

## What might happen to the accused?

- Police investigation of possible criminal offence
- Enquiries/assessment by local authority social services for children/adults.
- Other actions: disciplinary action, referral to DBS
- Strategy meeting to plan enquiries, allocate tasks, set timescales.

**Statutory Agencies** will provide advice to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator on management of risk. **Temporary removal** from active ministry is informed by statutory agencies and the Safeguarding Committee.

If the accused person is convicted of an offence, or if there is no conviction but concerns remain about their conduct towards children or adults and the person still holds a role within the Church, action will be taken which may include commissioning an independent risk assessment and/or putting in place a **Safeguarding Plan** in consultation with the relevant statutory authorities to help manage risk.

## How will I be kept informed?

Your designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator (see back of leaflet) will be your point of contact throughout investigations. An agreement will be made between you and the safeguarding co-ordinator considering your preferred method of contact, and if face-to-face, the location that feels safe for you. You can also make arrangements about frequency of contact.

Whilst the Co-ordinator will keep you informed as much as possible, there may be certain information that cannot be shared, because doing so might compromise or prejudice any ongoing investigations or for reasons of confidentiality and data protection.

A record of contact and progress in the case will be kept and retained securely by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

## What support will be offered?

Support will vary based on what is available locally, but you will be offered access to counselling, and signposted to groups and organisations that other survivors have found helpful. The Isaiah Journey group provide a library of prayer and reflection resources that may help you on your journey towards healing. These can be found by navigating through the pages at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/the-isaiah-journey/>

**The Isaiah Journey** is a working group of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales which has grown out of the need for a pastoral-spiritual response to the suffering of victims and survivors of abuse in the Church.

## Useful Contacts:

Your designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator

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Safeguarding Co-ordinator Contact number

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Safeguarding Co-ordinator Contact email

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Your preferred support organisation

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The insert to this leaflet gives you information about national organisations who offer support. Your Safeguarding Co-ordinator will also provide local contact information.

**The Isaiah Journey**  
seeking truth | bringing hope | finding healing

# A Guide for Survivors of Abuse

**I** was abused by someone in the Church. I was so afraid of saying anything — of not being believed. Now I have spoken, I need to know what happens next, and have some control.

## Sorry doesn't feel enough...

The very fact that you are reading this leaflet perhaps means you are seeking some support. And our first words to you come from the heart — we are deeply sorry for the abuse that you have suffered, from the moment the abuse began, and for every day after that you have lived your life as a survivor.

Saying that we are sorry just doesn't feel enough, but please know that ***you are believed***, that ***you are not to blame***, that the abuse ***should never have happened to you***. We are a church of people committed to a zero tolerance approach to any kind of abuse whether current or historic. We are a church of people who wish to make atonement for the devastation caused by abuse.

Thank you for your ***bravery*** in coming forwards. We sincerely hope that we can be there for you, and stand with you, and somehow support you on a path to healing.

This leaflet has been prepared to provide some ***practical guidance*** to the steps and actions that may happen once you have disclosed the abuse and who you can speak to if you wish to disclose.

## I want to report the abuse I suffered, who can I tell?

Every Diocese and Religious Order is required to have Safeguarding Arrangements in place. Public places of worship have Safeguarding Notice boards that display contact details of who you can tell. This could be your Priest, Religious Sister, Religious Brother, Deacon, or the local Safeguarding Representative(s) and the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, whose details can also be found on the back of this leaflet.

Please get in contact with the person you feel most comfortable talking to, and they will put you in touch with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. You will be listened to.

## The person who abused me isn't connected to the Church?

### Can I still talk to somebody?

Yes, absolutely. You will be listened to. Whilst there will be no internal processes for the Church to follow, we can support reporting to the Authorities and signpost you to the right support for you. Please, get in touch with us. We are here to listen and help.



## I've reported the abuse — what will happen to the accused?

It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to report to the statutory authorities, all allegations of abuse made against those working in the name of the Church, regardless of whether the allegations or concerns relate to a person's behaviour in relation to their role within the Church or another setting.

## What if I don't want to go to the Police?

Not all survivors want to go through the criminal justice system. We understand this, but have to balance this with the need to keep others safe. We are able to report allegations of abuse against perpetrators anonymously, that is without giving

survivor's details to the statutory services. A Safeguarding Privacy Notice will be shared with you and will tell you more about this.

## The person who abused me is deceased. How can I get justice?

A report will still be made to the statutory authorities. The church will look back on historical records for the accused and will share anything of relevance with the police.

Whilst no legal sentence could be imposed on the deceased perpetrator, at the very least, the Church has committed to support any investigation into what happened to you. Importantly, we need to really listen and learn from you, and together work towards ensuring abuse is no longer a reality or threat within the Church, which should be a safe, protective space for all. You teach us how we can be our best in supporting all survivors of abuse.

## The person who abused me has a role in the Church. How will others be protected from them?

Please be reassured that the national Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) requires dioceses and orders it regulates to have a policy in place to carefully manage those with roles in the Church who are subjects of allegations of abuse, you can ask to see a copy of the policy.

- <https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk>



# The Isaiah Journey

seeking truth | bringing hope | finding healing

## National Organisations

### offering support and helplines

<https://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/>  
*supporting victims and survivors of church-related abuse.*

<https://www.macsas.org.uk/>  
MACSAS *supports women and men who have been sexually abused, as children or adults, by ministers, clergy or others in a church-related setting.*

<http://www.christiansurvivors.com/wordpress/>  
*support for any survivors and others impacted by abuse.*

<https://napac.org.uk/>  
*supporting recovery from childhood abuse, with helplines.*

<https://www.mysupportspace.org.uk/>  
*interactive-guides for victims of any form of abuse*

### NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/our-services/nspcc-helpline/>

### Childline

<https://www.childline.org.uk>

### National Domestic Violence helpline

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>

### Samaritans Helpline

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>

### Action on Elder Abuse helpline

<https://www.thenationalcareline.org/AccessingHelp/ActionOnElderAbuse>



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