



Our ref: EG/AB

29 May 2019

To: *Incumbents and Priests in Charge*
Parish Safeguarding Officers

Dear Colleague

As you know, all Parochial Church Councils are charities (whether or not their annual income is at the threshold to require them to register with the Charity Commission). Therefore, they are already required to report any Serious Incidents (both safeguarding and non-safeguarding) to the Charity Commission.

Following recent high-profile safeguarding-related incidents in the charity sector, the Charity Commission updated its guidance in October 2018, with a particular focus on the reporting of Safeguarding Serious Incidents. The Church has worked with the Charity Commission to agree bespoke guidance for Diocesan Boards of Finance, PCCs and Religious Communities on how to identify and report a Serious Incident. When PCCs report any Serious Incident to the Charity Commission, they should now do so in accordance with the new C of E Guidance.

The purpose of this Guidance is to assist those responsible within PCCs to ascertain:

- whether an incident is a Serious Incident (whether safeguarding related or otherwise) and so must be reported to the Charity Commission; and
- how to report the incident.

The following documents are attached to this letter:

- Explanatory Note explaining what the new Guidance and Templates are and what action needs to be taken.
- Guidance for DBFs, PCCs and Religious Communities on identifying and reporting Safeguarding Serious Incidents.
- Practical Guidance on how to make a Safeguarding Serious Incident Report (including a template report).
- Guidance for PCCs on identifying and reporting non-safeguarding Serious Incidents (including a template report).
- Example Delegation for the PCC trustees to bespoke and pass in order to delegate authority:
 - o to the Diocesan Secretary to submit safeguarding Serious Incident Reports on behalf of the PCC's trustees; and
 - o to a suitable person within the PCC to submit non-safeguarding Serious Incident Reports on behalf of the PCC's trustees.

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The Guidance and accompanying template reports have been approved by the Charity Commission and those relating to safeguarding Serious Incidents have also been approved by the C of E National Safeguarding Steering Group.

Please note that the links in the Guidance and template reports are live and the documents are also available online on the Parish Resources website. In addition, the safeguarding related guidance and templates will be available on the safeguarding pages of the Church of England website and the non-safeguarding guidance will be available through a link on the finance portal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Gorringe', with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the signature.

Edward Gorringe
Diocesan Secretary

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