

COTTESMORE BENEFICE

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (CHILDREN and VULNERABLE ADULTS) - “Child” & “children” are used in the text but are applicable to both. (Revised and updated February 2026)

1. WE RECOGNISE the need to provide an environment within which children and young people feel that they are safe, are valued, and feel confident about asking for help or support on any matter.
2. WE RECOGNISE the need for volunteers to assist with the work of the parish and the necessity for careful recruitment and selection.
Furthermore we recognise the importance that all volunteers and workers, paid or otherwise, understand the policies that are in place, and are fully acquainted with the procedures to be followed.
3. WE RECOGNISE that all those working with children should understand fully the issues involved in working with children.
4. WE RECOGNISE the need for training, and hope that all those involved will receive training in at least one of the aspects involved in the care of young people.
5. WE ACCEPT that cases of abuse may be revealed and these will be reported in accordance with ISA and diocesan guidelines whenever they are encountered.
6. WE RECOGNISE the special care that victims of abuse, whether still children or now adult, require.
We also accept that we have a duty of care towards any who may have abused young people, and whilst offering support and compassion will ensure that they do not participate in our children's work.
7. WE FEEL that it is in the interests of all who come into contact with our parish work, be they parents, visitors or volunteers, that our policies and the procedures for implementing them are clearly set out and displayed on our notice board.
8. WE ACCEPT that it is our responsibility to extend or modify our policy as the work within our parish evolves, and to ensure that other organisations who from time to time may use our facilities have in place, and adhere to, equivalent policies. Should there be a conflict between the policy of the benefice and that of the diocese, then the diocesan policy will prevail.

Implementation of the policies

1. THE ENVIRONMENT

We will ensure that any building which is used for children's work is warm, well lit and suitable for the purpose, and equipped with all safety precautions that the law requires. We will ensure that safety exits are not blocked by our activities, and that toilet facilities are labelled and their locations explained to the children.

Whenever an activity is in progress, if there are children of both genders whose parents or guardians are not present, there will be helpers of both genders present, and in a ratio of at least 1 adult to 8 children. No helper will be alone with a child in a room whose door is closed at any time. In emergency situations where there is only one helper of a gender the child will be asked to name a friend to be with them.

Where there are invited speakers to participate in an activity we will make them aware that we have a child protection policy in place and will be introduced to the children by name before the activity commences.

A record will be kept on each occasion of all children who attend group activities, together with their addresses and telephone numbers.

Any other person who may appear, who is not known to anyone present at the activity will be approached by the leaders and asked to present credentials. If there is no good reason for them to be there, they will be asked to leave.

Whilst children are present there will be no consumption of alcohol or any illegal substance, nor abusive language between workers. Children using abusive language will be warned and parents notified. In extreme circumstances parents will be notified that their children will not be allowed to attend activities for their own and others safety. Knives or offensive weapons will be confiscated and returned only to parents. There will be no inappropriate reading matter present in the building.

Whenever food is prepared for the children, it will be done in clean surroundings, and supervised by someone who holds the basic Food Hygiene certificate. A first aid kit will be provided and where possible a qualified first aider.

Should the activity involve movement outside the building, all movements will be supervised by at least two adults.

Where the activity involves instruction ideally this should take place without physical contact. In activities such as bellringing contact should only be in exceptional circumstances or where the safety of the child is at risk.

Drivers involved with the carriage of children other than their own will have checked with their insurance company that this is covered. Seat belts will be worn by all passengers and child seats used where this is appropriate. Other than in a case of emergency no child will be transported alone in a vehicle other than by his or her parent or with the express consent of that child's parent. In emergency situations the child will occupy the rear seat.

Children will not be allowed to travel on an outing unless their parent has signed the parental consent form for that trip which has been informed of all arrangements relating to that outing.

2. VOLUNTEER WORKERS

We will ensure that all those having charge of children have been DBS (enhanced) cleared. Should extra helpers be recruited for special occasions, they will not have sole charge of any children.

All those involved in activities will have seen a copy of this document, and have been given opportunity to seek guidance over any portion of it which is unclear to them. This document will be reviewed annually by the PCCs to implement any changes that may be required.

3. ISSUES INVOLVING CHILDREN

We will ensure that before any volunteer, other than those already working with children in other capacities, takes charge of a group he or she will have discussed the situations that may arise in this particular area of work. This discussion will normally be with the Rector or a person nominated by him.

For the protection of both children and workers a written record (two copies) will be made, at the time, of any incident that may later have a bearing on a child's welfare. This will be done on the Parish incident record form, one copy of which will be handed to the Rector for safekeeping.

4. TRAINING

We shall endeavour to arrange for workers to gain qualifications in appropriate areas. Ideally all involved should have a basic First aid certificate. The PCCs will assist with fees where necessary.

Safeguarding Officers will bring to the notice of volunteers any appropriate training courses taking place locally, and see that volunteers are aware of what their reactions should be to inappropriate behaviour by children in their charge.

5. CASES OF ABUSE

We will require any worker who receives direct information from a child, or has reason to suppose that there may be abuse to communicate, within 24 hours, such knowledge or suspicions to the Rector, or if that is inappropriate or he is away, to one of the Churchwardens.

They will decide which of the lead agencies (as listed below) shall be contacted in the first instance, and if appropriate inform the parents and diocesan authorities. In cases where a child has passed information directly to a worker the child will be reassured that he or she has done the right thing, and will not be questioned further by the worker. Written notes on what has been said, seen or suspected will be made as soon as possible afterwards. Should a worker be involved the Rector or Churchwarden will inform that worker that an allegation of abuse has been made, request that he or she does not work with children until the matter is resolved and follow DBS and diocesan guidelines.

6. VICTIMS OF ABUSE AND SUBJECTS OF ALLEGATIONS

We will make it our duty to ensure that all workers who have children in their charge who are known to have been abused are aware, in confidence, of the situation and will have been advised on the particular problems and needs that such children may have.

We will offer help and advice to anyone who has been the subject of an allegation, whatever the outcome.

7. PUBLICITY

We will publish copies of our Policies and Procedures on the Church notice boards.

8. UPDATING

We will review this policy whenever we embark upon new areas of work with children, and at least annually. The PCCs will be responsible for examining and any changes felt necessary will be implemented at their next meeting.

In the event of other organisations using any of our facilities for regulated activities, the PCCs will satisfy themselves that the body concerned has and observes satisfactory policies, and will refuse or rescind permission if they are not satisfied.

Agencies		Safeguarding Officers			
Police	0116 222 2222	Church	Clipsham	Sue Thomas	07885 046449
			Cottesmore	Caroline Simmonds	01572 812202
Rutland CC	01572 722 577		Exton	Bernie Wallace	01572 812956
					07858 484918
			Greetham	Diane Creasey	01572 812079
Childline	0800 1111		Stretton	Cassandra Pattison	07757 311330
NSPCC	0808 800 5000	Diocese		Victoria Kellett	01733 887040
Samaritans	116 123 (open 24 hours)	Rector		Rev Anthony Oram	01572 812948