

AMDG

GUIDELINES FOR BEST PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

1. GENERAL CONTEXT

1. The Oxford University Catholic Chaplains minister as members of the Catholic Church, the Senior Chaplain and the (Lay) Assistant Chaplain being appointed by the Oxford and Cambridge Education Board, a body of the Bishops Conference of England and Wales. The (Priest) Assistant Chaplain is appointed by the Jesuit Provincial of the Jesuits in Britain.
2. In respect to their work within the Chaplaincy the Chaplains are accountable to the Oxford Board of the Oxford and Cambridge Education Board for the fulfilment of their responsibilities. A named Board member has responsibility for the oversight of Safeguarding policy and practice.

2. STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

1. The Oxford University Catholic Chaplains embrace as integral to their Christian ministry the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and are committed to providing an environment in which all who attend the Chaplaincy are treated with respect and care whoever they are.
2. The Chaplains will show sensitive regard for differences of race, culture, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, age, religion and physical and mental wellbeing.
3. The Chaplains will work towards the continued development, improvement and growth of pastoral and spiritual care in their place of ministry.
4. The Chaplains will follow the policies and processes of the Catholic Church in England and Wales as set out by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency. For Safeguarding purposes, they report to the Safeguarding apparatus of the Jesuits in Britain.
5. The Chaplains are DBS checked through the Archdiocese of Birmingham.
6. All the Chaplains will have regular supervision for their pastoral ministry.

3. REGARDING THOSE TO WHOM WE MINISTER

1. Called to serve all God's people, the Chaplains will treat all persons with respect.
2. The Chaplains will not condone or support any unlawful discrimination in respect of faith, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age or disability among those they have contact with in their role as chaplains.
3. The Chaplains will affirm the religious and spiritual freedom of all persons they encounter in their role as chaplains. They will not impose doctrinal positions or spiritual practices on persons and will affirm and promote their faith in ways that respect the spiritual freedom of others.

4. The Chaplains are accountable for maintaining the integrity of the pastoral and spiritual relationship with those they encounter in their role as chaplain.

5. The Chaplains are aware that there is a power imbalance between a Chaplain and student, and that there is often some vulnerability implicit in the kind of conversations that students might have with a Chaplain. Chaplains are to be aware of when this is the case and discuss it in supervision regarding appropriate ways to manage the situation to ensure that students remain safe and not at risk.
6. The Chaplains will not use their professional position for personal gain, be it emotional, financial, sexual or other form of gain.
7. The Chaplains will undertake professional training to ensure they support students in the best possible way. The training will include: safeguarding, mental health and suicide awareness, and the dynamics of pastoral interaction.
8. The Chaplains will make referrals in the best interests of those they serve.

4. REGARDING THOSE WITH WHOM WE MINISTER

REGARDING THEIR COLLEAGUES

4.1 The Chaplains will respect the opinions, confidences and beliefs of their colleagues in the Chaplaincy.

4.2 The Chaplains will pursue personal growth and development in theology, spirituality and pastoral skills and will have appropriate supervision and spiritual direction.

4.3 The Chaplains have a responsibility to support and care for their colleagues in chaplaincy.

REGARDING OTHER CHAPLAINCY STAFF

4.4 The Chaplains will engage professionally with the Chaplaincy Manager, Housekeeper, Handyman and Cleaner.

4.5 Priest Chaplains will be careful to ensure that no element of 'clerical status' colours their relations with the staff, giving rise to expectations of preferential treatment, vis-à-vis the Lay Chaplain, or in other respects. The Lay Chaplain, similarly, will not use her position as one that creates inappropriate expectations.

REGARDING THE UNIVERSITY

4.6 The Chaplains will work and cooperate with other services within the University to serve the best interest of the people to whom they minister.

4.7 The Chaplains will maintain appropriate records and financial accounts.

4.8 The Chaplains will maintain the ethos and integrity of their function as Catholic chaplains while respecting and, where necessary, supporting the policies and procedures of the University.

4.9 The Chaplains will be aware of the University's duties under Prevent and Counter Extremism and its code of practice on Meetings and Events.

REGARDING THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM

4.10 The Chaplains will maintain an active relationship with and good standing within the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

5. REGARDING PERSONAL WELLBEING

5.1 Chaplains have a responsibility for their own wellbeing. Regular supervision will help and also enable the chaplain to recognise symptoms of stress and exhaustion.

APPENDIX I

SAFEGUARDING

Oxford University Catholic Chaplaincy Safeguarding code of practice

1. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE CODE

1. The Oxford University Catholic Chaplaincy is committed to providing a safe environment for all adults at risk and children as an integral dimension of their Christian mission.
2. The Chaplains may encounter adults at risk and children at public Masses and other public events organised by the Chaplaincy. The Chaplains may also, in the conducting of their pastoral ministries, be party to disclosures.
3. In respect to children, the Chaplains cannot act 'in loco parentis' and ultimate responsibility for children rests with those who have parental responsibility. In respect to disclosures, the Chaplains are committed to responding according to the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency and reporting to the Jesuits in Britain.
4. Adults at risk include the elderly, the mentally ill, and people in social difficulty who at times come into the Chaplaincy or call at the front door. The Chaplains are committed to respond to all in a respectful way whilst acknowledging that in only rare cases will people at risk be the direct pastoral responsibility of the Chaplaincy.
5. This Code of Practice seeks to support activities organised by and held at the Chaplaincy, attended by adults at risk and children and to offer assurances to staff, students, volunteers and visitors that safeguarding will be dealt with effectively and in a timely manner. It does not cover events or activities organised at the Chaplaincy by third parties, normally through a booking with the Newman Trust, including accommodation bookings.
6. The Chaplains are DBS checked.

2. ROLES AND PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Safeguarding Officer for the Chaplaincy is the Senior Chaplain.
2. The Chaplaincy has two Safeguarding Representative appointed through the Archdiocese of Birmingham. They are a first point of contact for anyone with safeguarding concerns and assist students and University members with DBS applications. The Safeguarding Reps will report to the Senior Chaplain any matters of concern. In the case where the Senior Chaplain is themselves the subject of a complaint, the Reps will report directly to the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Lead. An Assistant Chaplain can be called on for support.

3. This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the Chaplaincy's Guidelines for Best Professional Practice Document, and the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency Practice Guidance Document.

3. CHAPLAINCY ACTIVITIES AND MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

1. To ensure the safety of children and adults at risk who attend or call at the Chaplaincy:
 1. All visiting priests celebrating Mass or other sacraments will be required to provide proof of good standing in their Order or Diocese; this includes priests wishing to celebrate a Mass in the Chaplaincy for an external visiting group. Priests celebrating Mass with no congregation need not be checked.
 2. No Chaplain or Chaplaincy member (student, University Members or adult parishioner) will be alone with a child.
 3. All physical contact with a child will be in public, age appropriate and respectful.
 4. Adults at risk will be engaged with courteously and with due consideration for their particular vulnerability even when it is clear that no concrete help can be provided.
2. To ensure the safety of the Chaplains and Chaplaincy members (students, University Members and adult parishioners):
 1. When possible, no single Chaplain or Chaplaincy member should be on their own in responding to a person at risk who themselves may put others at risk. The support of another should be sought before the person at risk is engaged with.
 2. Where possible, to avoid a situation of dependency, no Chaplain or Chaplaincy member should be considered the only person able to respond to a person at risk who is present regularly or calls regularly at the Chaplaincy.

4. RECEIVING OF DISCLOSURES

1. If in the course of their pastoral engagement with students or University members, a Chaplain receives a disclosure of historical or current abuse, he or she:
 1. will follow the procedures outlined in the *Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency* document, '[Management of Concerns and Allegations – Practice Guidance \(July 2021\)](#)' which includes the need for mandatory reporting, for proper record keeping and the need not to promise total confidentiality to the one making the disclosure.
 2. will inform the Senior Chaplain as Safeguarding Officer, who will report the disclosure/allegation to the Jesuits in Britain Safeguarding Coordinator. In situations of doubt the Safeguarding Officer will seek advice from either the Jesuits in Britain Safeguarding Coordinator or the Archdiocese of Birmingham Safeguarding Team. If the first action of the Safeguarding Officer is to contact the police, he will immediately afterwards inform the Jesuits in Britain Safeguarding Coordinator, and when appropriate the University.

2. The Chaplains are aware that Church requires mandatory reporting of allegations of abuse. All disclosures must be reported to the Jesuits in Britain. The name of the complainant should only be disclosed with their permission.

5. SUSPICION OF ABUSE

1. When Chaplains suspect that a student or other University member has been abused, they should seek advice as how best to support the Student or University Member. The following could be contacted under 'extended confidentiality' provision:

- A College Chaplain or Welfare Dean
- The University's Service Director of Student Welfare and Support Services
- The University's Director of HR
- The Archdiocesan Safeguarding Team
- The Jesuit Province's Safeguarding Coordinator

(See below for contact details)

6. RECORD KEEPING AND SECURE STORAGE OF INFORMATION

1. A safeguarding log, recording concerns and actions taken, will be maintained and stored securely in the Senior Chaplain's Office.

7. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND ONGOING TRAINING

1. All students and University members undertaking volunteering with children or adults at risk through the Chaplaincy will be asked to apply for a DBS.
2. The Chaplaincy will provide safeguarding training for all such volunteers.
3. The Chaplaincy will not signpost students to volunteering organisations which do not have safeguarding training available.

8. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

1. This policy will be reviewed annually at the end-of-year meeting of the Oxford Board of the Oxford and Cambridge Education Board.

CONTACTS

Oxford University Catholic Chaplaincy Safeguarding Officer: Fr Damian Howard SJ, Senior Chaplain, 07794 318844, dhowardsj@jesuit.org.uk

Oxford University Catholic Chaplaincy Safeguarding Reps: Nicola Paul nicola.paul@linacre.ox.ac.uk and Kathryn Wills kathrynawills@ntlworld.com

Oxford Board member with responsibility for the oversight of Safeguarding policy and practice: Helen Swift; 01865 276871, helen.swift@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk

Archdiocese of Birmingham Safeguarding Team (Head of Safeguarding – Claire Reay, Safeguarding Advisor – Sarah Fullard, Safeguarding Advisor – Beverley Lewis) 0121 230 6240, safeguarding@rcaob.org.uk

College Chaplains <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/chaplaincy>

Oxford University Student Welfare & Support Services Co-Directors: Kathy Noren and Jane Harris; 01865 280444, director.swss@admin.ox.ac.uk

Oxford University Director of HR: Dr Markos Koumaditis; 01865 270152, director.hr@admin.ox.ac.uk

The Jesuit Province's Safeguarding and Professional Conduct Coordinator: Julie Ashby-Ellis, 07715 669128, safeguarding@jesuit.org.uk

POLICY DOCUMENTS

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency

[Practice guidance](#)

Jesuits in Britain

[Our safeguarding policy | Jesuits in Britain](#)

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