



Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth
Bringing all people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church

Charter for the care of victims and survivors

As the Bishop for the Diocese of Portsmouth the safeguarding of all those who worship within our parishes and church communities is of utmost importance to me.

We will work tirelessly to provide safe places for everyone, and above all, those who are most vulnerable. This is a primary focus for all our clergy and people, one that is mandated by the Lord Himself.

Our Charter for the Care of Victims and Survivors sets out our commitment to those who contact us and report they have been harmed.

The Church not only expresses her heartfelt sorrow and her apologies to anyone who has suffered abuse within her domain but wishes to do all she can to help and to assist with healing.

I thank all those who contribute their time to the work of safeguarding in our parishes and I pray that those in pain and sorrow may receive comfort and healing.

"Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18).

In Corde Iesu

+ Philip

Charter for the care of victims and survivors

Introduction.

The Bishop, Trustee Board, Safeguarding Committee, and all those who serve within the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth are committed to ensuring that safeguarding is an integral part of the life and ministry of the church.

Our charter for the care of victims and survivors sets out our commitment to victims and survivors of abuse.

As a Regulated Affiliate of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA), our work is shaped by the eight national safeguarding standards and our charter reflects standard number three – engaging with and caring for those who report having been harmed.

Our commitment to victims and survivors.

We understand how difficult it may be to make a disclosure about abuse or harm.

We will ensure that all victims and survivors who disclose abuse or harm to us receive a professional, caring, compassionate and timely response.

We will follow the national safeguarding policy and procedures for the Catholic Church of England and Wales when we respond to disclosures.

We are committed to helping and supporting victims and survivors through the process of reporting their disclosure for example to the police or other agencies who can help.

When and how we keep in touch will be led by the wishes of the victim or survivor and agreed when we have our first contact.

A copy of our victim and survivor privacy notice will be provided to all those who disclose abuse or harm to us. You can also access this [HERE](#)

How we will meet our commitment.

We will ensure that we can respond to those who raise concerns with us in a professional and timely way by having the right resources in place.

We will promote safeguarding across the Diocese in all aspects of our work and ministry.

We will foster a culture which recognises that safeguarding is an integral part of the Church's mission and is understood as everyone's responsibility.

We will ensure that all clergy, staff and volunteers who may receive a disclosure of abuse are trained to help them respond in a compassionate and caring way.

We will work with the statutory authorities, and other relevant organisations to provide a robust and supportive service to all those who seek our support.

We will signpost to those agencies and organisations that provide professional support services, if we have the consent from those who have been affected.

All victims and survivors will be informed about our Safeguarding Complaints policy so they can express if they are not satisfied with the service they have received from us.

We will ask for routine feedback from victims and survivors about our service to help us to improve the way we provide support to victims and survivors.

Reporting a concern.

If you need to report a safeguarding matter, you can contact the Diocesan safeguarding team by telephone on 02394 216487 or by email safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

If you are concerned that a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm or requires medical attention, please telephone the emergency services using 999.

Access to support services.

If you are not ready to contact us at this time, we understand. There are a number of other organisations that can provide support, advice and guidance to victims and survivors of abuse.

[Safe Spaces](#) is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church or as a result of their relationship with the Church of England, the Catholic Church of England and Wales or the Church in Wales.

[Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors](#) (MACSAS) supports women and men who have been sexually abused, as children or adults, by ministers, clergy or others under the guise of the Church.

[Grief to Grace UK – Healing the wounds of abuse](#) Founded in Pennsylvania in 2006, Grief to Grace ministers in several dioceses in the USA, Canada and Kingston, Jamaica. With the support of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Southwark, The Most Reverend Peter Smith, the program was first piloted in the UK in 2011 and established as a UK charity in 2014.

[The Survivors' Trust](#) (TST) is a UK-wide national umbrella agency for 130 specialist organisations to support the impact of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse throughout the UK and Ireland.

[One in Four](#) provides support to people who have experienced child sexual abuse and trauma.

[NAPAC](#) The National Association for People Abused in Childhood offers support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.