

What To Do When Safeguarding Concerns Arise

FAQ's

If it feels complicated, report it anyway

Reporting a safeguarding concern should be straightforward. And yet, for many Church Officers, something gets in the way.

More often it is doubt. A worry about getting it wrong, causing harm, or overstepping.

These hesitations are understandable. They are also worth naming, because they are some of the most common reasons concerns go unreported.



Recognise

Be alert to signs or disclosures of abuse.



Respond

Listen carefully and take what is being said seriously.



Record

Make a written record of what has been shared.



Refer

Share the concern with the Safeguarding Officer and relevant authorities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



IT'S NOT JUST POLICY, IT'S PERSONAL

What if it feels like interfering in someone's personal life?

When someone shares a concern with you, it is often because they want help and they are trusting you to act. A safeguarding concern is never just a private matter. You are not being asked to take sides or make a judgement, simply to pass it on so that someone trained to help can take it forward.

Keeping people safe is at the heart of what we are called to do. That is not interference. That is care.



What if I was told something in confidence, or asked to keep it a secret?

It takes courage for someone to share something difficult.

The *Reporting Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Code of Practice* is clear that promises of confidentiality should not be made if they cannot be kept.

You can respond with care while explaining that the information may need to be shared to keep people safe.



What if it has already been reported?

Report it anyway.

You cannot know what has or has not been shared, and every account matters.

There is no such thing as reporting too many times when a person's safety is at stake.



What if it happened a long time ago?

Non-recent concerns are still concerns. Time does not change the obligation to refer, and it does not make what happened any less important to the person who experienced it.

If someone has questions about what happens next, be honest about the process. Your DSO can help you navigate that conversation.



What if it involves someone well-known or in a senior position?

We know this one can feel the hardest. The process exists precisely for moments like this.

Seniority does not change the process, and no one is above it. You will not be on your own.

Safeguarding professionals are there to support you.



What if I'm not sure it's serious enough, don't have enough information, or don't know the process?

It is common to feel unsure.

You do not need to know every step before you act.

Your DSO is there to guide you through what happens next.

The most important thing is that you make contact. Everything else can be worked out together.

