



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



# Safeguarding Learning Pathway

## Permission to Officiate

*Promoting a Safer Church*



Loving God,

We come to you in the knowledge that you hold all your children in unconditional love.

We lift to you those who are vulnerable and in need of protection. Give them your safety, comfort and peace.

We cry to you for those who are hurting and whose trust has been broken. Give them your healing, restoration and justice.

For those who have caused your children to stumble, lead them to seek your forgiveness and to enter into true repentance.

Thank you for all who give their time, knowledge, and skills to make our communities safer. Give them your wisdom, guidance and grace.

For ourselves, we ask you to give us your heart for the vulnerable, the oppressed, the voiceless and the forgotten.

Help us to see them as you see them; to value them as you value them, and to nurture and protect them as you desire.

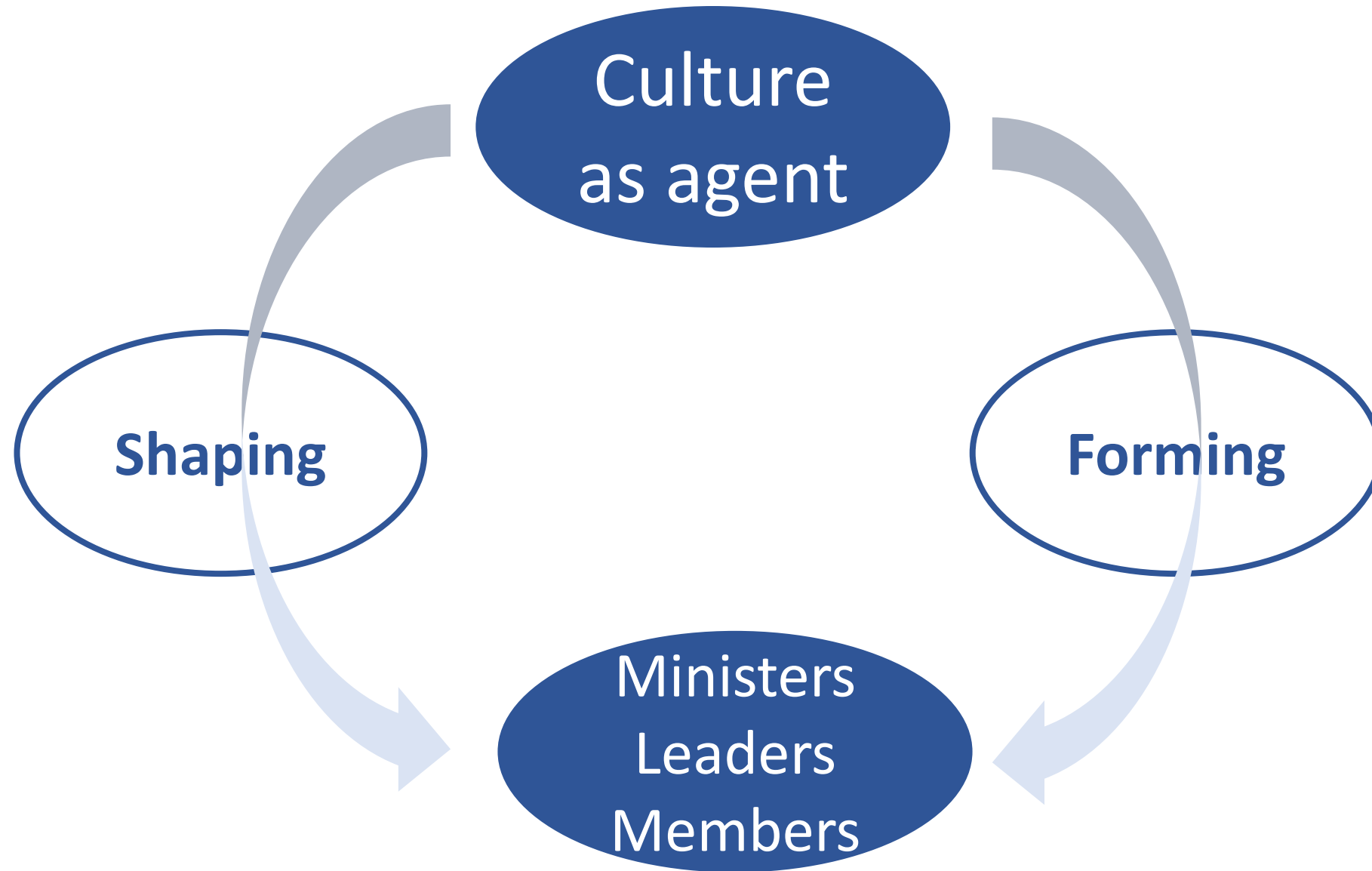
Help each one of us play our part in creating safer places for all your people. **Amen.**

# Learning Outcomes

- understand how healthy culture, and safe and effective leadership, shapes Christian communities that are healthy, safe and able to deliver high-quality safeguarding practices.
- evaluate their own practice and identify changes required that will improve their safeguarding practice and responses
- understand what a healthy Christian community looks like, how healthy communities keep people safe, and their role in shaping Christian communities that are healthy and safe.
- recognise how their own faith, beliefs, and values support good safeguarding behaviours.



***I learned it, I practised it, and then I passed it on to others***



***I learned it, I practised it, and then I passed it on to others***





# What is spiritual abuse?

“Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it.

However, holding a theological position is not in itself inherently spiritually abusive, but misuse of scripture, applied theology and doctrine is often a component of spiritually abusive behaviour.”

# A Spectrum of Behaviour





# Part 1

## Reflection and Discussion



## Part 1: Reflection and Discussion

1. If a faith culture is safe and healthy, what would you expect to see, hear, feel and experience as a member?
2. How do you see your role and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and creating a healthy culture?
3. How do you think a healthy culture can help to reduce risk of harm and prevent safeguarding incidents?

## Part 2: Theological Reflection

What has influenced your  
values and beliefs in relation to  
safeguarding?

## Part 3: Case Study



# Post Course Reflection

- What were your 3 top 'takeaways' from the session?
- What difference have I noticed in myself in my approach to safeguarding? (e.g., knowledge, attitude, language, importance/integration within my work)
- What opportunity do I have or could use, to create a healthy church community?
- What would it look like for me to demonstrate behaviours that give equal value to all?



The following slides  
are a reminder of  
some of the key  
safeguarding  
messages from  
previous courses



# RECOGNISE: the principles of adult safeguarding

## **Empowerment** –

Ensure people are in control of their decision making.

## **Accountability** –

Safeguarding is everybody's business.

**Partnership** – Working with communities, to prevent, detect, and report neglect and abuse.



**Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

## **Proportionality** –

Response should be least intrusive.

**Protection** – when working in the persons best interest, always ensure they are protected from harm as far as possible.



# Making Safeguarding Personal

## No Decision About Me, Without Me

- person-centred led
- outcome-focused
- engages the person and enhances involvement, choice and control
- improves quality of life, wellbeing and safety



**Making Safeguarding Personal**  
What good person-centred adult safeguarding  
practice looks like in Birmingham

Making Safeguarding Personal empowers the person to be included and have control over the process to the greatest extent possible in their circumstances

# Promoting the Adult's Voice – 'With Not To'

Every adult should:



- get help and support to report the abuse
- be asked their opinion if there are concerns
- feel listened to and taken seriously
- be given the information they need, in the way they need it
- be asked their views to directly inform next steps
- have advocacy support if they can't do this for themselves

# RECOGNISE: At Risk Adults

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult with care and support needs - due to age, illness or disability - or an adult who lacks the capacity to make informed decisions for him/herself - e.g. due to a cognitive impairment or substance misuse or because they are being controlled or coerced by someone else - who is experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect and unable to protect him/herself

*The Care Act 2014 (14.2)*

# Consent

- Seek advice and support from your Parish Safeguarding Co-Ordinator and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Officer – you do not need consent
- Obtain consent from an adult to make a referral to an external agency – unless:

1. Individual lacks the capacity to give consent
2. There is a public interest to share because others may be at risk of harm
3. There is a vital interest to share because there is an immediate risk to life

4. A crime has been or may be committed
5. An individual is unable to freely give consent due to control and coercion
6. There is a legal requirement to share (e.g. court order or law)

# RECOGNISE: the principles of child safeguarding ...

*Working  
Together to  
Safeguard  
Children 2018*  
defines  
safeguarding  
and promoting  
the welfare of  
children as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

# Recognise – Types of Abuse

emotional/psychological criminal  
social sexual verbal threats victim  
assault physical  
financial



# Recognise

## SIGNS AND INDICATORS

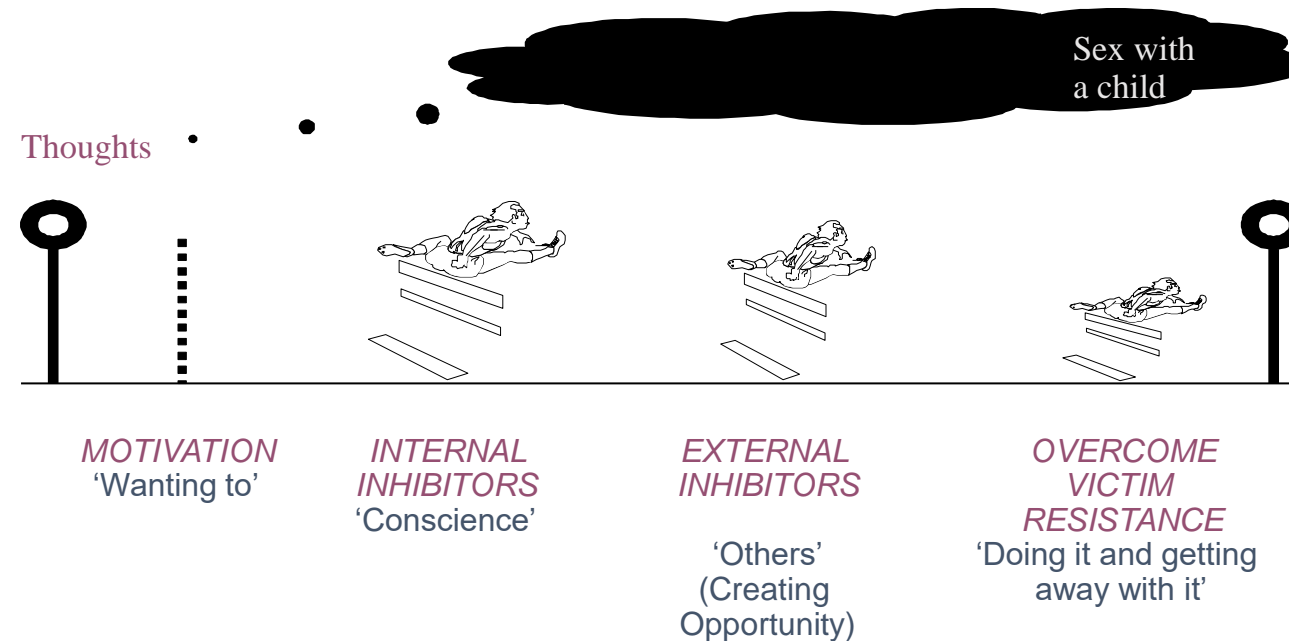
Neglect	Emotional	Physical	Sexual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tired/listless</li> <li>• Unkempt</li> <li>• Poor hygiene</li> <li>• Untreated medical conditions</li> <li>• Medical appointments missed</li> <li>• Constantly hungry or stealing food</li> <li>• Over eats when food is available</li> <li>• Poor growth</li> <li>• Poor/late attendance</li> <li>• Being regularly left alone or unsupervised</li> <li>• Dressed inappropriately for the weather condition</li> <li>• Having few friends and/or being withdrawn</li> <li>• Ill equipped for school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to thrive</li> <li>• Attention seeking</li> <li>• Over ready to relate to others</li> <li>• Low self esteem</li> <li>• Apathy</li> <li>• Depression/self harm</li> <li>• Drink/drug/solvent abuse</li> <li>• Persistently being over protective</li> <li>• Constantly shouting at, threatening or demeaning a child</li> <li>• Withholding love and affection</li> <li>• Regularly humiliating a child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained injuries</li> <li>• Injuries on certain parts of the body</li> <li>• Injuries in various stages of healing</li> <li>• Injuries that reflect an article used</li> <li>• Flinching when approached</li> <li>• Reluctant to change</li> <li>• Crying/ instability</li> <li>• Afraid of home</li> <li>• Behavioural extremes</li> <li>• Apathy/depression</li> <li>• Wanting arms and legs covered even in very hot weather</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age inappropriate sexual behaviour/knowledge/ promiscuity</li> <li>• Wary of adults/ running away from home</li> <li>• Eating disorders/depression/ self harm</li> <li>• Unexplained gifts/ money</li> <li>• Stomach pains when walking or sitting</li> <li>• Bedwetting</li> <li>• Recurrent genital discharge</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted diseases</li> </ul>
			



# The pathway to abuse

Finkelhor – 'Four pre-conditions to sexual abuse'

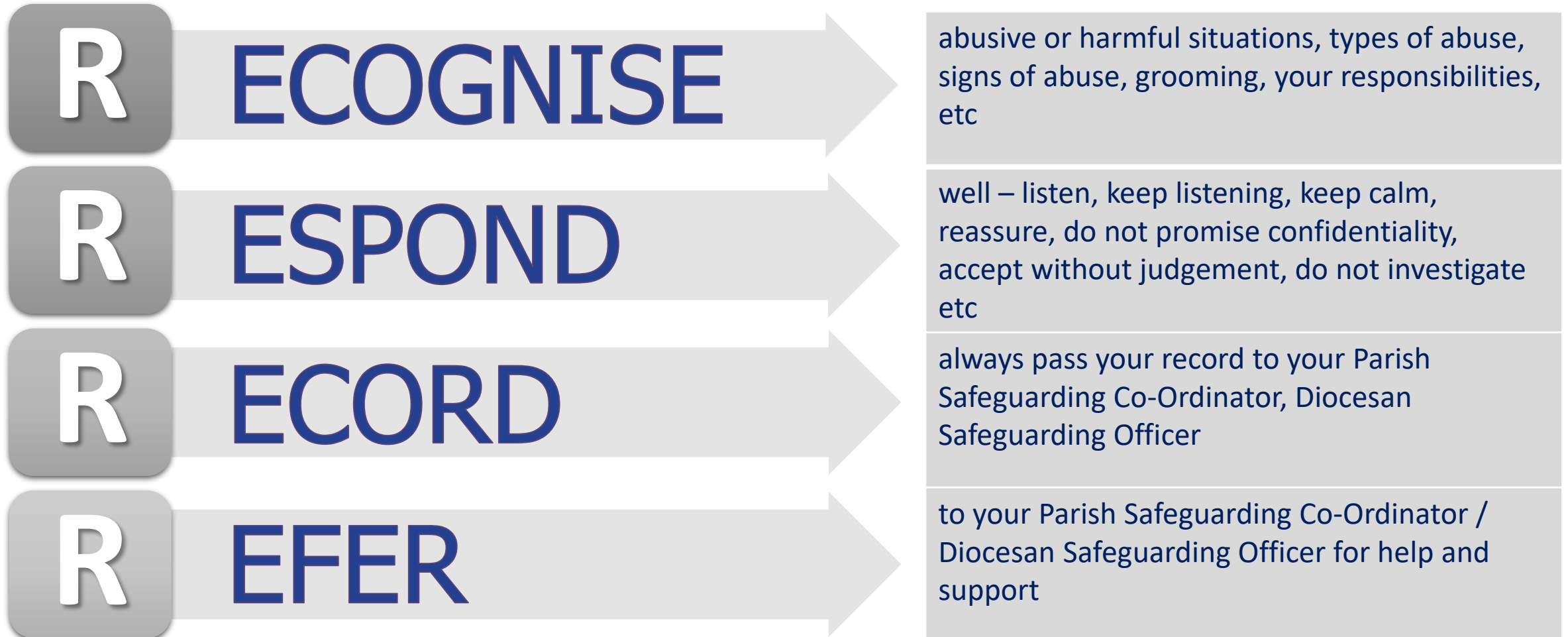
Adapted from: D Finkelhor Child Sexual Abuse: New Theory & Research 1986



# Grooming ....

.... is when a person uses the power, knowledge/‘secrets’ they have in a relationship to make or force someone do something they do not want to do or when one person gains the complete ‘friendship/trust/love’ of another person so that this person will do anything they ask without questioning or challenging them

# What to do...?



# RESPOND: Listening to someone disclosing abuse

## DO

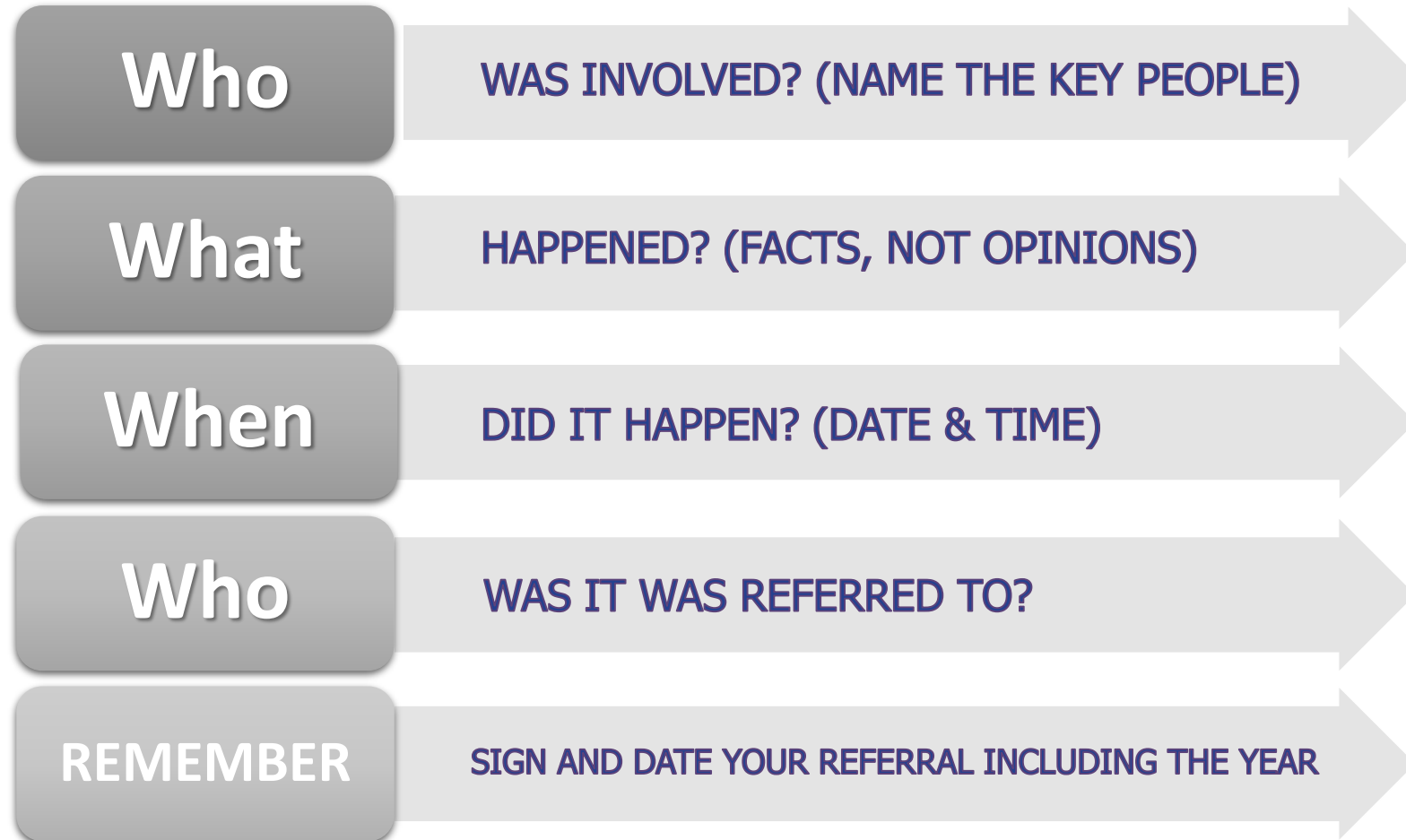
- Keep calm
- Listen carefully to what is being said – at the person's own pace
- Take it seriously and accept without judgement
- Reassure the person that they are not to blame and were right to speak out
- Explain what you need to do next
- Be honest – don't make promises you can't keep
- Be aware the person may have experienced harmful spiritual practices as well as other abuse
- Think carefully before offering scripture or prayer – especially if spiritual abuse is disclosed
- Be aware – it may be very difficult for a survivor to disclosure to a cleric or at church or the vicarage if the abuse happened in the church context
- Discuss with the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

# Respond: Listening to someone disclosing abuse

## **DON'T**

- Show shock or jump to conclusions
- Keep it secret
- Question or push the person into giving details of the abuse – you're a listener and receiver of the disclosure, not an investigator
- Suggest the use of Matthew 18 or that the person speaks to their abuser
- Alert the alleged abuser
- Discuss with others who are not directly involved in helping the person – maintain confidentiality

# Recording – the 4 W's





Dial 999 or 101



Are you unhappy, or seen or heard something about a child or adult that concerns you?



Say something!



**Tell** Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator  
Vicar



Record It



Report It



Do NOT alert alleged abuser



# Always involve the DSO if:

**You receive safeguarding information concerning a church officer i.e.:**

- all who hold the Bishop's licence, permission or commission
- all who hold parish positions of trust
- all who work with children, young people and adults at risk of neglect and/or abuse

**You receive information about an offender or someone who presents a risk to a child or an adult.**

# The Core Group

The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will convene a Core Group to manage every safeguarding concern or allegation involving a Church Officer



The core group works together and meets at intervals from the beginning of a concern or allegation being raised to the end.

# Safety Plans (formerly Safeguarding Agreements)

Where someone who poses a risk to others wants to attend church the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer carries out a risk assessment and drafts a safeguarding agreement.

This is managed by a 'reference group' in the parish – vicar, Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator & church wardens



# Serious Incident Reporting

*A safeguarding serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant harm to the charity's beneficiaries, employees, office holders, volunteers or to others who come into contact with the charity through its work. This includes where there are allegations or incidents of abuse of or risks to beneficiaries or others connected with the charity's activities. What is considered to be "significant" is a matter for the trustees to determine, as it will depend on the context of the charity, taking into account its operations, staff, finances and reputation*

*Practical Guidance: How to make a Safeguarding Serious Incident report to the Charity Commission, 2019, Page 2.*



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# Simpler parish safeguarding ...



The Church of England has lots of policies for safeguarding arrangements in its safeguarding e-manual

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual>

The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard simplifies these for the local church so that the PCC can be sure they have the correct arrangements in place.

# Working Safely

Abuse thrives  
in secrecy –  
**be open and  
transparent**  
in everything  
you do

**Be  
accountable**  
– to the  
Church  
Council,  
colleagues and  
people who  
attend your  
activity

**Risk  
assess**  
every  
activity to  
prevent  
significant  
harm

**Review**  
regularly –  
we can  
learn a lot  
from  
something  
that hasn't  
gone to plan



# Who's Who in your Parish?



Parish Safeguarding  
Co-Ordinator



Parish Domestic  
Violence Contact



Parish Identity  
Verifier (DBS)



 **Need to talk?**

We want everyone in our churches to feel safe and welcomed.  
If you're worried or unhappy about something,  
don't stay silent – come and talk to us.

**Worried?**  
Have you seen or heard something about a child or adult that concerns you?

**Say something!**

**Tell**  
Your Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator

**You can talk to:**  
your Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator

**In our church**  
you can also talk to:

**Other organisations**  
that may be able to help

**CHILDLINE**  
0800 1111

**BROKEN RAINBOW HELPLINE**  
0300 999 5428

**SAMARITANS**  
116 123

**FAMILY LIVES HELPLINE**  
0808 800 2222

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE**  
0808 2000 247

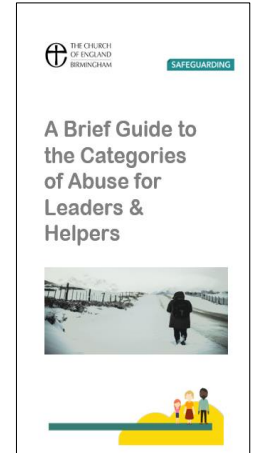
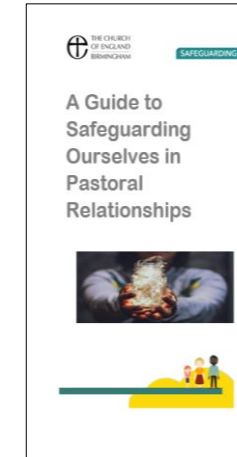
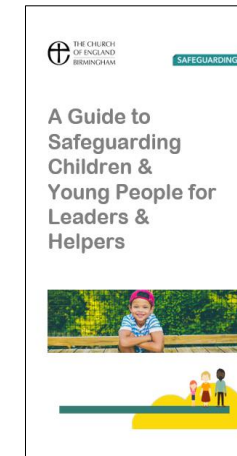
**STOP IT NOW! HELPLINE**  
0808 1000 900

**Tell**  
Bishops Safeguarding Advisor  
0121 427 1163

The Church of England is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults.

# Resources for parishes..



## Pocket Guides



Safer practice  
leaflets for  
leaders & helpers

There is more  
safeguarding information  
for parishes on our  
website

[www.cofebirmingham.com/info-for-parishes/safeguarding/](http://www.cofebirmingham.com/info-for-parishes/safeguarding/)



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### Info for Parishes

- [Parish Support Services](#)
- [Finance & Governance](#)
- [Property Team](#)
- [Communications](#)
- [Living Generously](#)
- [Interfaith](#)

## Parish Safeguarding

[Promoting a Safer Church](#) is the Church of England's safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults and must be adopted by every PCC.

### What does a PCC need to do?

The Parish Safeguarding Handbook, used together with The Church of England – Birmingham's supplement, outlines what the local church must do. The Parish Safeguarding Dashboard helps the church to implement these requirements.

- [+ Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#)
- [+ The Church of England - Birmingham Parish Handbook Supplement](#)