

FCJ Safeguarding Policy – Britain



For

FCJ Sisters and workers within the FCJ Society volunteers or employees regardless of their role or the activities they undertake.

1. POLICY OVERVIEW

Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ Society) is committed to safeguarding all children and adults. For the FCJ Society, this commitment directly relates to the fact that we are all made in the image of God and the Church's common belief in the preciousness, dignity, and uniqueness of every human life. We start from the principle that each person has a right to expect the highest level of protection, love, encouragement, and respect. Following on from the safeguarding reviews in 2020 we are committed to the One Church Approach to safeguarding by implementing the changes needed and ensuring we respond to victims/survivors promptly and compassionately.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all FCJ Sisters, and workers within the FCJ Society volunteers or employees regardless of their role or the activities they undertake.

2.2 It is the responsibility of all members of the FCJ Society and the workers, voluntary and employee, to prevent, whether by action or omission, abuse. Abuse in this policy refers to: physical; sexual; emotional; spiritual; neglect; self-neglect; organisational; material; psychological; financial; domestic or verbal. Additionally, behaviour which effectively results in modern-day slavery or where there is evidence of discrimination or radicalisation needs to be recognised and addressed as a safeguarding issue, in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section 6.

3. TRAINING

3.1 All active members of the FCJ Society, their workers, voluntary and employee will undergo Safeguarding Training in relation to both Children and Adults relevant to their role. The list below outlines the minimum standards for training in each role:

- Area Leader – RLG Lead Training (equivalent to Level 2)
- Safeguarding Lead – Safeguarding Lead Training (equivalent to Level 3)
- FCJ Trustees – Trustee Training (equivalent to Level 2)
- Community Members who work with public – Advance Safeguarding Training (equivalent to Level 2)
- Community members who don't work with public – Basic Safeguarding Training (equivalent Level 1)
- the workers, voluntary or employee – (equivalent to Level 2)

3.2 The active FCJ Sisters and the FCJ Safeguarding Advisory Committee (Safeguarding Lead, Area Leader, Trustee Representative and the FCJ Contact for England) will undertake relevant refresher training.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Trustees of the Faithful Companions of Jesus

The Trustees have a duty to maintain appropriate governance and oversight of safeguarding in accordance with this policy and national guidelines. Certain functions of the Trustees will be delegated to the Area Leader and the Safeguarding Lead, as indicated below.

4.2 The Area Leader

The Area Leader is responsible for ensuring appropriate policies, procedures and best practices are in place for the effective delivery of safeguarding, including any related due diligence checks. Certain functions of the Area Leader will be delegated to FCJ Sisters and relevant Lay people who have roles of responsibility as indicated below.

4.3 The Safeguarding Lead

Sr Bernadette Coughlin

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The Safeguarding Lead has direct oversight of the safeguarding policy and guidance, for the Society of the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus including management and oversight of documentation, case progression/management and the secure, legally compliant storage of safeguarding reports and related material as well as oversight of the relationship with and input in the work of the RLSS.

4.3.1 The Safeguarding Lead may delegate some of this responsibility to the RLSS by referring the case to them but will remain as key contact for the case duration unless another individual is identified to assume responsibility.

4.4 All other roles

All members of the FCJ Society and the workers, voluntary or employee, have an obligation to ensure they know how to respond to safeguarding concerns by being familiar with the content of this policy and the procedure contained within it and any other associated policies/procedures.

4.5 General

Everyone involved in the work of FCJ Society has a duty to disclose to the Safeguarding Lead /Area Leader any safeguarding concerns that have been raised about them.

5. PRACTICE GUIDANCE

5.1 Action must be taken if a concern is raised that a child or adult is suffering or is likely to be suffering from significant harm. This includes but is not limited to

- Someone who is at serious risk of harm from self or others
- Someone who poses a serious risk of harm to someone else
- A concern about a child or vulnerable adult at risk of harm from someone else
- Concerns over someone's mental capacity

5.2 Action must also be taken in line with the Church's mandatory reporting policy. This means that action must be taken if there are reasonable grounds to suspect or believe that someone who holds any type of role within the Church is going to or has committed a crime, is going to or has caused harm, poses a risk or is otherwise unsuitable to work in a public-facing role.

6. PROCEDURE

6.1 If a Sister, worker, volunteer or employee of the FCJ Society becomes aware of a safeguarding issue, they should contact the FCJ Safeguarding Lead or Area Leader who will contact the RLSS Safeguarding Team and pass on the concern and all associated documentation immediately. You should ensure the person who made you aware of the concern knows you are doing this.

6.1.2 The RLSS and the Faithful Companions Jesus designated Safeguarding Lead who has casework responsibility should:

- Ensure the victim/survivor or individual has been informed of the next steps
- Explain what will happen, give them options if possible and an indicative timescale.
- Contact any relevant bodies.
- Complete the safeguarding paperwork and ensure appropriate record keeping of all communications including phone calls, meetings and discussions in relation to the case.
- Inform the Area Leader of the new safeguarding referral.
- All referrals/reports outside of the RLSS should be made within 24 hours of receiving the information unless there are exceptional circumstances to postpone making this referral/report.
- The decision to delay a referral/report must be authorised by the Area leader.

6.1.3 When the concern needs to be reported to a statutory agency, the individual reporting the issue must be informed that the information will not be kept confidential and that the details will be passed on to the police and any other appropriate statutory body. The FCJ Designated Safeguarding Lead should be supportive of the individual making the disclosure but should not seek more details than necessary for an initial statutory referral.

6.2 The RLSS will make recommendations about when to report to safeguarding bodies or external agencies based on risk and need and the national policy guidance supplied by the CSSA.

6.3.1 Safeguarding bodies (not exhaustive)

- Internal Safeguarding Structures within the Catholic Church
- Local authority Safeguarding team – Adults
- Local authority Safeguarding team – Children
- Police 999
- Police 101
- GP
- Crisis Team
- RLSS Out of Hours Team

- Community Psychiatric Nurse
- Charity Commission
- CSSA
- Local Safeguarding Commission
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- NSPCC
- DBS

7. WHISTLEBLOWING

7.1 The FCJ Society will encourage and enable anyone with a serious concern, to raise that issue without fear of victimisation, or disadvantage.

7.1.2 If that concern is regarding malpractice, illegal acts, or omissions, of the FCJ Society or other religious institutions, relating to safeguarding, then the RLSS should be made aware.

7.2 The action taken by the RLSS will depend upon the nature of the concern referred to. However, an investigation will be undertaken if appropriate, followed by appropriate action and written feedback will be provided, including a rationale documenting the reasons why identified actions have been taken. This can be delegated to the RLSS.

8. RECORDING AND STORAGE OF SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS AND CASE FILES

8.1 Primary responsibility for the management of documents and safeguarding case files lies with the Safeguarding Lead and the RLSS who will ensure an accurate, auditable, and secure record of any safeguarding concerns or allegations referred to the FCJ Society are maintained.

This record will include:

- Relevant contact details
- Details of how/when the concern or allegation was received.
- Details of the concern itself
- Relevant historical information
- Identified past and present risk factors
- Any actions or investigation undertaken including those by the FCJ Society Or the RLSS and from statutory agencies.
- Rationale for actions and or outcome of case

8.2 All records are potential evidence in a criminal proceeding, civil case or statutory/public inquiry and must be stored in a suitable and retrievable format with an auditable record of provenance and integrity.

9. SAFER RECRUITMENT PRACTICE GUIDANCE

9.1 The FCJ Society will ensure that all FCJ Sisters and workers, voluntary and employees are subject to the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (including enhanced DBS) in line with both statutory and Catholic Church requirements.

9.2 Appointments will be based on the person's experience, skills and ability to meet the set criteria and job specification for the specific role. It is essential to ensure that all documentation relating to the applicant is stored in a secure place and remains confidential.

9.3 Appointment to a role will not be confirmed until a satisfactory DBS Disclosure check has been received and previous employment references confirmed as being acceptable.

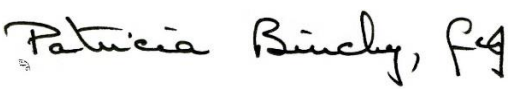
9.4 On appointment, all new employees will be asked to sign to say they understand all relevant safeguarding policies and procedures, and their responsibilities as outlined in the document.

9.5 All persons seeking to work with children or adults whether in a paid or unpaid capacity must be provided with the opportunity to self-disclose relevant conviction information. This is a DBS Code of Practice requirement and applies to anyone being asked to have an Enhanced Disclosure.

10. POLICY REVIEW

10.1 This policy is approved by the FCJ Safeguarding Advisory Committee and will be subject to an initial review in April 2024 and then annually or sooner, where there is a significant change to the organisational infrastructure, processes or to relevant legislation.

Key Roles	Names	Contact information
Religious Leader and Trustee Representative	Sr Patricia Binchy	+44 (0)208 232 9570
FCJ Safeguarding Lead	Sr Bernadette Coughlin	+ 44 (0)7375 801201 safeguarding@fcjbritain.org

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Signed by: Sr Patricia Binchy Religious Leader	Signature:  Date: 21/03/24