

The English Benedictine Congregation Trust (EBC Trust)

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for Children, Young People & Adults at Risk

Policy No. SP01

Version 3

Ratified by the Board of Trustees

Date December, 2025

Date for review: December 2026

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## PROCEDURES

### **Disclosures to a trustee or official of the EBC Trust**

Step 1: If a trustee or official of the EBC Trust, in the exercise of their role as a trustee or official, receives an allegation of abuse relating to a child or an adult at risk, they must report this to the safeguarding lead (or any deputy) of the monastery of which the alleged perpetrator is or was a member, and to the Abbot President. If the alleged perpetrator does not reside in a monastery, they should report the allegation to the Abbot President. If the Abbot President cannot be contacted, they should report it to the Secretary of the Congregation.

Step 2: If the alleged perpetrator is a member of a monastery in, or is resident in, the United Kingdom, The Abbot President or the Secretary of the Congregation must liaise with the relevant safeguarding coordinator for the monastery where the alleged perpetrator is or was a member, in order to make a referral to the statutory authorities (police and social care, as appropriate), as well as any other relevant monastery. In all cases, if the safeguarding lead, Abbot President or the Secretary of the Congregation consider that a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm, then a referral must be made directly to the police and the local authority designated safeguarding officer (LADO), and the safeguarding coordinator must be informed as soon as possible afterwards.

Step 3: A written record of concerns and the actions taken to respond must be kept and shared with the safeguarding lead of the relevant monastery/monasteries, the safeguarding coordinator(s) of the relevant monastery/monasteries, and the Abbot President or the Secretary of Congregation as the case may be, within 24 hours.

If concerns relate to the Abbot President, this must be reported to the First Assistant. In those circumstances references to the Abbot President under 'Step 2' and 'Step 3' above should be read as references to the First Assistant. If the concerns relate to a time before the Abbot President was elected to that office, the First Assistant will ensure that the concerns are dealt with in accordance with the national procedures on responding to allegations and any other relevant part of the national procedures manual, as well as applicable safeguarding statements issued by the Holy See.

If the concerns relate to his time as Abbot President, in accordance with *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, the First Assistant must report the matter to the Metropolitan within whose jurisdiction the alleged offence took place.

### **Meeting with Survivors**

If the Abbot President receives a request from a survivor for a meeting, he will agree to meet them. He will listen to the survivor with care, take their concerns seriously and engage with them to assess what action he can take to address their needs. If disclosures are made which have not previously been disclosed to the police and LADO, the Abbot President will seek the survivor's consent to refer the disclosure(s) to the statutory authorities in accordance with the process set out above, save that where the survivor is an adult at risk or child, the Abbot President will do so himself without the need for consent. In circumstances where it is not possible or appropriate for the Abbot President to meet (for example, because of ill-health or overseas, visitation or safeguarding commitments, or a risk of prejudice to an investigation, contemplated investigation, or other proceedings), the Abbot President should arrange for a suitable person to meet with the survivor in his place. The suitable person will be granted delegated authority to assess what action can be taken to address their needs.

### **Supporting and Encouraging Superiors of EBC Monasteries**

If the Abbot President receives a request for support and encouragement from a Superior of an EBC Monastery, or a group of Superiors, in connection with a safeguarding issue he will listen to their description of the issue and help them to consider their options in relation to which agencies to approach and, if a survivor is involved, how that survivor might be supported.

### **Constitutional Processes**

The Constitutions of the English Benedictine Congregation (EBC) give the Abbot President a continuing role in safeguarding arrangements across the monasteries of the EBC. To facilitate this continuing role, he will:

- Require each monastery to engage in an accreditation process with the Religious Life Safeguarding Service in England and Wales, and Praesidium in the USA. The Abbot President will receive copies of the accreditation reports.
- Require each Superior to send him copies of all safeguarding plans for monks and others associated with their monastery.

### **Whistleblowing**

The EBC will encourage and enable anyone with a safeguarding concern, to refer the concern without fear of victimisation, or disadvantage.

If that concern is regarding malpractice, illegal acts, or omissions at the EBC or other religious institution in relation to safeguarding, then the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS) should be made aware.

The action taken by the RLSS will depend upon the nature of the concern referred. 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.

## **Admission Requirements**

A Congregation-wide framework for the admission of new members has been accepted by all Superiors. It includes processes which support the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

## **Managing allegations against trustees, officials or volunteers**

Allegations of abuse by anyone in the course of their work for the EBC Trust will be reported to the Abbot President, or the First Assistant if the allegations are against the Abbot President. The Abbot President or the First Assistant will refer allegations of abuse in accordance with the process set out above. Also, following the provisions of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, the First Assistant reports allegations against the Abbot President concerning something he is alleged to have done while Abbot President to the Metropolitan within whose jurisdiction the alleged offence took place.

## **Storage, Recording and information sharing**

The EBC Trust will keep records in accordance with GDPR according to the EBC policy, even if they are from outside the UK

## **E-safety**

The EBC Trust will follow the national guidance on safer use of technology:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/> <https://www.internetmatters.org/>  
<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>

The EBC Trust also observes UK data protection law and has a policy dealing with data relating to allegations of abuse.

In particular:

- The electronic devices used by the Abbot President, the First Assistant, and the Secretary of the Congregation are password protected and encrypted and their data is stored securely.
- Those working for the EBC Trust will never use personal social media accounts, phone numbers or email addresses to contact children or young people, or adults who lack capacity to give their consent.
- Any discovery of inappropriate use (including of a nature giving rise to safeguarding issues) of social networking sites, computers, the internet generally, email or texting will be reported to the Abbot President or the First Assistant.
- Access to online forums under the auspices of the EBC Trust will be restricted. Online forum content will be monitored.
- Users of email and SMS will be mindful of the risk of such communications not reaching the intended recipient and of sending information without appropriate security.
- Where appropriate, email addresses will be placed in the BCC field to prevent a data breach.

## **Training, Supervision and Support**

All trustees, officials and volunteers of the EBC Trust are members of monasteries which provide training, supervision and support to a level appropriate for each member's role and responsibility.

**Recruitment**

At this time the EBC Trust does not employ anyone. If it were to do so, or if it were to appoint any volunteers, it would do so using the national safer recruitment policies and procedures:

The EBC Trust will review this policy annually.

## Appendix 1 GENERAL INFORMATION

### **The EBC Trust**

The EBC Trust is a charity established and governed by a Trust Deed dated 7 October 1987. It is registered with the Charity Commission under the reference number 297880. The Chair of the Charity is the Abbot President of the EBC. He is elected by the General Chapter of the EBC to serve for a four-year term. The trustees are appointed by the Abbot President with the Executive function being performed by the Congregational Bursar who is the Secretary and Treasurer to the EBC Trust. The Congregational Bursar is elected by the General Chapter to serve for a four-year term.

### **Objectives and Activities**

The EBC Trust supports and encourages the monastic communities which constitute the EBC. In accordance with its Constitutions, the EBC acts in such a way that the freedom of each monastery to make its own decisions about its life and work, is preserved: the EBC exists in order to promote the good of all the monasteries, not to exercise control over them.

### **Purpose and Scope**

This policy applies to the board of trustees and the officials of the EBC when they are exercising their respective roles of Procurator General, Formation Consultor, Canonical Consultor, Congregational Bursar and Congregational Secretary. It also applies to volunteers of the EBC Trust.

The purpose of this policy is to provide those working on behalf of the EBC Trust with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

### **Equality Statement**

We are committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively across the EBC Trust. We uphold these principles in our behaviours and practises towards everybody who works for our organisation. We oppose all forms of discrimination and intolerance in our work and we have a zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and victimisation. We will not tolerate discrimination against those who work within or use our organisation and have one or more the protected characteristics, namely: age; disability; gender; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation; pregnancy and maternity.

## Appendix 2 POLICY STATEMENT

Every human being has a value which we acknowledge as coming directly from God's creation of male and female in his own image and likeness. We believe therefore that all people should be valued, supported and protected from harm. We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable people towards whom the Church has a special responsibility.

The EBC Trust will undertake appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all, by practising fully and positively Christ's Ministry towards children, young people and adults and responding sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm. This is demonstrated by the provision of carefully planned activities for children, young people and adults, caring for those hurt by abuse and managing those who have caused harm.

The EBC Trust is committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church and affirms a 'One Church' approach to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk through the promotion of a sustained culture of constant vigilance. The 'best interests' or 'paramountcy principle', which underpins and is enshrined in child and adult protection legislation, shall be the primary consideration in all matters of safeguarding.

The following expressions of principles and values have been adopted by the EBC Trust and underpin its response and actions under this policy and procedure.

### **Key Principles Regarding Children at Risk**

The EBC Trust believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to keep them safe. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, including ours.

All trustees, officials and volunteers of the EBC Trust have a responsibility to act and intervene when it appears that children need to be made safe from harm, whether the risk of harm is Neglect, Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse or Emotional Abuse.

The EBC Trust will act in an open, transparent and accountable way in working in partnership with Children's Social Care Services, the Police, Health Agencies, Probation Providers and other agencies to safeguard children and assist in bringing to justice anyone acting in the name of the EBC Trust who has committed an offence against a child.

Anyone who brings concerns or allegations to the notice of the EBC Trust will be responded to sensitively, respectfully and seriously. All concerns and allegations will be dealt with within the national procedures and in a timely manner.

The EBC Trust is fully committed to acting within the guidance as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and recognises value of working in partnership with other agencies and not acting alone. This includes playing a role in identifying concerns early on and preventing them from escalating; cooperation, collaboration and timely sharing of appropriate information

with relevant organisations and agencies; keeping good records and taking prompt action.

Pastoral care will be made available to children and their families and to other relevant people where there have been concerns and allegations of some form of harm or maltreatment of a child.

### **Key Principles Regarding Adults at Risk**

The EBC Trust will:

- Work actively and constructively within the framework set out in the Care Act 2014 and Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014, and with associated statutory and good practice guidance.
- Actively promote the empowerment and well-being of adults;
- Recognise that everyone has the right to live their life free from violence, fear and abuse;
- Recognise that adults have the right to be protected from harm and exploitation;
- Recognise that adults have the right to independence that involves a degree of risk; and
- Act in an open, transparent and accountable way in working in partnership with Adult Social Care Services, the Police, Health Agencies, Probation Providers and other agencies to safeguard adults and assist in bringing to justice anyone acting in the name of the Church who has committed an offence against an adult.

### **Legal Framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- General Data Protection Regulation(EU) 2016/679
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice for 0 to 25 years: Statutory guidance 2014
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2015
- Working together to safeguard children: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018

## Appendix 3

### CONTACT DETAILS

The Abbot President  
Abbot Christopher Jamison OSB  
[president@benedictines.org.uk](mailto:president@benedictines.org.uk)  
Tel. 0118 207 3021

The First Assistant  
Abbot Robert Igo OSB  
[robert@ampleforthabbey.org.uk](mailto:robert@ampleforthabbey.org.uk)  
Tel. 01439 766700

The Secretary of the Congregation  
Fr. Francis Straw OSB  
[frfrancis@buckfast.org.uk](mailto:frfrancis@buckfast.org.uk)  
Tel. 01364 645560

#### **Designated Safeguarding Leads:**

Ampleforth  
Tom Kelly  
Tel: 01439 766066  
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Martha Morely  
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Belmont  
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Douai  
Kate Burke  
[safeguarding@douaiabbey.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@douaiabbey.org.uk)



Community of St. Gregory the Great (formerly at Downside)  
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[dtimothyw5@aol.com](mailto:dtimothyw5@aol.com)

Stanbrook  
Sr. Josephine Parkinson  
Tel: 01347 868 900  
[josephine@stanbrookabbey.org.uk](mailto:josephine@stanbrookabbey.org.uk)

Worth  
Religious Safeguarding Lead (RSL), Paul Bilton [pbilton@worth.org.uk](mailto:pbilton@worth.org.uk) 01342-710368  
Safeguarding Trustee, Alda Andreotti [aandreotti@worth.org.uk](mailto:aandreotti@worth.org.uk)

Religious Life Safeguarding Service:  
<https://religioussafeguarding.org/>

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency:  
<https://www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk/>

#### Safe Spaces

Safe Spaces is a free and independent support service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused through their relationship with either the Church of England or the Catholic Church of England and Wales. Phone 0300 303 1056 (a voicemail facility is available outside of opening times)  
Email [safespaces@firstlight.org.uk](mailto:safespaces@firstlight.org.uk)

Referral can be made online to a local council:  
<https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>

Child Line FREEPHONE 0800 1111

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline:  
FREEPHONE 0808 800 5000  
FREETEXT 0800 056 0566