



Safeguarding procedure for all staff, volunteers, contractors and Community

**Safeguarding children, young people and adults who
may be vulnerable to abuse and/or neglect**

Reviewed and updated October 2024

**This document must be read alongside the York Minster Policy and
Guidance document**

**NB. Child choristers at York Minster are safeguarded as outlined in:
York Minster Child Chorister Safeguarding Policy and Procedure**

The Chapter of York, the working name for York Minster,
Registered Charity No. 1201499 of 8-9 Minster Yard, York, YO1 7HH

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Scope

- This procedure must be followed by all those who work or volunteer at York Minster, including clergy and contractors when there are concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children, and adults who may be vulnerable to abuse or neglect, incl:
 - Concerns or suspicions about abuse or neglect (see definitions)
 - Concerns or suspicions about domestic abuse
 - Concerns or suspicions about the behaviour of someone who works with children or adults who may be vulnerable
- All new staff and volunteers must receive induction training on their safeguarding responsibilities on commencing in their role

The Chapter of York’s safeguarding policy and procedures are informed by, and compliant with, the Church of England published policy and practice guidance. The full, up to date, list of Church of England policy and practice guidance documents can found at: [Policy and practice guidance | The Church of England](#)

York Minster Safeguarding - people and contact details

In an emergency, call the Police on 999

- **Cathedral Safeguarding Officer: Dee Cooley**
 - Ext dir line: 01904 559542
 - Int extn: 5420
 - Mobile: 07843339980
- **Pastoral lead: Canon Tim Goode – Canon for Congregational Discipleship and Nurture**
 - Email: nurture@yorkminster.org or patothecanons@yorkminster.org
- **Minster Police**
 - Ext dir line: 01904 557222
 - Int extn: 2220
- **Diocese of York Safeguarding Officer: Rob Marshall**
 - Tel: 01904 699524
 - Email: safeguarding@yorkdiocese.org
- **Diocese of York Safeguarding Team**
 - Website: [Diocese of York / Safeguarding / Contact Safeguarding](#)
- **Church of England National Safeguarding team**
 - Website: [A Safer Church | The Church of England](#)
 - Email: safeguarding@churchofengland.org
- **City of York (Safeguarding Children)**
 - Children’s MASH: 01904 551900 (9-5, mon-fri)
 - 01609 780780 (out of hours)
- **City of York (Safeguarding Adults)**
 - Adult Social Care: 01904 555111
 - 01609 534527 (out of hours)

Safeguarding leads at York Minster

Cathedral Safeguarding Officer

Chapter Safeguarding Lead (clergy): Canon Tim Goode; (lay) Jonathan Britton

All members of the clergy team

York Minster Police

Your line manager(s), directors or activity leaders can also help you to think through your concerns.

YOU MUST ENSURE THAT YOU REPORT ANY SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS WITHIN 24 HOURS

Support for anyone who has been the victim of abuse, and/or if you want to tell someone about abuse that has happened to you

Talking about experiencing abuse is never easy, you may have tried to tell people before. We hope that you feel safe to talk to us at York Minster. We have worked with the Diocese of York to make a set of promises to you – a charter:

This is our promise to you

If you have something you want to talk about it is important you feel you:

- Are believed and are listened to
 - Are valued as a whole person
 - Are able to make choices and decisions about what to tell us, and what happens
 - Understand that we cannot always keep information confidential – we will tell you who needs to be told, and why
 - Are told about what is happening in your case regularly
 - Are well supported in choosing if you want a referral or an introduction to other people who can help you e.g. the Police, other agencies who can help
 - Are supported to be able to provide information, or talk to someone (if you wish to) to explain how what happened made you feel and what it means to you now
 - Are supported in continuing to come to Church, if that is what you want to do
 - Are given support to find help from victims' support services, like people or charities who can help you
 - Are offered support by the Church from someone specially trained as a listener, if that is what you want
 - Are given clear information about what has happened as a result of what you have told us
- If you want to report abuse**, you can use the list on page 3.

IN AN EMERGENCY PHONE THE POLICE ON 999

If you would like to get support from someone else, outside the Church, here are some agencies that can help:

- [Building Hope](#): help and advice from an independent advocacy service – 0300 110 110
- [Samaritans](#): Tel 116 123 (24 hrs)
- [Childline](#): 0800 1111
- [MACSAS](#) (Minister And Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors): 08088 01 03 40
- [Survivor Voices](#): via webpage
- [National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#): 0808 2000 247
- [IDAS](#) (Independent Domestic Abuse Services) North Yorkshire: 03000 110 110
- [Survive](#) North Yorkshire: 01904 638813
- [Safe Spaces](#) is a free and independent service, providing a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused by someone in the Church or as a result of their relationship with the Church Tel: **0300 303 1056** Email: safespaces@firstlight.org.uk

York Minster safeguarding procedures and processes

PART 1: All clergy, staff, volunteers, contractors and community – see flowchart 1

The first principle is that you MUST report safeguarding concerns within 24 hours. You must not investigate – only proper authorities, and trained professionals, should do so.

What to do if...

You have concerns about possible abuse (including domestic abuse and allegations against a colleague or clergy):

- In an emergency, call emergency services 999.
- You can go directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO), Minster Police, or, if urgent, make an immediate referral to police or appropriate care services (see below).
- If you are unsure about your concerns (e.g. whether or not they are safeguarding related), consult your line manager, and decide together when to seek advice from the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer; or, speak to Minster Police.
- Always inform the person you spoke with (e.g. line manager), and the CSO, of your actions.
- Keep a record of what happened, your concerns, who you spoke with and your actions.
- Only tell those who need to know. NOT the person any allegations relate to.

A child, young person or adult wishes to disclose they have been abused

- Listen. Keep listening. Do not question or investigate.
- Do not promise confidentiality; tell them we need to share this, but only with those who can help to protect them.
- Assure them they are not to blame.
- Tell them what you are going to do and that they will be told what happens.
- Make careful notes of what is said (using the words of the person disclosing), record dates, times, events, who you spoke with and your actions. Sign and date your notes.
- Report it to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer. If they are not available, alert the Canon in Residence.
- Only tell those who need to know. NOT the person the allegations relate to.

Things to remember

- Anyone under 18 years is a child in law.
- Treat everyone with respect, setting a positive example and respect personal space and privacy.
- Ensure your actions are transparent and open, and cannot be misunderstood.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour, regardless of position or authority.
- Do not put anyone, including yourself, in a vulnerable or compromising situation.
- Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- You must not keep allegations or suspected abuse secret.
- You can get advice and support from the person you report to, or the CSO

If you have concerns about a person with whom you have a close relationship, e.g. familial, marital, friendship, please pass all information onto your manager immediately.

York Minster safeguarding procedures and processes

PART 2: Line managers, clergy and Minster Police

Your role is to be the first port of call for staff and volunteers working out of hours, or who are uncertain, unable, or not confident enough, to take concerns directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.

What to do if.....

You have concerns about possible abuse (including domestic abuse and allegations against a colleague or clergy):

- In an emergency, call emergency services 999.
- You must go directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.
- If this is not possible, and the matter involves a Church Officer, particularly a member of clergy, you must inform the Diocese of York on 01904 699524 or safeguarding@yorkdiocese.org
- Keep a record of what happened, your concerns, who you spoke with and your actions.
- Only tell those who need to know. NOT the person the allegations relate to.

A clergy/staff member, volunteer, contractor or Community member tells you they have concerns about possible abuse (including allegations against a colleague or clergy):

- In an emergency, call emergency services 999.
- Reassure the individual that they were right to talk to you.
- You should go directly to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer to inform them.
- Make sure the individual has kept a record of what made them concerned.
- Keep your own record of what happened, who you spoke with, and your actions.
- Only tell those who need to know. NOT the person the allegations relate to.

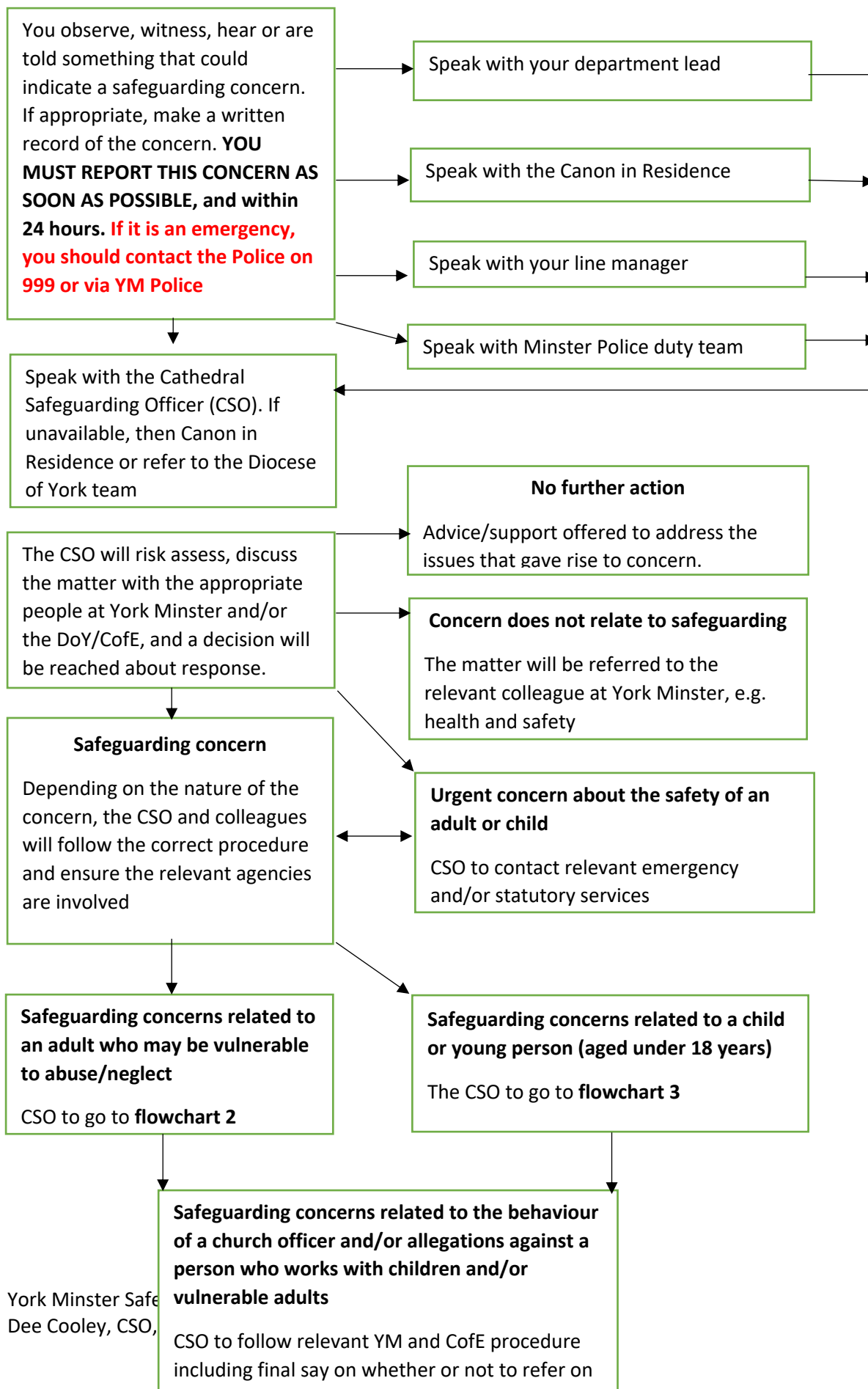
Things to remember (in addition to those on **page 9**)

- Individuals may feel very upset or angry about the things they are discussing with you. Please try to provide support through the process, or refer them to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer for advice and support.
- You can get advice and support from the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.
- Do not attempt to investigate.
- Simply listen. Do not ask leading questions. If you need to clarify a point, just ask an open question.

Those working with groups of children who are accompanied by teachers/group leaders, e.g. school visits or events, must report concerns to the teacher/group leader responsible for the child(ren); and must report the incident and actions to the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.

It is also your responsibility to ensure that you, and your team, observe safer working practice guidance in recruitment and behaviours. If you need advice or support with this, please contact the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer.

Flowchart 1: York Minster safeguarding procedure



Responding to safeguarding concerns related to an adult who may be vulnerable to abuse/neglect

Introduction

Section 6 of [The Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure \(2016\)](#) defines a 'vulnerable adult' as:

"...a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired..."

The Church of England definition recognises that any adult can be vulnerable at any point in their life, regardless of ability, age, gender, health, marital status, sexuality, race, culture, etc.

Vulnerability is often hidden, and can be affected by a number of factors, for example: temporary (e.g. unemployment, short-term health problem or housing issues, etc.); incident based (e.g. bereavement, breakdown of a relationship, traumatic event); and/or, longer standing or permanent characteristics (e.g. physical or learning disability, mental ill-health, chronic abuse, etc.). These can be interchangeable, and inter-react.

It is right that individuals, regardless of their background, abilities, needs etc. are able to be involved in worship and other activities at York Minster. Additionally, individuals may seek solace, safety and sanctuary in a church setting. It would be reasonable and right for individuals to believe that all the people they encounter in the setting will be trustworthy, honest and safe. This can leave some individuals more vulnerable to, and at increased risk of, a range of abusive acts or negligence. As an institution it is important that we recognise this dynamic and take an organisational and individual responsibility to safeguard all those who may be vulnerable.

What to do if.....

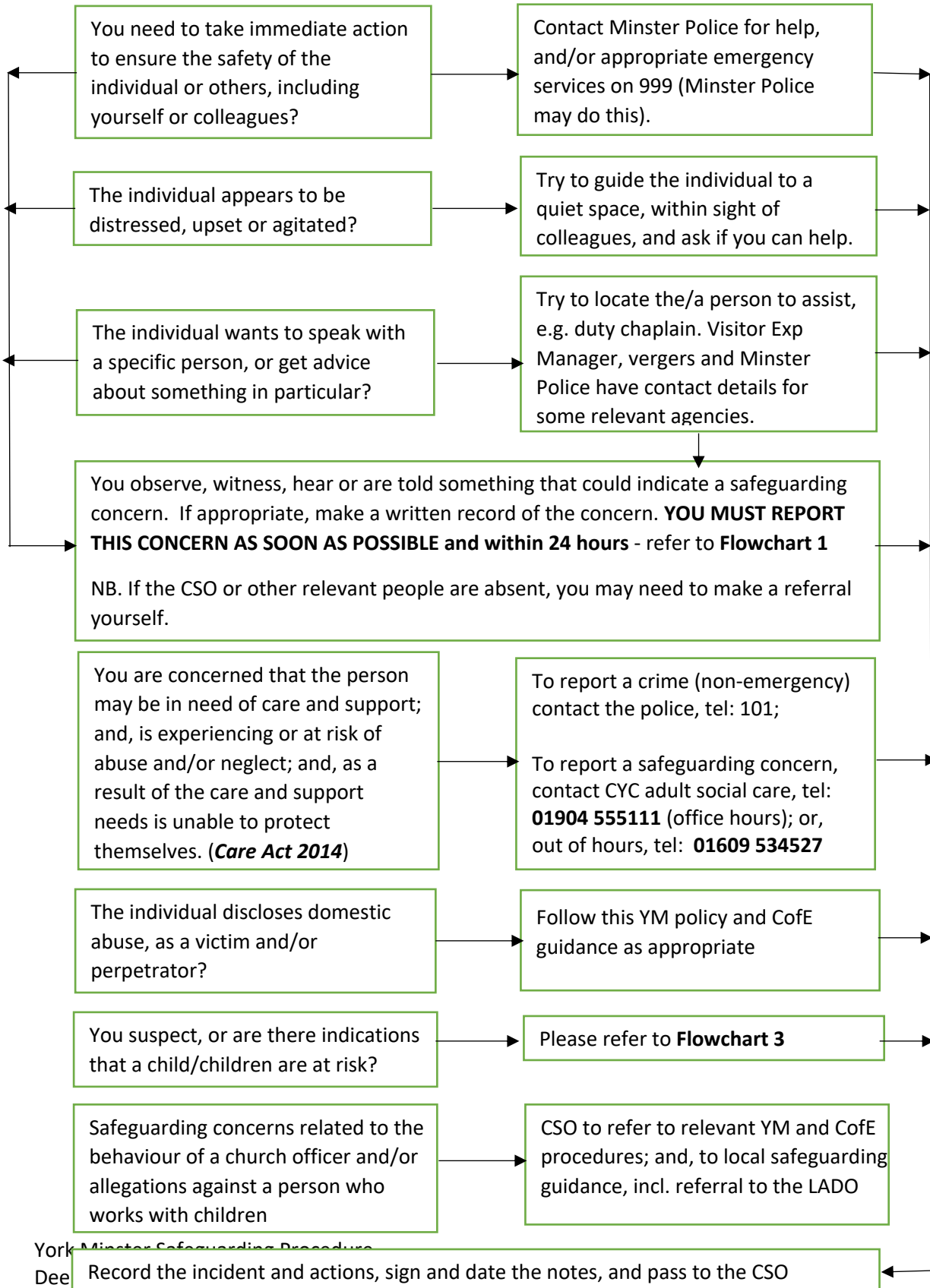
NB. If you have concerns that an adult may be "at risk" as defined under the Care Act (2014), you should refer to the section below in "**Safeguarding adults: statutory duties and responses**".

- See **Flowchart 2** for the processes
- Confidentiality
 - Dealing with concerns related to adults can be a little complicated. For example, an adult may say that they wish to speak with you, but it must be confidential. It is best if you tell them that you can't always keep things confidential.
 - It may be clear that the matter is not a safeguarding concern that needs to be escalated. In which case, you can listen, and keep the matter private.

- If it isn't clear, you can always speak with someone else, including the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO). You could keep the individual's name anonymous, and still get advice on what to do.
- The CSO will advise you if it is a concern that needs to be taken further, and will support you with this, for example, the individual may be disclosing domestic abuse and there are children involved which would then constitute a child safeguarding concerns.
- Referral to services
 - Some adults are recognised as being particularly at risk, and there may be statutory guidance on dealing with this. It is important that referrals are made to statutory services. Again, the CSO can help.
- Managing difficult situations
 - Some individuals who are particularly vulnerable can present with quite unusual behaviours, which may seem difficult. It is important that we try to ensure the safety of the individual as well as ourselves and colleagues, whilst trying not to escalate the situation. York Minster Police colleagues are trained in managing difficult situations, and de-escalation strategies. In a situation requiring such assistance, you or a colleague should immediately alert the York Minster Police at the police cabin.

Flowchart 2: York Minster procedures and processes - responding to safeguarding concerns related to an adult who may be vulnerable to abuse/neglect

NB. An adult may simply wish to speak with someone about something that is troubling them, or find a quiet space to pray and/or reflect



Responding to safeguarding concerns related to a child or young person (aged under 18 years)

Introduction

Section 6 of [The Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure \(2016\)](#) defines a 'child' as:

“a person aged under 18”

The Church of England definition, alongside the legal definition, recognises that children and young people are vulnerable to abuse and neglect due to their age.

Vulnerability is often hidden, and can be affected by a number of family factors, for example: temporary, e.g. short-term health problem or housing issues, etc.; incident based, e.g. bereavement, breakdown of a family, traumatic event; and/or, longer standing or permanent characteristics, e.g. physical or learning disability, mental ill-health, chronic abuse, etc. These can be interchangeable, and inter-react.

Other vulnerabilities for children and young people include: a communication barrier, e.g. English is not their first language; being perceived as “different”, e.g. refugees or asylum seekers; and, being perceived as “troublesome”, e.g. young offenders or children excluded from education.

It is right that children and young people are able to be involved in worship and other activities at York Minster. Additionally, children and young people may seek assistance from the Church. It would be reasonable and right for children and young people, and their parents/carers, to believe that individuals encountered in the setting will be trustworthy, honest and safe. This can leave some children and young people more vulnerable to, and at increased risk of, grooming behaviours, a range of abusive acts or negligence. As an institution it is important that we recognise this dynamic and take an organisational and individual responsibility to safeguard all those who may be vulnerable.

What to do if.....

NB. If you have concerns that a child or young person could be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm, as defined under the Children Act (1989), you should refer to the section on “**Safeguarding children and young people: statutory duties and responses**”.

- See **Flowchart 3** (below) for the processes
- Confidentiality
 - When dealing with concerns related to children and young people, it is best to say that you cannot guarantee confidentiality. For example, a child may say that they wish to speak with you, but it must be confidential. It could be that they simply wish to tell you about a sibling’s surprise birthday present! However, if they disclose anything that is related to safeguarding concerns then you **MUST** pass it on. It is best if you tell them that you can’t always keep things confidential

and that, depending on what they say, you may need to tell the right people – you could explain this using the birthday surprise example above.

- It may be clear that the matter is not a safeguarding concern that needs to be escalated. In which case, you can listen, and keep the matter private.
 - If it isn't clear, you can always speak with someone else, including the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer (CSO). You could keep the child's name anonymous, and still get advice on what to do. The CSO will advise you if it is a concern that must be taken further, and will support you with this.
- Referral to services
 - Some children and young people may be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm (see below in Safeguarding children and young people: statutory duties and responsibilities). It is not your role to investigate this, but it is your role to pass your concerns on so the right people can investigate.
 - Managing your feelings
 - Dealing with safeguarding concerns can feel very stressful, and can be upsetting or anger provoking. Make sure you take care of yourself and colleagues. It is important to speak with people about your feelings, but to maintain confidentiality. You can speak with the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer or Pastoral lead; or, if you prefer, your line manager.

Managing allegations against adults who work with children

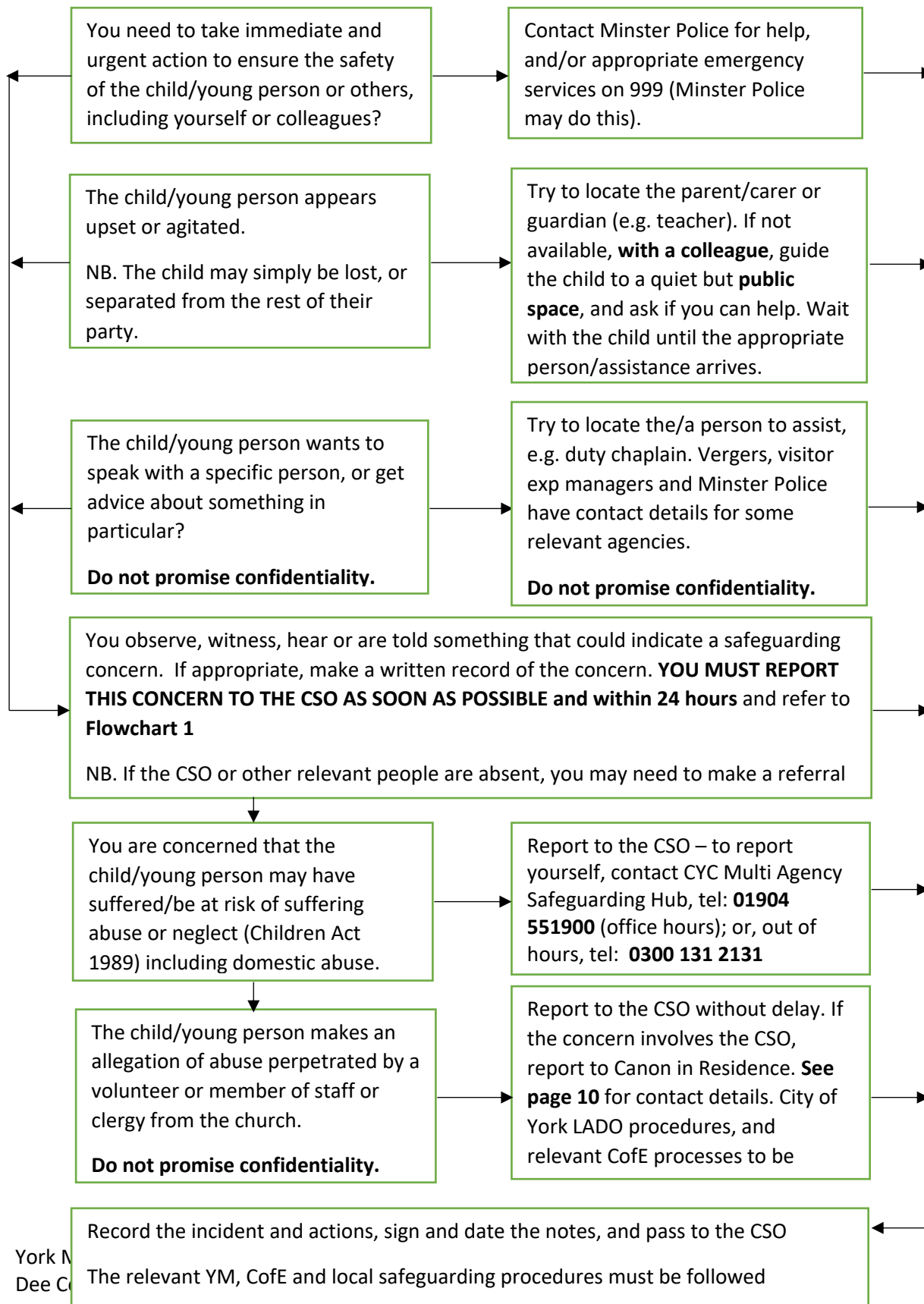
On receipt of an allegation against an adult who works with children, the CSO will:

- Refer to relevant CofE policy and practice guidance;
- Consult the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, if appropriate;
- Follow the City of York procedures related to referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

City of York Council LADO: [Allegations against childcare workers - advice for professionals – CYSCP \(saferchildrenyork.org.uk\)](https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk)

Flowchart 3: York Minster procedures and processes - responding to safeguarding concerns related to children and young people

NB. The age and understanding of the child or young person will impact on the response required. The older a child is, in age and/or understanding, the greater their capacity to seek advice and support independently; or, to want someone to speak with.



Charity Commission: Serious Incident Reporting

It is important that ALL safeguarding concerns are reported within 24 hours to the CSO or other named in this procedure. Failure to do so may result in Chapter failing to meet its legal responsibilities as trustees of a registered charity.

The Chapter of York has registered with the Charity Commission. The members of Chapter are the charity trustees and responsible for compliance with the law and the Charity Commission's guidance, including reporting any "Serious Incidents" occurring within their charity.

The Church of England (2022 – approved by the CC 2021), [Guidance for Cathedral Chapters: Identifying Safeguarding Serious Incidents and Reporting to the Charity Commission](#) explains how to identify a **safeguarding Serious Incident** and sets out the procedure for reporting to the Charity Commission. The requirement to report a Serious Incident to the Charity Commission is in addition to any requirement to notify the police, local authority, statutory agency or other authority; and CofE National Safeguarding Team.

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 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. Further information can be found in the guidance document.

Safeguarding Serious Incidents must be reported **promptly, and in a timely manner**. Whilst sufficient information should be known to make the report meaningful, in some circumstances, it may be appropriate to make a brief initial report, following this up later.

In addition to reporting its own safeguarding Serious Incidents, cathedrals are also required to consider reporting serious incidents that take place in "**partner**" organisations where there is a threat to the cathedral arising from the incident.

The **responsibility for making a Serious Incident report** in a timely manner rests with the Chapter as the charity trustees but the Chapter can delegate the reporting of Serious Incidents to the Chapter Steward, or relevant Chief Officer or Director, as appropriate.

The Chapter Steward should **report each safeguarding Serious Incident** to the Charity Commission **using the guidance** at: [How to report a serious incident in your charity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity)

Once the Chapter has reported a safeguarding Serious Incident to the Charity Commission, the Chapter must also send a copy of the Serious Incident Report, and a copy of any follow-up reports made to the Charity Commission, to:

- the NST at rsi.nst@churchofengland.org;
- the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer;
- the Archbishop of York, as the Visitor for the cathedral; and
- the cathedral's auditors.

Further information can be found on the [Charity Commission](#) website

Safeguarding adults: statutory duties and responses

In some circumstances, the local authority (e.g. City of York Council) may have a statutory duty to assess and assist in meeting the needs of those who are defined as “adults at risk” under the Care Act (2014).

If you have concerns that an adult may fall within this remit, you can speak with the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer about a referral.

Care Act 2014: Adults at Risk (Vulnerable Adults) (14.2)

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
 - Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and;
 - As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.
- Replaces ‘No Secrets (2000) definition of ‘Vulnerable Adult’
- Explicitly applies to those aged over 18 even if they may be receiving what may be thought of as a “children” or “young people’s” service
- “Care and Support Needs”:
 - “The adult’s needs arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness. Local authorities must consider at this stage if the adult has a condition as a result of either physical, mental, sensory, learning or cognitive disabilities or illnesses, substance misuse or brain injury...a formal diagnosis of the condition should not be required” (Care Act statutory guidance)
- Includes carers

Care Act (2014): Duty of enquiry (Section 42)

“Local authorities must make enquiries, or cause others to do so, if they reasonably suspect an adult who meets the criteria at paragraph 14.2 is, or is at risk of, being abused or neglected.”

Safeguarding adults - definitions

NB. Whilst the list below is primarily focused on abuse and neglect of “adults at risk” under the definitions in The Care Act (2014), the forms of abuse and neglect can relate to anyone we may encounter in the context of York Minster; and, anyone can be vulnerable, and at risk, at any point in their life.

Abuse and Neglect: Abuse / neglect can happen anywhere including at home, in care homes or in day care centres or hospitals. It may be a single act or take place over a longer period of time. Abuse can take different forms:

Common forms of abuse:

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic Violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation or blaming.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding

Adapted from: [City of York Safeguarding Adults Board](#) webpage (accessed 17.1.23)

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 and can be experienced in a variety of different relationships.....Spiritual abuse may occur on its own, or alongside other forms of abuse, such as physical or sexual abuse. It may be used to ‘legitimise’ or facilitate other forms of abuse.”

See **CofE (2021)**, [Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults guidance](#)

York Minster Safeguarding Procedure
Dee Cooley, CSO, October 2024

Safeguarding children and young people: statutory duties and responses

In some circumstances, the local authority (e.g. City of York Council) has a statutory duty to assist in meeting the needs of children and young people who are deemed to be “in need”; and, to investigate where a child in their area is “suffering or is likely to suffer, significant harm” (Children Act 1989: s17 & 47 respectively). [The City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) is the statutory partnership tasked with co-ordinating multi-agency activity to safeguarding children and young people, including publishing local policies and procedures. York Minster should work within the local, as well as Church of England, policies and procedures.

If you have concerns that (a) child(ren) may fall within this remit, you can speak with the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer about a referral.

Under Section 17 (10) of the **Children Act 1989** a child is a Child in Need if:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority;
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him/her of such services; or
- He/she is disabled.

The Children Act 1989 introduced Significant Harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children.

- Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect are all categories of Significant Harm.
- Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development...it may include, "... impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another".
- Suspicions or allegations that a child is suffering or likely to suffer Significant Harm should result in an Assessment incorporating a Section 47 (CA 1989) Enquiry
- There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes a single violent episode may constitute significant harm but more often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, damage or change the child's development.

HM Gov't (2023), [Working Together to Safeguarding Children](#) guidance states:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance 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.

And:

Chapter 4: Organisational Responsibilities sets out the specific statutory duties of agencies in respect of safeguarding children.

Churches, other places of worship and faith-based organisations, alongside other voluntary, charity, social enterprise and private sector organisations:

“...play an important role in safeguarding children through the services they deliver...

... (They) should have policies in place to safeguard and protect children from harm. These should be followed and systems should be in place to ensure compliance in this. Individual practitioners...should be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children from harm, how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to local authority children’s social care or the police if necessary...”

The Sexual Offences Act 2003

The [Sexual Offences Act 2003 - Position of Trust 22A](#) expands “Position of Trust” offences to include anyone who is coaching, teaching, training, supervising or instructing in a sport or a religion. This is an expansion of scope that the Church has been supporting and was one of the recommendations in the [interim report](#) from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, IICSA, in 2019, in its Anglican Church investigation.

For more information, please see the Government factsheet:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-factsheets/police-crime-sentencing-and-courts-bill-2021-positions-of-trust-factsheet>

Safeguarding children and young people - definitions

The definitions below are outlined in the **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)** statutory guidance published by the government. All individuals and agencies working with children and young people are required to operate within the guidance.

Child Protection: Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

This is not an exclusive list of areas of abuse. For further definitions, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, extremism, see: HM Gov't (2023), [Working Together to Safeguarding Children](#) guidance

NB. Children, in law, are defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding children: the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone's responsibility. **Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.**

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 and can be experienced in a variety of different relationships.....Spiritual abuse may occur on its own, or alongside other forms of abuse, such as physical or sexual abuse. It may be used to 'legitimise' or facilitate other forms of abuse.”

See CofE (2021), [Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults guidance](#)

Further information on definitions for adults and children can be found in the above guidance.