

Safeguarding adults

Guidance for Communities and Groups in the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites in England and Wales

Community

The importance of community is extremely significant to all Secular Carmelite communities. It is one of the three elements of one's "Call to Carmel", a call to prayer, a call to community, and a call to service. Community groups, however, must be aware of the particular vulnerabilities of their members which may lead to them becoming targets of abuse.

Within each community there is a responsibility to look out for the vulnerable, to care for the distant members and the infirm, housebound etc. and to have procedures in place for any case of bullying or other sort of difficulty.

Secular Carmelite communities will be able to define abuse of adults, know how to identify it and act on any concerns about abuse for which there must be zero tolerance and a commitment to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Who is a vulnerable adult?

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because they have a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, are old and frail, or have some form of illness.

What is adult abuse?

Abuse can be defined as the mistreatment of an individual or group by another individual or group, often resulting in a violation of human and civil rights. The abuse can vary from treating someone in a disrespectful way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.

Abuse can happen anywhere – in a person's home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment, in supported housing or in the street.

Any of the following forms of abuse can be either deliberate or be the result of ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way, they are also being abused in other ways resulting in harm.

Harm: Sexual, mental, spiritual, emotional, any type of harm. These are all interlinked.

Forms of abuse:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse
- spiritual, financial or material abuse
- neglect such as ignoring medical or physical care needs
- discriminatory abuse such as that based on race or sexuality or a person's disability and other forms of harassment.
- institutional abuse can sometimes happen in residential homes, nursing homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect and poor practice that affects the whole of that service.

Who might be causing the abuse?

The person who is responsible for the abuse is very often well known to the person being mistreated or exploited.

Visiting the vulnerable in the Secular Order

Official Secular Order visits to a sick or housebound community member will take place in pairs, this protects both the visitors and the visited. However, most visits will be on an informal and friendship basis.

What do you do if you are being abused or you suspect that someone you know may be the victim of abuse?

If you are concerned about behaviour towards an adult who may be at risk in a Secular Carmelite community, please report your concern to the *Safeguarding Lead* for the Secular Order in the first instance (if the situation is considered non-urgent):

Safeguarding Lead Name: Teresa Lynch OCDS

Contact detail: teresalynch1@hotmail.co.uk

What if the abuse is also a crime?

If the abuse is also a crime such as assault, racial harassment, rape, or theft, Safeguarding Leads should involve the **police** to prevent someone else from being abused. If the police are involved, social services work with them and with the abused person to support them. If you are worried about contacting the police you can contact social services to talk things over first, but if the person is in immediate danger, you should call the emergency services by dialling 999.

What will happen if abuse is reported?

Should the Safeguarding Lead believe that a member of the Secular Carmelite community is being abused or mistreated, he or she will make appropriate investigations.

Situations involving abuse, such as bullying, spiritual abuse, or intimidation, may be dealt with in the first instance within the Carmelite Order. If a formal complaint is made, outside agencies will be involved.

Concerns will be taken seriously and will receive prompt attention.

What if the abuse is criminal?

- if there is immediate danger, social services will aim to visit the person about whom there is concern straightaway.
- if there is a significant risk of harm the aim will be to visit within 24 hours
- for other reports of abuse, the aim will be to visit normally within five working days.

Social services dealing with the report will work with the Safeguarding Lead and the person on behalf of whom they were contacted, to help make any decisions. They will provide help and support in taking action to try to end the abuse and ensure that it does not happen again.

Social services will not normally do anything or share information with other people without the permission of the person who is being abused. The only exception to this is in situations where others may be at risk of abuse, or the person is not able to make their own decisions because of mental disability.

Concerns will be taken seriously.

See the attached Formation Candidate Declaration form.

Formation Candidate Declaration

I.....have been attending Secular Carmelite Spirituality Group monthly meetings now formonths and wish to be received into my community for a minimum period of two years of initial formation.

By making this application I confirm that I am not barred from working with vulnerable groups and understand that to apply to work with such groups when barred from doing so is a criminal offence. I further understand that some roles within the Carmelite Secular Order may require a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check. I confirm my willingness to undertake this check if necessary.

I understand that my contact details, (telephone number, email address and home address if agreed) are to be available to designated responsible people in the Secular Carmelite family. These are the Presidents of Secular Order Communities in England and Wales, the Regional Representatives, the National President and the Provincial Delegate.

Signed:

One copy of this form should be retained by

the candidate

the community to which they belong

the Secular Order National Registrar

Data Protection

The Data Protection Act (1998) was replaced in May 2018 by the [General Data Protection Regulations](#) (GDPR). The 'Regulations' control how personal, or customer information is used by organisations or government bodies. It protects people and lays down rules about how data about people can be used and applies to information or data stored on a computer or an organised paper filing system about living people.

Important activities and principles are at the heart of GDPR compliance:

- Regular evaluation of the quality of the data held and ongoing data collection.
- lawfulness, fairness, and transparency
- 'purpose limitation'
- data minimisation
- accuracy
- storage limitation
- confidentiality
- accountability

Ensuring the right technology, processes and people in place to handle the quality of the data held, is a key part of compliance with the [GDPR](#).

21/09/23.