

Syro-Malankara Catholic Church Apostolic Mission in the UK (England and Wales)

Safeguarding Communication Plan

Applies to England and Wales only

Review Cycle: Biennial

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1. Introduction

Communication is an essential element of the mission of the Church, which centres on the proclamation of the Gospel and the dignity of every human person. Effective safeguarding communication reflects this mission by promoting respect, justice, and protection for children, young people and adults who may be at risk.

The Syro-Malankara Catholic Church Apostolic Mission in the UK (England and Wales) is committed to creating safe and welcoming environments across all missions where safeguarding is embedded in the life and ministry of the Church.

This Safeguarding Communication Plan sets out how safeguarding messages, policies and guidance will be communicated throughout the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church Apostolic Mission in the UK (England and Wales). It aims to ensure that clergy, volunteers, mission communities and the wider public understand the Church's safeguarding responsibilities and know how to raise concerns or seek support.

The plan supports the Apostolic Mission's safeguarding policies and the safeguarding standards of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, including those promoted by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).

Safeguarding communication within the Apostolic Mission seeks to:

- Promote a culture of safeguarding and accountability
- Ensure transparency and openness in safeguarding matters
- Provide clear guidance on reporting safeguarding concerns
- Ensure that victims and survivors are supported and heard
- Equip clergy, volunteers and safeguarding representatives with the knowledge they need to safeguard others

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility across the entire mission community.

2. Target Groups

The Syro-Malankara Catholic Church Apostolic Mission in the UK (England and Wales) communicates safeguarding information with a number of key audiences.

These include:

Internal audiences

- Apostolic Visitator
- Clergy serving within the missions
- National Safeguarding Lead
- Mission Safeguarding Representatives
- Volunteers and catechists
- Employees and pastoral workers
- Mission leadership teams and committees

External audiences

- Mission communities and parishioners
- Children, young people and their parents or carers
- Adults who may be at risk and their carers
- Victims and survivors of abuse
- Statutory safeguarding authorities
- Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA)
- Other Catholic dioceses and safeguarding organisations
- The wider public and media

3. Safeguarding Messages

The Apostolic Mission seeks to communicate clear and consistent safeguarding messages across all its communities.

These include:

- What safeguarding means within the context of the Catholic Church
- The commitment of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church Apostolic Mission in the UK (England and Wales) to safeguarding
- The importance of creating safe environments in all mission activities
- The role of the National Safeguarding Lead and Mission Safeguarding Representatives
- Information on safeguarding policies and procedures of the Apostolic Mission
- How to report safeguarding concerns or allegations
- The referral process and engagement with statutory authorities
- The importance of safer recruitment and safeguarding training
- Support and care available to victims and survivors
- The responsibility of every member of the Church community to promote safeguarding

These messages will be communicated in clear and accessible language to ensure understanding across diverse mission communities.

4. Mission Communities and the Wider Community

Members of the mission communities should be able to easily access safeguarding information and know how to respond if concerns arise.

Communication with mission communities will aim to ensure that people understand:

- How safeguarding helps protect children, young people and adults at risk
- How to recognise signs of abuse or harm
- What to do if they or someone they know is being harmed
- How to report safeguarding concerns
- Where to access advice and support services
- The roles of safeguarding authorities and church safeguarding structures

Safeguarding communication will also promote awareness that safeguarding is an essential part of the Church's pastoral mission.

5. Victims and Survivors

The Syro-Malankara Catholic Church Apostolic Mission in the UK (England and Wales) is committed to placing victims and survivors at the centre of its safeguarding work.

Safeguarding communications will ensure that victims and survivors know:

- How to access confidential support
- Who to contact within the Apostolic Mission for safeguarding concerns
- How the Church will respond to disclosures or allegations
- How they may contribute to improving safeguarding practices
- The Apostolic Mission's commitment to dignity, compassion and justice

The Apostolic Mission recognises the importance of listening to the voices of victims and survivors in order to improve safeguarding culture and practice.

6. Church Personnel

Clergy, volunteers and those involved in mission leadership play an essential role in communicating and promoting safeguarding practices.

Communication with church personnel will ensure they understand:

- The safeguarding policies and procedures of the Apostolic Mission
- Good safeguarding practice and how to implement it
- Their responsibilities in safeguarding children and adults at risk
- Safer recruitment processes and DBS requirements
- How to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns
- Where to access safeguarding advice, training and guidance
- The role of the National Safeguarding Lead and Mission Safeguarding Representatives

Safeguarding training and guidance will support church personnel in fulfilling these responsibilities.

7. Methods of Communication

The Apostolic Mission uses a range of communication methods to ensure safeguarding messages reach all members of its communities.

These methods will be regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of diverse communities, including those whose first language is not English and those with disabilities.

7.1 Website

The Apostolic Mission website serves as a principal source of safeguarding information.

Safeguarding information on the website will include:

- Safeguarding policy documents and operational guidelines
- Contact details for the National Safeguarding Lead
- Contact details for Mission Safeguarding Representatives
- Guidance on reporting safeguarding concerns
- Information on safeguarding training
- Links to statutory agencies and support organisations
- Safeguarding statements and mission commitments
- Safeguarding news and updates

The website will be regularly updated to ensure that safeguarding information remains accurate and accessible.

7.2 Mission Communities

Each mission community will promote safeguarding awareness through:

- Safeguarding information displayed in church buildings or community spaces
- Safeguarding posters and contact information
- Leaflets and information materials
- Announcements within mission gatherings where appropriate
- Inclusion of safeguarding information in mission newsletters or bulletins
- Safeguarding awareness events or initiatives

Mission Safeguarding Representatives will support clergy and mission leaders in ensuring safeguarding information is visible and accessible.

7.3 Safeguarding Training

The Apostolic Mission will provide safeguarding training for:

- Clergy serving within the missions
- Mission Safeguarding Representatives
- Volunteers and catechists
- Employees and those working with children or adults at risk

Training will support participants in understanding safeguarding responsibilities and communicating safeguarding practices within mission communities.

7.4 Newsletters and Digital Communications

Safeguarding information may also be communicated through:

- Mission newsletters or bulletins
- Email communications
- Digital updates from the Apostolic Mission
- Safeguarding awareness campaigns or events

These communications may include updates on safeguarding policies, training opportunities and examples of good safeguarding practice.

7.5 Printed Materials

Printed safeguarding materials may include:

- Safeguarding policy statements
- Safeguarding posters and guidance materials
- Information leaflets for children, parents and adults at risk
- Safeguarding training resources
- Safeguarding reports or summaries

These materials will be made available where appropriate to support safeguarding awareness.

7.6 Safeguarding Leadership and Engagement

The National Safeguarding Lead will work with clergy, Mission Safeguarding Representatives and the leadership of the Apostolic Mission to promote safeguarding communication across the mission communities.

Activities may include:

- Safeguarding awareness meetings and events
- Engagement with safeguarding agencies and organisations
- Reporting on safeguarding activities and developments
- Consultation and feedback from mission communities

7.7 Media Communication

Where appropriate, safeguarding communications may also involve engagement with media and public communications.

Any communications regarding safeguarding cases or matters involving legal processes will be managed carefully in accordance with legal requirements, confidentiality obligations and safeguarding best practice.

8. Responsibility for Implementing the Plan

Overall responsibility for safeguarding within the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church Apostolic Mission in the UK (England and Wales) rests with the Apostolic Visitor.

Responsibility for implementing this communication plan is shared by:

- The Apostolic Visitor
- The National Safeguarding Lead
- Clergy serving within the missions
- Mission Safeguarding Representatives
- Mission leadership teams and volunteers involved in pastoral activities

All those involved in ministry within the Apostolic Mission share responsibility for promoting and communicating safeguarding practices.

9. Monitoring and Review

This Safeguarding Communication Plan will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that safeguarding information remains effective and accessible.

The National Safeguarding Lead will oversee the implementation of the plan and provide updates to the leadership of the Apostolic Mission where appropriate.

The plan will be reviewed periodically in light of:

- Updates to safeguarding policies and guidance
- Developments within the Catholic Church in England and Wales
- Feedback from mission communities and safeguarding representatives
- Recommendations from safeguarding bodies including the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA)

Regular review will help ensure that safeguarding communication continues to support a safe and caring mission community.