



MALANKARA ORTHODOX SYRIAN CHURCH (INDIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH)

DIOCESE OF UK • EUROPE • AFRICA •
UK REGISTERED CHARITY : 1159302

+METROPOLITAN ABRAHAM MAR STEPHANOS

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Blessings to All Vicars, Parish Office Bearers, Sunday School Teachers and all the Faithful of the Diocese in the name of the blessed Holy Trinity:

Dearly beloved in Christ,

I would like to introduce the revised Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese applicable to England and Wales for adoption and implementation by all Parishes and Congregations in England and Wales with immediate effect. Following careful consideration and collaborative work, the Diocese has prepared this revised Safeguarding policy taking into account the relevant safeguarding expectations, legal requirements and good-practice principles applicable in England and Wales.

The Church has a sacred responsibility to ensure that our parishes, worship, educational programmes, pastoral activities and all other ministries provide a safe, welcoming and caring environment for children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable or at risk. All of us have a role to play in creating an environment in which children and adults feel safe, respected, valued and protected. Particular care and attention must be given to children and adults who may be vulnerable. Let us remember that safeguarding is ultimately about protecting people, preserving their dignity and demonstrating the love of Christ through responsible Christian care.

Similar safeguarding policies will be issued soon for the other jurisdictions within the Diocese, including Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the countries of Europe, taking into consideration the respective legal and regulatory requirements of those jurisdictions. The present policy for England and Wales will provide an important framework and reference point for the development of these policies.

All Vicars and Parish Office Bearers are instructed to ensure the following actions are taken without delay:

1. The Safeguarding Policy shall be followed as issued. No changes, additions, deletions or modifications shall be made to the policy at Parish level without the prior written consent of the Diocesan Metropolitan.
2. The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) shall be elected annually by the General Body (GB) of the Parish in accordance with the applicable constitutional procedures.
3. The Parish Safeguarding Officer shall be invited to the first Managing Committee meeting of every year. The PSO may also be invited to other Managing Committee meetings whenever safeguarding matters are to be considered or whenever their participation is considered necessary.
4. At its first Managing Committee meeting of the year, the Managing Committee shall formally agree to abide by and implement the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy. This decision shall be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
5. A copy of the current Diocesan Safeguarding Policy shall be displayed prominently on the Church Notice Board so that it is accessible to members of the congregation. Parishes are also encouraged to make the policy available through appropriate parish communication channels.

I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the entire team who worked diligently towards the preparation of this policy and to everyone who will contribute to its effective implementation.

With prayers and blessings,

+ Metropolitan Abraham Stephanos