

St Cuthbert's Catholic Church, Marlow Bridge

A parish of the Diocese of Ashfield

Parish Safeguarding Policy

Adopted by the Parish Pastoral Council on 17 August 2026 · For review annually

If you are worried about a child or an adult at risk right now, do not wait to read this document.

Speak to Bernadette Ruiz, our Parish Safeguarding Representative, on 01632 960 145. If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Our commitment

The parish of St Cuthbert's is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults at risk. We recognise that everyone who takes part in the life of this parish has a right to be safe, to be listened to, and to be treated with dignity and respect.

We accept and adopt in full the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Diocese of Ashfield and of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency. This document sets out how those apply here.

Who is responsible

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in the parish, not only of those holding a formal role. Nobody should assume that a concern is somebody else's to raise.

- **Parish Safeguarding Representative:** Bernadette Ruiz, 01632 960 145, safeguarding@stcuthbertsmarlowbridge.org.uk
- **Parish Priest:** Fr Dennis Okoye, 01632 960 118
- **Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser:** 01632 960 900

The Parish Safeguarding Representative is appointed by the Parish Priest in consultation with the diocese, holds an enhanced DBS check, and attends diocesan training. They are not expected to investigate concerns, and will not do so. Their role is to receive a concern, record it, and pass it to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

What we do

- Everyone in a role involving children or adults at risk is recruited safely: application, references, interview and an enhanced DBS check where the role requires it.
- Nobody begins such a role before their DBS check has been returned and cleared.
- All volunteers and staff in these roles complete diocesan safeguarding training and refresh it every three years.
- A register of roles requiring a DBS check is maintained by the Parish Safeguarding Representative and reviewed annually.
- Risk assessments are completed for parish activities involving children or adults at risk, and for the use of parish premises by outside groups.
- Outside groups hiring parish premises are required to confirm in writing that they hold their own safeguarding arrangements.

Raising a concern

If you are worried about the safety or wellbeing of a child or an adult at risk, whether the concern relates to something that happened in this parish or elsewhere, please speak to the Parish Safeguarding Representative.

You do not need to be certain that something is wrong before speaking to somebody. You will be listened to and taken seriously. It is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has taken place; it is your responsibility to pass on what has worried you.

If a child or adult tells you something, take it seriously, listen carefully, and do not promise confidentiality. Do not ask leading questions or attempt to investigate. Make a written note of what was said as soon as you can afterwards, using the words used, and pass it to the Parish Safeguarding Representative the same day.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999 without waiting for anybody else's permission or advice.

What happens next

Any concern is referred by the Parish Safeguarding Representative to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, normally within 24 hours. The diocese decides whether a referral should be made to the local authority or the police, and will make that referral where it is required.

The parish does not investigate safeguarding concerns and does not attempt to establish whether an allegation is true. Concerns about a member of clergy, an employee or a volunteer are handled by the diocese, not by the parish.

Confidentiality and records

Safeguarding records are kept securely, separately from other parish records, and are seen only by those who need to see them. Information is shared with the diocese and, where necessary, with statutory agencies. It is not shared more widely, including with the Parish Pastoral Council.

Information relating to safeguarding is special category data under UK GDPR. It is held and retained in accordance with diocesan guidance and the parish privacy notice.

Behaviour expected of everyone

- Treat every person with respect, and recognise that behaviour appropriate in one context may not be in another.
- Avoid being alone with a child or adult at risk where this can reasonably be avoided, and work within sight or hearing of others.
- Do not give lifts to a child alone, or invite a child to your home, without the knowledge and consent of a parent or carer and of the Parish Safeguarding Representative.
- Communicate with children through their parents or carers, not privately or through personal social media accounts.
- Do not photograph or film children at parish events without the written consent of a parent or carer.
- Challenge behaviour by others which falls short of these expectations, and report it.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Parish Pastoral Council, and sooner if diocesan guidance changes. It is published on the parish website and displayed on the noticeboard at the back of church.

Concerns in the parish

Bernadette Ruiz
01632 960 145
safeguarding@stcuthbertsmarlowbridge.org.uk

Outside the parish

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: 01632 960 900
NSPCC: 0800 800 5000
Police, in an emergency: 999

St Cuthbert's, Marlow Bridge. Registered charity number 1101234. **This is a fictional example produced for demonstration purposes, and is not a substitute for your own diocese's policy.**