Bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church
Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

Safeguarding service complaints policy.

Issued by:

The Bishop of Portsmouth and the Trustees of the Portsmouth Diocesan Trust St Edmund House

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Crispian
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Registered Charity No. 1199568

Reviewed -

Foreword.

God's Church here in the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth is formed of many and varied communities, held together in the same Truth of Christ both in doctrine life and worship. We need common operating procedures across the Diocese to ensure compliance with the needs of both canon and civil law.

In addition, and especially in the light of the church's call to the work of new evangelisation, we need to ensure harmonised collaboration. We have a responsibility to ensure that people, buildings, and money are treated carefully allowing us to perform our duties "with the diligence of a good householder" (Canon 1284§1).

These Diocesan Operating Procedures (DoPs) have the status of particular law for the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth. They must be understood and followed in the broad areas of human resource, safeguarding, schools, buildings, and finance.

I am very grateful to all those who have compiled these procedures and ensure their regular review and updating.



In Corde Iesu

+Bishop Egan
Bishop of
Portsmouth

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The Bishops Vision.

The Bishop of Portsmouth and the Trustees are fully aware of their duty of care to all our employees, and to anyone who works within the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.

As a Regulated Affiliate of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA), the Diocese adheres to the national policies and practice guidance as defined by the 'One Church' approach.

Our safeguarding services and functions are administered in accordance with the agreed national safeguarding standards which provide the framework for safeguarding activities across the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

It is our aim that our policies provide a framework of guidance for all who work within the Diocese: guidance to support and encourage us all in our work, to enable a working environment that is based on co-operation, respect for each other's gifts, tolerance and support for each other's limitations and above all, fairness and justice in our dealings with each other.

Please read these policies, become familiar with the procedures and the forms, and help us to ensure that our work together fulfils our aims of respect, tolerance, and fairness.

Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth

Safeguarding Service Complaints Policy and Procedure

1 Definitions.

1.1 "A complaint" - an expression of dissatisfaction, disquiet, or a concern, about how a safeguarding service has been delivered.

1.2 "Chief Operating Officer" – A role that is responsible for directing the implementation of the Diocesan Trustees' Strategy.

1.3 "(the) Diocese" refers to the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth including its constituent Parishes and CARITAS, Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth.

1.4 "Diocesan Bishop" – The person in pastoral charge of a diocese.

1.5 "Episcopal Vicar" for Safeguarding – a priest who is appointed to provide pastoral care and to represent the Diocesan Bishop in an area or activity of the diocese.

1.6 "Independent Investigator" - a person who is not directly involved in a situation or dispute and who is able to investigate problems and make recommendations about what should be done. This person may be from within the diocese or from outside the diocese.

1.7 "Metropolitan Archbishop" – a Bishop presiding over a number of dioceses in a Province.

1.8 "Person concerned" – the person being complained about, or that the complainant is unhappy with in respect of delivery of the safeguarding service.

1.9 "Safeguarding Service Complaint" – a complaint about the delivery of a safeguarding service.

1.10 "Safeguarding Lead" – the most senior lay role in the Safeguarding Department e.g. Safeguarding Coordinator.

1.11 "Senior Auxiliary Bishop" – the most senior assistant Bishop to the Diocesan Bishop.

1.12 "Vice President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales" – an Archbishop who is charged with overseeing the complaint if it relates to a Metropolitan Archbishop.

1.13 "President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales" – a Bishop who is charged with overseeing the complaint if it relates to the Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

2 Contact Details.

Contact details for the people named in this procedure are set out in paragraph 10.3 below.

3 Introduction.

3.1 This Policy and Procedure are intended to be consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

3.2 The Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth will listen to comments and concerns, seek to put things right for the person making the complaint and learn from them, using the experience to improve services for everyone who uses them.

3.3 The Diocese will aim to resolve complaints as quickly and efficiently as possible in a personalised, fair, transparent way respecting confidentiality insofar as it is able, in accordance with the principles in section 5.1.

4 Purpose of the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

4.1 The Diocese has adopted this Complaints Policy and Procedure to:

- Provide a fair process which is clear and easy to use.
- Work in a transparent and open way.
- Encourage resolution of complaints by informal means wherever possible.
- Offer recourse to somebody more senior if informal resolution cannot be achieved.
- Ensure all complaints are investigated fairly, consistently and in a timely way.
- Ensure that explanations are provided, and solutions offered, where possible.
- Ensure that wherever possible, relationships are repaired.
- Gather, record, review and utilise information, to help us to improve service delivery.

5 Scope.

5.1 This Policy covers complaints from persons in receipt of a service from the safeguarding department, having received a service in the past or entitled to have received a service.

5.2 This Policy does not cover:

- Allegations or expressions of concern about the welfare of children or adults at risk.
- Allegations about failure to follow safeguarding processes where these are already managed under the national safeguarding policy and procedure.
- Issues raised by individuals who have not been directly affected by the matter being complained about.
- Complaints about safeguarding services that are delivered via contractual arrangements or covered under a Memorandum of Understanding or canonical arrangements, between the diocese and other church bodies or organisations.
- Grievance, capability, or disciplinary matters, which are addressed using other Diocesan policies and procedures.
- Any other complaints unrelated to the provision of a safeguarding service which must be addressed via alternative Diocesan routes.
- Whistleblowing which is addressed by a separate policy and procedure.
- Complaints relating to a member of a Religious Congregation which must be addressed to the Religious Leader.
- Concerns or complaints relating to safeguarding in organisations outside the diocese, which must be addressed to the organisation concerned.
- Subject Access Requests.

5.3 A representative can complain on a person's behalf where that person:

- Is a child.
- Has requested the representative to act, as confirmed in writing to the diocese.
- Lacks mental capacity, as assessed under the Mental Capacity Act 2005[1].
- Has appointed a person as a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) for health and welfare.
- Has an appointed Independent Advocate.
- Has passed away.

[1] Lacks capacity to make a specific complaint.

5.4 Anonymous complaints will always be considered but it may not be possible to fully investigate or resolve complaints where the complainant cannot be contacted for further information. Learning from anonymous complaints will inform service improvement in the same way as learning from complaints from named individuals.

5.5 If a person making a complaint needs somebody to help them put their complaint to the diocese, they can ask a friend, family member or somebody else that they know to assist or support them.

5.6 The Diocese will not treat you less favourably than anyone else because of your:

- Sex or legal marital or same-sex partnership status: this includes family status, responsibility for dependants, and gender (including gender reassignment, whether proposed, commenced or completed).
- Sexual orientation.
- Colour or race: this includes ethnic or national origin or nationality.
- Disability.
- Religious or political beliefs, or trade union affiliation.
- Any other unjustifiable factors, for example language difficulties, age, pregnancy, and maternity.

5.7 Complaints can be made up to 12 months after the date on which the cause for complaint occurred or came to the notice of the person wishing to complain.

However, if following discussion between the Safeguarding Lead and the Chief Operating Officer the diocese is satisfied that there is good reason for the complaint not having been made earlier and feels that it is still possible to investigate it fairly and effectively, then this time limit may be waived.

5.8 Where a complaint about the provision of a safeguarding service in one Diocese is submitted to a different diocese, regardless of who is being complained about, the receiving Diocese will refer the complaint to the Chief Operating Officer for the Diocese being complained about. The Chief Operating Officer will direct the complaint to the relevant person for response.

6 Confidentiality.

6.1 All complaint information will be handled sensitively and in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation, subject to the need to disclose information as required by statutory authorities. It will be necessary to share information with people who need to know in order that the complaint can be investigated.

If this includes contacting another organisation, the complainant's written consent to share relevant information with the other organisation will be sought.

6.2 Details of how your personal data may be processed by the diocese, are contained in the Diocesan Privacy Notice. The privacy notice can be found here: GDPR | Portsmouth Diocese

7 Stages of the complaints process.

7.1 At all stages of the complaints process, complainants are advised to include as much information as possible about what happened, when, where, who was involved, what the outcome was and what they would like the person they are contacting to do.

7.2 The stages of the complaints process are illustrated, with timings, on the chart on page 12 and described in more detail below.

7.3 Complainants can refer their complaint to the Charity Commission at any stage, however the Charity Commission requires complaints to be made to the Charity in the first instance, or for there to be a reason why this could not be done.

7.4 Informal stage

7.4.1 In the first instance, expressions of dissatisfaction about the safeguarding service are to be addressed by the complainant to the person concerned, regardless of the seniority of their role, giving them the opportunity to resolve the concerns. An acknowledgement will be sent within 5 working days and a response will be made within 30 working days.

The response may be made in writing or by way of a meeting or telephone discussion, and the complainant will be provided with a copy of this Safeguarding Service Complaints Policy and Procedure. The Diocese anticipates this to be the appropriate response in most instances.

If an informal approach does not resolve the matter or is not an appropriate course of action, the complainant should follow the process at Stage 1 of the formal stage.

7.5 Formal Stage

7.5.1 There are three stages to the formal safeguarding service complaints procedure[2].

7.6 Stage 1

7.6.1 Complaints about the Safeguarding Coordinator are to be sent to the Chief Operating Officer who will allocate the investigation to somebody who is suitably experienced in handling complaints, outside the safeguarding department ('other appointed person').

7.6.2 All other complaints about safeguarding services or personnel are to be sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator, who will establish if anybody within the Diocese is already involved in addressing the issues raised, what has happened so far and will allocate an appropriate person to investigate, outside the safeguarding department ('other appointed person').

7.6.3 Whoever receives the complaint will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days. The letter of acknowledgement will assure the complainant that their complaint will be taken seriously. A copy of this safeguarding service complaints policy and procedure will be included with the acknowledgement letter.

7.6.4 The person appointed to investigate the complaint will usually need to contact the complainant to clarify matters such as the nature of the complaint and what the complainant feels would put things right.

[2] Occasionally, and at any of the 3 stages, it might be necessary to appoint an independent investigator if the seriousness of the complaint means it is not appropriate for the matter to be dealt with internally. This would be decided in discussion between the Safeguarding Lead and Episcopal Vicar for Safeguarding (Diocese to specify which roles if not the Episcopal Vicar), unless the complaint relates to the Safeguarding Lead, and then the discussion will take place between the Chief Operating Officer and the Episcopal Vicar for Safeguarding.

If this is necessary, a full written record will be made of the discussion or meeting. A copy of the record will be provided to the complainant, to allow them to confirm accuracy.

7.6.5 The complainant will be assured that they will be listened to.

7.6.6 If the complainant's expectations are considered to be excessive, they will be informed of this and the reasons why.

7.6.7 The complainant will be given a copy of the Diocesan Privacy Notice and informed that their identity[3] and the detail of the complaint will be shared with the subject(s) of the complaint. They will also be informed as to how the records relating to the complaint will be kept and who will see them.

7.6.8 The complainant will be advised who will provide them with updates or give feedback on the process as it is underway.

7.6.9 Details of the complaint will be shared with the person being complained about (respondent), so that they can make a response to the person investigating the complaint. A copy of the record will be provided to the respondent to allow them to confirm accuracy.

7.6.10 After an investigation has taken place, the appointed person will decide as to whether the complaint is upheld.

7.6.11 A written report will be produced using clear, comprehensible language and neutral tone. The report will:

- Set out the complaint(s).
- Identify the process of enquiry or investigation.
- Summarise the facts that can be established.
- Clarify what cannot be determined and why.
- Provide an explanation as to how the complaint arose.
- Identify potential solutions (having regard to the resolution that is being sought by the complainant).
- Recommend action to resolve the complaint and to avoid similar situations occurring in the future, again considering the resolution that is being sought by the complainant.

[3] unless the complainant objects and the person responding believes that, in the specific circumstances, their objection should be sustained.

7.6.12 Regardless of whether the complaint is upheld, within 30 working days of receipt of the complaint, the report will be sent the complainant, accompanied by a letter from the appointed person setting out the diocese's views, actions and comments.

The covering letter will usually:

- Express regret for the dissatisfaction.
- Acknowledge if it is decided that an objectively acceptable standard of service was provided, giving a clear and evidenced explanation as to how this decision was reached.
- Acknowledge if the service provided fell short of an objectively acceptable standard of service and/or could have been handled differently or better and offer an apology for this.
- If the service provided fell short of an objectively acceptable standard, explain the steps have been taken to ensure that the situation does not occur again.
- Advise the complainant that if they are unhappy with the response at Stage 1, they can invoke Stage 2 of the complaint's procedure.
- Advise the complainant that they can refer their complaint to the Charity Commission at any stage, noting that the Charity Commission requires complaints to be made to the Diocese in the first instance, or for there to be a reason why this could not be done.

7.6.13 If it is not possible to complete the report within this timeframe, the complainant will be kept updated and informed of the reasons why not and, where possible, advised of a new timeframe for the report. The complainant's views will be considered in defining the new timeframe.

7.7 Stage 2 – Review

7.7.1 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the way the complaint was handled or the outcome of the Stage 1 procedure, the complainant can refer the matter to the Chief Operating Officer within 30 working days who will review, or appoint somebody else to review the investigation and outcome of Stage 1, repeating any prior process that they feel is appropriate.

7.7.2 The subject of the complaint and the person who investigated at Stage 1 are to be informed (a) that a review at Stage 2 is taking place and (b) of the outcome of the review at the completion of Stage 2. All papers from Stage 1 and will be made available to the Chief Operating Officer at Stage 2.

7.7.3 The Chief Operating Officer will write to the complainant to acknowledge receipt of the request to progress to Stage 2 within 5 working days and write to the complainant within 30 working days to notify them of the outcome of their review.

7.7.4 The letter from the Chief Operating Officer will be written using clear, comprehensible language and neutral tone. The letter will :

- Set out whether the conclusion reached at Stage 1 is upheld or not.
- Set out the reasons for reaching such conclusion, including acknowledging if enquiries or investigation at Stage 1 should have been handled differently.
- Offer an apology about the process if they conclude that a complaint that was not upheld should have been upheld.
- Acknowledge if the service provided fell short of an objectively acceptable standard and/or could have been handled differently or better and offer an apology about the service provided.
- If appropriate, explain the steps have been taken to ensure that the situation in relation to the original complaint does not occur again.
- Advise the complainant that if they are unhappy with the response at Stage 2, they can invoke Stage 3 of the complaint procedure.
- Advise the complainant that they can refer their complaint to the Charity Commission at any stage, noting that the Charity Commission requires complaints to be made to the Diocese in the first instance, or for there to be a reason why this could not be done.

7.7.5 If it is not possible to complete the review within this timeframe, the complainant will be kept updated and informed of the reasons why not and, where possible, advised of a new timeframe for the report.

7.8 <u>Stage 3 – Appeal – Final Stage</u>

7.8.1 If the complainant remains dissatisfied at the end of Stage 2, complaints may be progressed to Stage 3, which is a review by the Diocesan Board of Trustees.

7.8.2 At this stage, any complaint will be passed to the Diocesan Bishop, in his capacity as Chair of Trustees, who may review the matter himself, or nominate another Trustee to undertake the review.

7.8.3 The subject of the complaint and the person who investigated at Stage 2 are to be informed (a) that a review at Stage 3 is taking place and (b) of the outcome of such review at the completion of Stage 3.

All papers from Stage 1 and Stage 2 will be made available to the person assigned to review matters at Stage 3.

7.8.4 Complaints will be acknowledged by the Bishop or a nominated Trustee, within 5 working days of receipt by the Board. The acknowledgement will say who will deal with the complaint and when the complainant can expect a reply.

7.8.5 The Bishop or nominated Trustee will appoint a senior person who has not been involved in any aspect of service delivery and is not responsible for the line management, supervision, or discipline of those being complained about to:

- Contact the complainant and agree which aspects of the original complaint remain unresolved.
- Complete a review of the papers from Stage 1 and Stage 2 and further investigate, if necessary.
- Produce a report for the Bishop and Board of Trustees within 30 working days of agreement with the complainant about the complaints that are unresolved.

7.8.6 If it is not possible to complete the report within this timeframe, the complainant will be kept updated and informed of the reasons why not and, where possible, advised of a new timeframe for the report. The complainant's views will be considered in defining the new timeframe.

7.8.7 If necessary[4], in the judgement of the Board of Trustees, the Bishop or nominated Trustee will appoint an Independent Investigator to investigate and produce a report on a Stage 3 Complaint. This will be someone who is not a member or officer of the diocese. Where possible, the timescale for completion will be advised to the complainant.

7.8.8 Where a timescale for completion has been agreed and it is not possible to complete the report within this timeframe, the complainant will be kept updated and informed of the reasons why not and, where possible, advised of a new timeframe for the report. The complainant's views will be considered in defining the new timeframe.

[4] For example, this may be to ensure lack of bias, or because there is nobody that can be appointed internally.

7.8.9 The report by the senior person or the Independent Investigator, written using clear, comprehensible language and neutral tone, will seek to :

- Set out the areas of complaint that remain unresolved.
- The process of review or further investigation.
- Set out any further facts that have been established.
- If appropriate, provide further explanation as to how the complaint arose.
- conclude whether the original complaint is upheld or not.
- Identify any additional potential solutions (having regard to the resolution that is being sought by the complainant).
- Recommend any additional action to resolve the complaint and to avoid similar situations occurring in the future, again considering the resolution that is being sought by the complainant.

7.9.10 Within 30 days of receiving the senior person's or Independent Investigator's report, the Diocesan Bishop or Trustee will send a copy of the report to the complainant, the subject(s) of the complaint and the stage 1 and stage 2 investigator/reviewer, accompanied by a covering letter from the Bishop or Board of Trustee setting out the diocese's views, actions and comments.

7.9.11 If it is not possible to meet this timeframe, the complainant will be kept updated and informed of the reasons why not and, where possible, advised of a new timeframe for the report. Where necessary, arrangements will also be made to keep the complainant updated.

7.9.12 The letter from the Diocesan Bishop or Board of Trustees will:

- Express regret for the dissatisfaction.
- Set out whether the conclusion reached at Stage 2 is upheld or not.
- Set out the reasons for reaching their conclusion, including acknowledging if enquiries or investigation at Stage 1 or 2 should have been handled differently.
- Offer an apology about the process if they conclude that a complaint that was not upheld should have been upheld.
- Acknowledge if it is decided that an objectively acceptable service was provided, giving a clear and evidenced explanation as to how this decision was reached.
- Acknowledge if the service provided fell short of an objectively acceptable standard and/or could have been handled differently or better and offer an apology about the service provided.
- Explain the steps have been taken to ensure that lessons are learned.

- Advise the complainant that this is the final Stage of the complaints process and the decision will not be subject to further review by the diocese.
- Advise the complainant that they can refer their complaint to the Charity Commission, noting that the Charity Commission requires complaints to be made to the Diocese in the first instance, or for there to be a reason why this could not be done.

8 Complaints in relation to Bishops.

8.1 Informal stage (Episcopal)

8.1.1 In the first instance, expressions of dissatisfaction are to be addressed to the Bishop concerned, giving them the opportunity to resolve the concerns. An acknowledgement will be sent within 5 working days and a response within 30 working days. The response may be made in writing or by way of a meeting or telephone discussion, and the complainant will be provided with a copy of this Complaints Policy and Procedure.

The Diocese anticipates this to be the appropriate response in most instances. If an informal approach does not resolve the matter or is not an appropriate course of action, the complainant should follow the process at the formal stage.

8.1.3 The response will:

- Express regret for the dissatisfaction.
- Set out the complaint(s).
- Identify the process of enquiry or investigation.
- Summarise the facts that can be established.
- Clarify what cannot be determined and why.
- Provide an explanation as to how the complaint arose.
- Identify potential solutions.
- Recommend action to resolve the complaint and to avoid similar situations occurring in the future, considering the resolution that is being sought by the complainant.

8.1.4 If the complainant's expectations are considered to be excessive, they will be informed of this and the reasons why.

8.2 Formal Stage (Episcopal)

8.2.1 If the complainant is unhappy with the response of the subject of the complaint, they can forward the complaint to the Chief Operating who will:

- In the case of an auxiliary Bishop forward the complaint and the auxiliary Bishop's response to the Diocesan Bishop for investigation, informing the complainant that this has been done.
- In the case of a Diocesan Bishop, forward the complaint and the Diocesan Bishop's response to the Metropolitan Archbishop for investigation, informing the complainant that this has been done.
- In the case of a Diocesan Bishop who is also the Metropolitan Archbishop, forward the complaint and the Diocesan Bishop's response to the Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales for investigation, informing the complainant that this has been done.
- In the case of a Diocesan Bishop who is also the Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, forward the complaint and Diocesan Bishop's response to the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- In the case of a Diocesan Bishop who is also the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, forward the complaint and the Diocesan Bishop's response to the Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

8.2.2 The Chief Operating Officer will acknowledge the complaint within 5 working days and inform the complainant of the contact details of the person to whom the complaint has been referred. The letter of acknowledgement will assure the complainant that their complaint will be taken seriously. A copy of this Complaints Policy and Procedure will be included with the acknowledgement letter.

8.2.3 The receiving Bishop, Metropolitan Archbishop, Vice-President or President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales will appoint somebody from outside of the diocese of the Bishop being complained about who is of sufficient seniority to investigate the complaint.

8.2.4 The investigator will provide a report, in accordance with paragraph 7.8.9, to the receiving Bishop, Metropolitan Archbishop, Vice-President or President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales within 30 working days of the complaint being received by the Bishop, Metropolitan Archbishop,

Vice-President or President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

8.2.5 Within 30 working days of the complaint being received by the Bishop, Metropolitan Archbishop, Vice-President or President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, he will send a copy of the report and a covering letter to the complainant. The covering letter will:

- Express regret for the dissatisfaction caused.
- Acknowledge if it is decided that the actions being complained about were objectively acceptable, giving a clear and evidenced explanation as to how this decision was reached.
- Acknowledge if the situation being complained about could have been handled differently or better and offer an apology.
- Explain the steps that have been taken to ensure that lessons are learned.
- Advise the complainant that if they are unhappy with the outcome, they can refer their complaint to the Charity Commission, noting that the Charity Commission requires complaints to be made to the Charity in the first instance, or for there to be a reason why this could not be done.

8.2.6 The Bishop, Metropolitan Archbishop, Vice-President or President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales will provide a copy of the report and covering letter to the person being complained about and his Board of Trustees, for the purpose of ensuring that any recommendations are acted upon and that learning informs future service.

8.2.7 If the complainant's expectations are considered to be excessive, they will be informed of this and the reasons why.

9 External process.

9.1 The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage, however the Charity Commission requires complaints to be made to the Diocese in the first instance, or for there to be a reason why this could not be done. Information about the kind of complaints that the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-charities

10 Making a complaint.

10.1 Complaints at any of the 3 stages can be made in writing (by post), by email or by telephone. Where a complaint is taken by telephone, a record of the conversation will be taken and sent to the complainant for agreement before any further steps are taken.

10.2 Where necessary, reasonable adjustments can be made to vary the way in which complaints can be made, including face to face meetings.

10.3 Stage 1 safeguarding service complaints about safeguarding employees, volunteers, priests, and deacons are to be addressed to:

Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator – Ruth Attfield
Safeguarding Department
Department for Administration
St Edmund House
Bishop Crispian Way
Portsmouth
PO1 3QA
Telephone: 02394 216486
Email: safeguarding@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

10.4 Requests to proceed to Stage 2 are to be addressed to:

Chief Operating Officer – Heather Hauschild
Department for Administration
St Edmund House
Bishop Crispian Way
Portsmouth
PO1 3QA
Email: hhauschild@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

10.5 Requests to proceed to Stage 3 are to be addressed to:

Chief Operating Officer – Heather Hauschild
Department for Administration
St Edmund House
Bishop Crispian Way
Portsmouth
PO1 3QA
Email: hhauschild@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

11 Withdrawal of a complaint.

11.1 If a complainant chooses to withdraw their complaint, they will be asked to confirm this in writing.

12 Managing repeated complaints.

12.1 The Diocese will not normally limit the contact complainants have with the organisation. However, complainants are requested to try to limit their communication with the Diocese which is material to their complaint while the complaint is being progressed.

12.2 For complainants who are deemed to contact the Diocese excessively, and because of the frequency and nature of their complaints cause a significant level of disruption to the extent that it impedes other work, measures may be put in place such as specifying the method and frequency of any ongoing contact.

13 Abusive or threatening behaviour.

13.1 The Diocese will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour and will take action to protect Clergy, employees, office holders and volunteers ('diocesan personnel') from such behaviour, including that which is abusive or threatening.

13.2 In response to abusive or threatening behaviour towards 'diocesan personnel', the Bishop or the Chief Operating Officer will write to the complainant, explaining that their behaviour is unacceptable.

14 Serious incidents of violence or aggression.

14.1 In response to any serious incident of aggression or violence, the Diocese will immediately inform the police and communicate these actions in writing to the complainant. This may include barring an individual from any premises of the Diocese.

15 Variation of this Policy and Procedure.

15.1 The Trustees may vary the Complaints Policy and Procedure for good reason. For example, this may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest.

Reasons for varying the Complaints Policy and Procedure should be recorded in writing on the case file relating to each complaint for which the Policy and Procedure is varied.

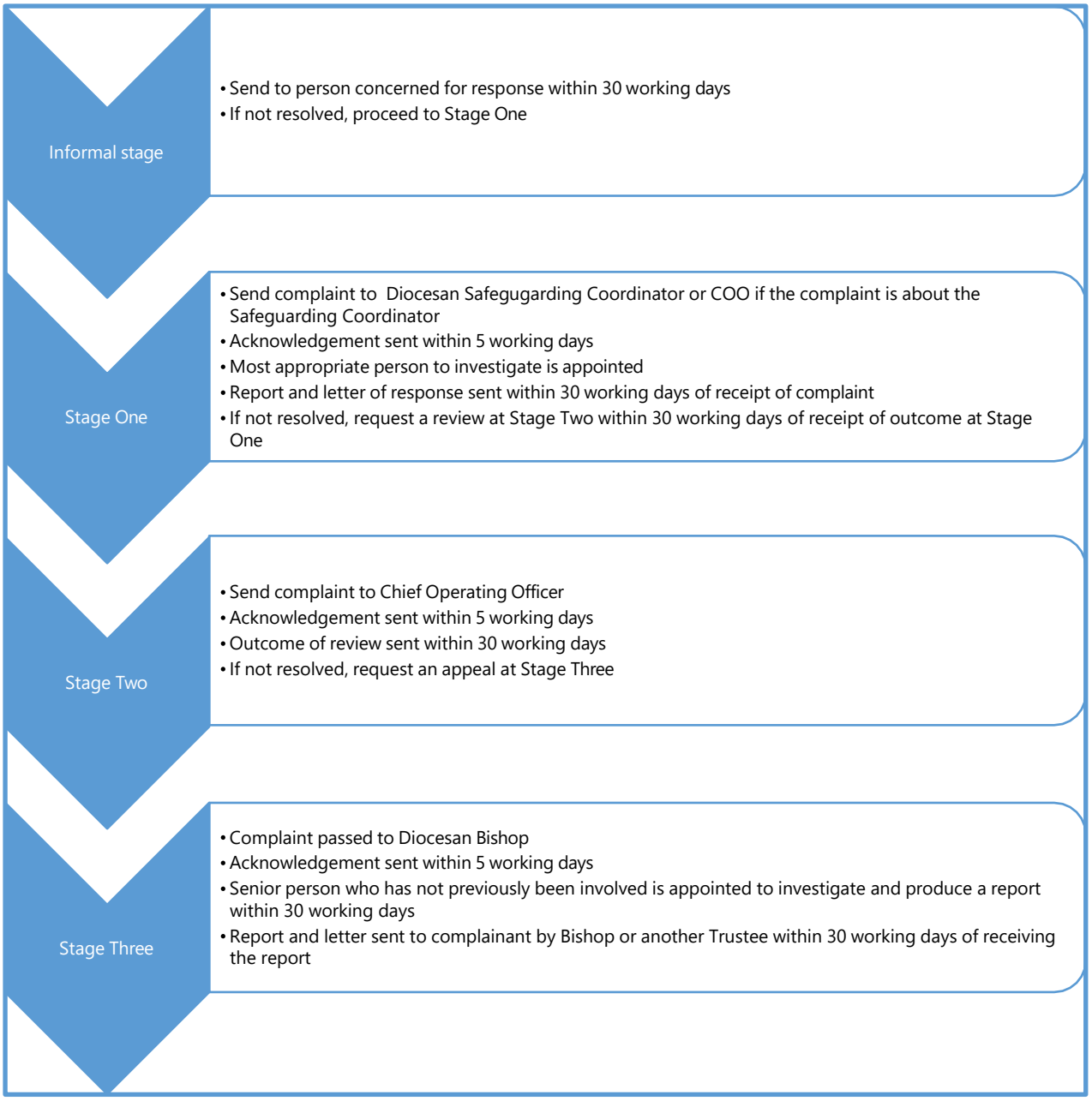
16 Monitoring and learning from complaints.

16.1 Complaints are reviewed annually by the Trustees, to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action. Anonymised data on complaints will be provided to CSAS on request.

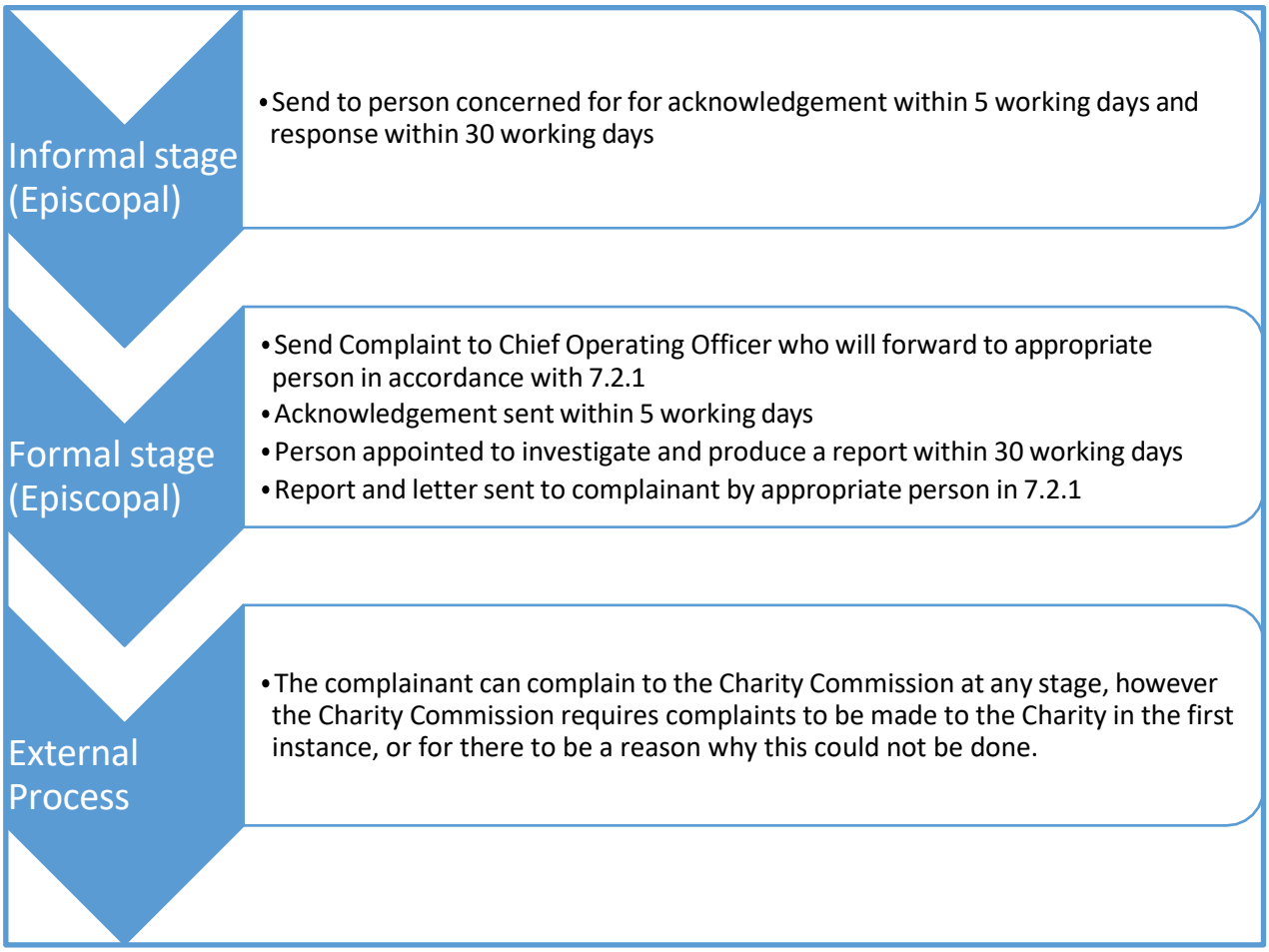
17 Amendment of this Policy and Procedure.

17.1 The Diocese reserves the right to amend this Policy at its discretion.

Quick Guide – Complaints against safeguarding service



Quick guide - Complaints against Bishops



Approvals

The signatures below certify that this document has been reviewed and accepted demonstrating that the signatories are aware of all requirements contained herein and are committed to ensuring their provision.

	Name	Signature	Position	Date
Prepared by	R Attfield	R Attfield	Safeguarding Coordinator	28/01/2021
Approved by	Finance and Risk Committee			20/01/2021
Approved by	Board of Trustees			18/02/2021
Approved by	Finance and Risk Committee			20/01/2021
Reviewed by	R Attfield	R Attfield	Head of Safeguarding	16/01/2025
Reviewed by	R Attfield	R Attfield	Head of Safeguarding and HR development	14/01/2026

Amendment Record.

This document is reviewed to ensure its continuing relevance to the systems and processes that it describes. A record of contextual additions or omissions is given below.

Page No.	Context	Revision	Date
	Policy reviewed.	No amendments made. Awaiting dissemination of new suite of national policies from the CSSA.	16/01/2025
	Policy reviewed.	No amendments made. Advised new suite of policies, procedures, guidance and tools will be disseminated summer 2026.	14/01/2026