

Recording a Safeguarding Concern

Adapted from “Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and Methodist Church 2015”

Good record keeping is an important part of the safeguarding task. Records should use clear, straightforward language, be concise, and accurate so that they can be understood by anyone not familiar with the case. They should clearly differentiate between facts, opinion, judgements and hypothesis.

Why record? In the church context, safeguarding records are needed in order to:

- Ensure that what happened and when it happened is recorded
- Provide a history of events so that patterns can be identified
- Record and justify the action/s of advisers and church workers
- Promote the exercise of accountability
- Provide a basis of evidence for future safeguarding activity
- Allow for continuity when there is a change of personnel

Example: When a minister moves between Parishes, a youth worker moves to a different post, or there has been a change of Parish/Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, the availability of a safeguarding record is essential so that one can know what has happened in the past.

The following approach is helpful in considering what should be written.

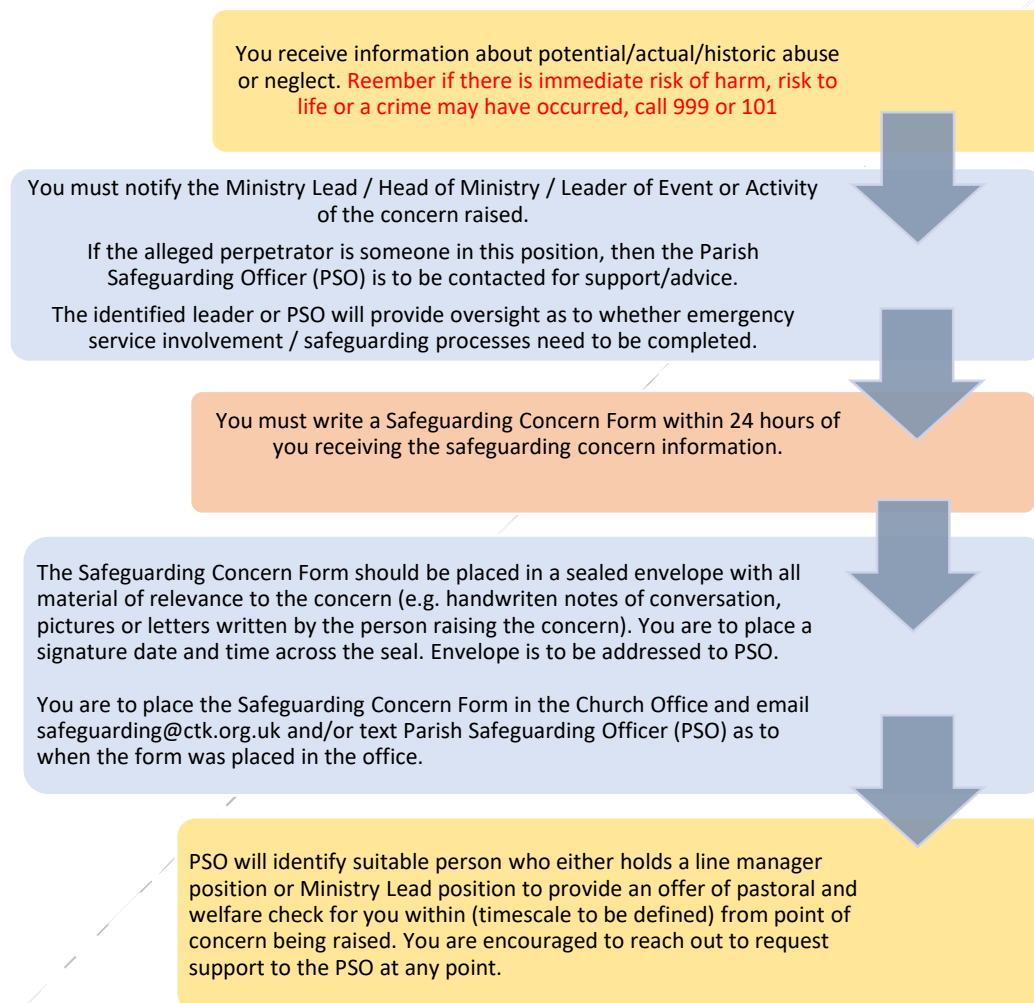
- **A written record** of the event or conversation should be made as soon as is practicable (after the event or conversation but always within 24 hours)
- **Who** is it about? (the names of all key people including any actual / potential witnesses)
- **What** happened? (use exact quotes where possible, in quotation marks)
- **How** did it happen? (for example, if someone is alleged to have assaulted a child, did they use an implement? Or was it a kick? Or a hit?)
- **Where** did it take place?
- **When** did it take place?
- **Why** did it happen? (this allows you to record any explanations offered to you by the people involved. It is not the place for your own analysis)
- **What should happen next** (what action will follow, for example, what are you going to do next, what is X going to do next, making sure it is in the diary in Y days time as a reminder)
- **Recording what did happen next and the checks made to ensure effective follow up** (did X do what they said they were going to do?)
- **Include the views / perspective of the child or adult who is vulnerable**
- **Analysis.** The PSO/CSO should analyse all the information gathered to decide the nature and level of the child's needs / the needs of the adults experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and the level of risk, if any, they may be facing
- **Records must always be dated and the author identified**
- **Indexing.** The PSO/CSO should ensure that Parish/Cathedral records are able to be searched or indexed so that previous names and concerns can be easily retrieved
- **Summary.** The safeguarding adviser should ensure, if a church worker has a separate personnel file, that a summary of any concerns and the outcome is filed on the personnel file.

NB Facts and professional judgments (analysis) should always be distinguished in the record and the record must not be disrespectful to the subjects. Always bear in mind they may be read by the subject(s), who have a right of access to their files.



If you suspect or have been told that a child, young person, or adult is at risk of significant harm, has been abused or neglected then you have a duty to report this as a Safeguarding Concern. Our priority as a Church is a timely response to historic, known or suspected safeguarding concerns to protect those at risk. **If the concern indicates a crime has happened or that someone is at immediate risk of harm or risk to life, call 999 or 101**

The following diagram explains the process you need to follow and contains the Safeguarding Concern Form attached for you to complete.



Remember the core safeguarding principles:

- Listen carefully and take seriously what is said.
- Use open questions, do not rush the person, or overly question them and remain calm. Allow the person to tell you what happened. Be mindful of their age and understanding.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do. Don't promise you can keep it confidential.

- Don't offer alternative explanations or make assumptions.
- Don't contact the person(s) whom the allegation and concern refer to.

Safeguarding Concern Form

Name of person you are worried about (if relevant include pronouns)	
Age / Date of Birth (if known):	
Any additional needs identified including disabilities or language barriers?	
Do we have details of the person we are worried about on ChurchSuite?	Yes / No (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)
You name (this is the name of the person who became aware of the worry)	
What position if any do you hold in relation to the person we are worried about? (<i>Head of Ministry / Leader / Staff member / Congregation Peer</i>)	
Date & Time you were made aware of the worry:	
Having completed this form, would you like to be contacted for some wellbeing/pastoral support?	Yes / No If yes, please provide contact details (<i>telephone / email</i>)

Please complete this form, giving as much detail as possible to enable the Parish Safeguarding Officer to take appropriate and informed action. Be wary of assumptions, record factually the account of what was shared.

Where additional pages are needed, please number these and securely attach these to this form

Who was involved: (names of those involved or who have/may of seen)

What happened: (Tell me, Explain to me, Describe to me. Please give exact quotes in speech marks)



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When and where did it happen: (Dates, Times & Locations)

Who have you told about this incident:

What does the person want to happen in sharing this information:

Action Taken:



Name of Ministry Lead / Head of Ministry / Leader / Clergy / PSO you have reported this concern to:			
Date & Time of Form Placed in Church Office:			
Was Email / Text notification sent to PSO?	Email: Yes / No	Date:	Time:
Email to: safeguarding@ctk.org.uk	Text: Yes / No	Date:	Time:
Text: 07731154331			

