

Holy Cross, Topsham: Safeguarding

The Church recognises the personal dignity and rights of children and vulnerable adults, towards whom it has a special responsibility and duty of care. The Church, and individual members of it, undertakes to do all in its power to create a safer environment for children and vulnerable adults, and prevent their physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

The Church authorities liaise closely with statutory agencies to ensure that any allegations of abuse are promptly and properly dealt with, victims supported, and perpetrators held to account.

Parish Safeguarding representative (PSR) – job description

Objective:

- Ensure vulnerable people in the parish are safe from harm.

Key responsibilities:

- Act as a point of contact if there are any concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused. The Diocesan Safeguarding office provides an alternative point of contact. Details of how to contact either the PSR or the Diocesan Office are given in the Holy Cross monthly newsletter and displayed on the church notice boards.
- Ensure that all those in contact with children or vulnerable adults on their own during parish activities or doing work for the parish (for example visiting the sick or housebound) have an up-to-date DBS certificate. The PSR will arrange DBS certification for those parishioners who need it.
- Essential training will be provided by the Diocesan Safeguarding Office as this must be completed before starting as a volunteer.
- Advise parishioners of their responsibilities to ensure safeguarding procedures are followed in the parish.
- Ensure PSRs are known and visible through photos and introductions.

The PSRs should:

- Be familiar with the Elliot Review, the Catholic Church's response to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).
- Refer to the Safeguarding Handbook, which provides an eight-point list of what this entails. PSRs are appointed in all Catholic churches, with a training requirement provided by the Diocese.
- Ensure compliance with legislative requirements and oversee necessary processes, such as DBS checks, references, and applications.
- Collaborate with the safeguarding team, based in Ashburton, who is always available to help.
- Handle paperwork related to safe recruitment, and provide advice and guidance as needed.

- Maintain the confidentiality of personal information, understanding that certain safeguarding issues may require breaking confidentiality.
- Support the parish priest, who holds the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding.
- Participate in support groups and training sessions, which are available throughout the year and designed to fit the personal schedules of PSRs.

Holy Cross Parish Safeguarding Representatives:

Patricia Venn Rees

Mirtha Mangone