

# **Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland**

## **Document B - Safeguarding Reporting Structure, Roles and Responsibilities**

### **1. Safeguarding Committee Structure**

1.1 The Safeguarding Committee comprises:

- Archdiocesan Safeguarding Officer (ASO)
- Archdiocesan Safeguarding Administrator (ASA)
- No more than two incumbent Priests from within the Archdiocese
- No more than two lay members of the Archdiocese

1.2 Members of the Committee are recruited and appointed by the Archdiocesan Board, with the Metropolitan's blessing, following consideration of candidates suitability for the role.

1.3 The Committee will meet three times per year, usually using an appropriate online meeting platform, and may convene on an ad hoc basis in response to complex casework.

1.3 Committee members serve for a maximum period of three years, with a further period of no more than one year being granted in exceptional circumstances, e.g. failure to recruit a replacement, and where the post-holder expresses a desire to continue.

1.4 A member of the Safeguarding Committee members who ceases to be a member of the Archdiocese community shall normally be automatically withdrawn from membership of the Safeguarding Committee but may serve until the next meeting of the Board subject to agreement of all parties and where circumstances are such that this is desirable, eg if the size of the Safeguarding Committee would be too small without the individual.

### **2. Safeguarding Committee Responsibilities**

2.1 The primary responsibilities of the Safeguarding Committee are listed below, this is not an exhaustive list and members of the committee may be asked to consider additional or revised responsibilities in the event that statutory regulatory frameworks change, and/or where the Board feel that the expertise of committee members can contribute to other casework:

- Develop and implement Safeguarding Policy and Process documents for all Archdiocesan institutions, at all levels, to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and support members of the Archdiocese in this;
- Keep up to date with legal developments in relation to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk, providing updates to the Archdiocesan Board and Parish Safeguarding Representatives as appropriate, and amending documentation as needed;
- Provide advice and guidance to Parish Safeguarding Representatives, and other members of the Archdiocese in relation to Safeguarding matters;
- To work with Parish Safeguarding Representatives to ensure that all volunteers undertaking regulated activity have a DBS check before taking up their role. In respect of clergy this must be before ordination takes place;

- To assess and respond to concerns, identifying the most appropriate course of action, eg whether a case should be dealt with as a Safeguarding case, a pastoral support case, or other;
- To deal with cases in line with the escalation process outlined in Document E - Safeguarding Case Escalation Process to ensure consistency of approach;
- To take action on behalf of the Archdiocese to escalate cases to external agencies and to act as the first point of contact for representatives of those agencies;
- Ensure that completion and storage of Safeguarding records is in line with GDPR requirements and is respectful of the need for confidentiality within appropriate limits;
- To hold a case review meeting at least once per year to consider the nature of, and response to, all concerns raised. Emerging themes and lessons learned should be recorded and raised at the Board where necessary.

### **3. Safeguarding Committee Oversight and Governance**

3.1 The Safeguarding Committee will provide reports to the Archdiocesan Board, at least annually and more often on request;

3.2 In the absence of a functioning Safeguarding Committee all responsibilities delegated to it will revert to the Archdiocesan Board until such time as a new Committee has been appointed.

3.3 A Safeguarding Committee member may resign before the end of their term of office by giving notice in writing to the Secretary of the Archdiocesan Board.

3.4 The Metropolitan and the Archdiocesan Board shall dismiss any individual member of the Safeguarding Committee if given sufficient cause to believe that the individual is unable to properly discharge their duties. Such action shall not be taken without full consideration of the issues causing concern, and discussions with the individual concerned.

3.5 If the Archdiocesan Board has a reasonable belief that the Safeguarding Committee is not functioning according to the requirements and responsibilities placed upon it, it may table a motion of no confidence, giving the Safeguarding Committee a minimum of twenty-eight days notice of the intention.

3.6 All documents comprising the Diocesan Safeguarding pack will be reviewed annually and approved by the Board. Where appropriate this work will be carried out at parish level with support from the Committee, e.g. when reviewing local risk assessments.