

DIVINE RETREAT CENTRE – PANTASAPH

SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2026

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk

Organisation	Divine Retreat Centre – Pantasaph / Divine UK Ministries
Registered Charity	1154874
Principal location	Franciscan Friary, Monastery Road, Pantasaph, Holywell, Flintshire, CH8 8PE
Policy owner	Trustees / Superior & Director / Safeguarding Lead
Version	2026 Edition – Version 4.0
Review cycle	At least annually, and sooner following significant legal, regulatory, organisational or safeguarding change

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This policy replaces the January 2025 safeguarding policy and should be read with Divine UK's safeguarding procedures, codes of conduct, safer recruitment documents, risk assessments, incident records and safeguarding implementation plan.

Document Control and Approval

Field	Requirement	Responsible	Record
Approval	Formal trustee/competent authority approval	Trustees / Superior	Board minutes and signed approval page
Implementation	Policy communicated and embedded across ministries	Director / Safeguarding Lead	Briefings, notices and training records
Monitoring	Quarterly safeguarding oversight; annual policy review	Trustees / Safeguarding Committee	Minutes, dashboard and annual report
Next scheduled review	Within 12 months of adoption	Trustees / Safeguarding Lead	Document control register

2026 Review Rationale

The 2025 policy was due for review on 8 January 2026. The 2026 edition modernises the governance, terminology, reporting, survivor engagement, respondent management, safer recruitment, training, quality assurance, online safeguarding and record-keeping arrangements while retaining the core commitment of the existing policy.

The 2025 document correctly recognised that safeguarding applies to both adults and children and identified the Children Act 1989 and Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 as key legal foundations. It also established local roles, reporting routes, safer recruitment and training expectations. This edition develops those foundations into a clearer whole-organisation framework.

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- Pantasaph is located in Flintshire and falls within the North Wales safeguarding arrangements. For a child safeguarding concern, contact Flintshire Children's Social Services on 01352 701000 (office hours) or 0345 053 3116 out of hours. For an adult safeguarding concern, contact Flintshire Adult Social Services on 01352 702000 (office hours) or 0345 053 3116 out of hours. In an emergency, call 999. The North Wales Safeguarding Board provides regional safeguarding procedures and information.
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1. Foreword and Safeguarding Commitment

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.” (Matthew 18:10)

Divine UK Ministries affirms the inherent dignity of every person and is committed to creating ministries, retreats, worship, pastoral care, accommodation, volunteering and community activities in which children, young people and adults are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, coercion and avoidable harm.

Safeguarding is integral to Christian ministry and is a responsibility shared by trustees, clergy, religious, employees, volunteers, ministry leaders, contractors and all who act on behalf of Divine UK. Leadership will promote a culture in which concerns can be raised without fear, disclosures are met with compassion, statutory authorities are engaged promptly where required, and learning is used to improve practice.

Divine UK adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and to the concealment, minimisation or mishandling of safeguarding concerns. No pastoral, spiritual, reputational or organisational consideration takes priority over a person's safety or lawful safeguarding action.

2. Purpose, Scope and Status

This policy establishes the safeguarding framework for Divine Retreat Centre – Pantasaph and the activities carried out under its authority. It applies to retreats, residential accommodation, worship, pastoral ministry, pilgrimage, children and youth activities, volunteering, outreach, transport, online activity, external activities and partnership work connected with Pantasaph.

2.1 Who must follow this policy

- Trustees and directors
- Superior, Director and clergy
- Religious and visiting ministers
- Employees, workers and contractors
- Volunteers and ministry leaders
- Safeguarding personnel and committee members
- Anyone authorised to provide pastoral, spiritual, youth, residential or other ministry on behalf of Divine UK.

2.2 Who this policy protects

- Children and young people under 18
- Adults with care and support needs who may be experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect
- Adults who may be temporarily vulnerable because of circumstances, dependency, distress, disability, illness, age, bereavement, homelessness, addiction, coercion or other factors
- Volunteers, staff, clergy, religious, retreatants, visitors and members of the public who come into contact with Divine UK.

This policy is a governance document. Detailed operational procedures, forms and risk tools should sit beneath it and must be consistent with it.

3. Legal, Regulatory and Catholic Safeguarding Framework

Divine UK will act in accordance with applicable law, statutory guidance, charity regulation and the safeguarding standards of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and Wales. The following framework should be checked at each annual review for amendments or replacement guidance.

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Working Together to Safeguard People: Code of Safeguarding Practice and applicable Welsh Government statutory guidance under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, including Part 7 safeguarding duties and the statutory framework for children and adults at risk in Wales.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Disclosure and Barring Service regime, including regulated activity requirements.
- Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, including lawful safeguarding information sharing.
- Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.
- Charities Act 2011 and Charity Commission safeguarding and serious incident expectations.
- Relevant North Wales Safeguarding Board procedures, Flintshire County Council safeguarding arrangements, local authority procedures for managing allegations against persons in positions of trust, and applicable Welsh statutory safeguarding processes.
- The Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) Eight National Safeguarding Standards and Quality Assurance Framework for Religious Life Groups.
- Applicable national Catholic safeguarding policies, canonical requirements and safeguarding instructions adopted by the competent Church authority.

Where statutory, Catholic or local procedures impose a higher or more specific requirement than this policy, the higher or more specific requirement must be followed.

4. Definitions and Safeguarding Principles

4.1 Safeguarding children

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes providing help and support as soon as problems emerge, protecting children from maltreatment whether inside or outside the home including online, preventing impairment of physical and mental health or development, ensuring safe and effective care, and taking action to enable the best outcomes.

4.2 Adult safeguarding

Adult safeguarding concerns the protection of an adult who has needs for care and support, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and because of those needs is unable to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. Divine UK also recognises situational vulnerability and will respond proportionately where an adult's circumstances create heightened risk.

4.3 Core principles

- Safety and welfare are paramount in safeguarding decisions.
- Listen, take seriously, record accurately and act promptly.

- Do not investigate a safeguarding allegation unless specifically authorised within an agreed statutory or canonical process.
- Work in partnership with statutory agencies and relevant Catholic safeguarding bodies.
- Use a person-centred, trauma-informed and respectful approach.
- Share information lawfully, proportionately and on a need-to-know basis; safeguarding can justify information sharing without consent where necessary to protect a person.
- Respect equality, culture, disability, language and communication needs without allowing these factors to obstruct protection from harm.
- Maintain professional and pastoral boundaries and recognise power imbalances in spiritual and ministry relationships.
- Learn from concerns, complaints, incidents, audits and the experience of people who report harm.

5. Forms of Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Safeguarding concerns may involve a single incident, repeated behaviour, omission, organisational practice, abuse of trust or a pattern of coercion. Abuse can occur in person or online, within families, communities, institutions, ministries or peer relationships.

5.1 Children

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse, including child sexual exploitation and grooming
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse and teenage relationship abuse
- Criminal exploitation, county lines and trafficking
- Online abuse and technology-facilitated harm
- Peer-on-peer or child-on-child abuse
- Bullying and discriminatory abuse
- Female genital mutilation, forced marriage and so-called honour-based abuse
- Faith or belief-related abuse
- Radicalisation and exploitation by extremist influences.

5.2 Adults

- Physical abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse

- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Spiritual abuse, coercive religious control or misuse of pastoral authority
- Online, financial and relationship exploitation.

The above lists are not exhaustive. Staff and volunteers must report concerns based on observed or disclosed harm rather than attempting to categorise the concern conclusively.

6. Safeguarding Governance and Accountability

The Trustees retain ultimate responsibility for safeguarding governance. Delegation to the Director, Safeguarding Lead, safeguarding provider or committee does not remove trustee accountability.

6.1 Trustee oversight

- Approve and review this policy at least annually.
- Receive regular safeguarding reports, including themes, training compliance, safer recruitment compliance, open actions, risks and audit findings.
- Ensure adequate safeguarding resources, expertise and independence.
- Maintain a rolling Safeguarding Implementation Plan.
- Ensure safeguarding is a standing governance consideration and is reflected in risk management and strategic decisions.
- Ensure serious incidents are reported to the Charity Commission where required and statutory referrals are made promptly.
- Review safeguarding arrangements after a serious incident, significant complaint, audit finding or material change in ministry.

6.2 Safeguarding Committee

Divine UK will maintain a Safeguarding Committee with appropriate leadership representation and access to professional safeguarding expertise. It will oversee implementation, risk, quality assurance, learning, training and policy compliance. It must not obstruct or duplicate statutory investigations.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Superior / Director

- Champion a safeguarding culture across all ministries.
- Ensure this policy is implemented in practice.
- Support the Safeguarding Lead's authority to escalate concerns independently.
- Ensure appropriate action where allegations concern clergy, religious, staff, volunteers or leaders.
- Ensure trustees receive sufficient information for governance oversight.

7.2 Safeguarding Lead

- Receive and triage safeguarding concerns and ensure immediate safety action.
- Consult and refer to police, children's social services, adult social services and other statutory bodies as appropriate.

- Maintain secure, accurate and retrievable safeguarding records.
- Advise leaders without allowing organisational interests to override safeguarding duties.
- Coordinate survivor support, respondent management and safeguarding plans as appropriate.
- Monitor safer recruitment, training and local safeguarding arrangements.
- Provide reports to trustees and support CSSA audit and quality assurance activity.
- Maintain professional competence and access supervision or specialist advice.

7.3 Safeguarding Representatives / Ministry Leads

Local or ministry safeguarding representatives support implementation, visibility, reporting and safe practice. They must promptly pass concerns to the Safeguarding Lead and must not conduct independent investigations.

7.4 Everyone

Everyone acting for Divine UK must recognise, respond, record and report safeguarding concerns; follow codes of conduct and boundaries; complete required training; cooperate with safeguarding processes; and raise concerns about unsafe practice.

8. Safe Ministry and Prevention

- Risk assess ministries, events, residential activities, transport, one-to-one work, online contact and external venues.
- Use appropriate staffing and supervision ratios and avoid avoidable one-to-one isolation with children or adults at heightened risk.
- Maintain clear codes of conduct for clergy, religious, staff, volunteers, young leaders and helpers.
- Use transparent pastoral practices and appropriate physical, emotional, financial, digital and spiritual boundaries.
- Ensure photography, livestreaming, messaging and data use are governed by consent, privacy and safeguarding procedures.
- Ensure premises and accommodation arrangements reduce opportunities for abuse, exploitation and unauthorised access.
- Require prompt reporting of boundary breaches, grooming indicators, coercive conduct or patterns of concerning behaviour even where no allegation has yet been made.

9. Responding to Disclosures, Concerns and Allegations

9.1 If someone discloses harm

1. Listen calmly and take the person seriously.
2. Do not promise secrecy. Explain that information may need to be shared to keep them or another person safe.
3. Do not interrogate, investigate or ask leading questions. Clarify only what is necessary to understand immediate safety and what happened.
4. Reassure the person that they have done the right thing by speaking.
5. If there is immediate danger or urgent medical need, contact emergency services without delay.
6. Record the person's words as accurately as possible, distinguishing fact, observation and opinion.

7. Report immediately to the Safeguarding Lead or, if unavailable and delay would create risk, directly to the relevant statutory authority.
8. Preserve evidence and do not confront the alleged person responsible unless advised by the safeguarding/statutory process.

9.2 Allegations about a person in a position of trust

Any allegation or concern that a person who works with children may have harmed a child, committed a possible offence against a child, behaved in a way indicating risk to children, or may be unsuitable to work with children must be referred in accordance with the applicable Welsh local authority safeguarding and allegations-management process. Similar concerns involving adults at risk must be considered with adult safeguarding services and any relevant professional or regulatory body.

9.3 Non-recent allegations

Non-recent or historic allegations must be treated seriously. Current risk must be assessed and statutory reporting considered even where the alleged person responsible is deceased, no longer in ministry or the alleged events occurred many years ago.

10. Reporting and Referral Pathway

10.1 Immediate danger

Call 999 where there is an immediate threat to life, serious injury, a crime in progress or urgent danger. Take reasonable steps to make the person safe. Inform the Safeguarding Lead as soon as practicable.

10.2 Safeguarding concern without immediate danger

Report to the Safeguarding Lead without avoidable delay. The Safeguarding Lead will determine, with appropriate professional advice, whether referral is required to children's social services, adult social services, police, DBS, Charity Commission, CSSA, Diocese of Wrexham / Church authority and other competent bodies or another regulator.

10.3 If the concern involves the Safeguarding Lead or senior leadership

The concern must be reported through an alternative route approved by the Trustees, including the Chair or designated trustee and, where appropriate, directly to statutory authorities or the relevant Catholic safeguarding body. No person who is the subject of an allegation should control the response to that allegation.

10.4 Timescales

Immediate risks require immediate action. Other safeguarding concerns must be reported without avoidable delay and recorded promptly. Internal reporting timescales must never be used to delay a statutory referral.

11. Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Records

Safeguarding information is confidential but not secret. Consent should normally be sought where appropriate and safe, but lack of consent does not prevent sharing where there is a lawful basis and sharing is necessary and proportionate to protect a child or adult or to prevent or detect crime.

- Record decisions to share or not share information and the reasons.
- Restrict access to safeguarding records to authorised persons with a legitimate need.
- Keep safeguarding case records separate from general pastoral or personnel notes where practicable.
- Do not use informal messaging platforms as the sole safeguarding record.

- Retain records in accordance with applicable national Catholic, legal, insurance and data protection requirements.
- Preserve original records and audit trails; corrections should remain traceable.
- Where a safeguarding matter may lead to litigation, investigation or inquiry, seek advice before destruction of any relevant record.

12. Supporting Victims and Survivors

Divine UK will respond to people who report harm with compassion, dignity and timeliness. The safeguarding response must not depend on whether the person wishes to remain involved with the Church or Divine UK.

- Offer a named point of contact where appropriate.
- Ask about communication, accessibility, cultural and pastoral needs.
- Provide or signpost to independent specialist support and statutory services where appropriate.
- Explain processes and limitations honestly and avoid unrealistic promises.
- Respect the person's choices while taking any safeguarding action that is legally or ethically necessary.
- Prevent retaliation, intimidation, spiritual pressure or attempts to silence a person who raises a concern.
- Seek feedback and organisational learning without placing responsibility for improvement on the person who reported harm.

13. Managing and Supporting Respondents

A respondent is a person who is the subject of a safeguarding allegation or concern. Divine UK will balance fairness, confidentiality and pastoral support with the overriding need to protect children and adults and preserve the integrity of statutory and canonical processes.

- Undertake or obtain appropriate risk assessment and implement a written safeguarding plan where required.
- Consider temporary restrictions, suspension from duties, supervised ministry, accommodation arrangements or other proportionate safeguards without treating interim action as a finding of guilt.
- Appoint an appropriate support person who is separate from decision-making where practicable.
- Ensure statutory and canonical reporting and investigation requirements are followed.
- Review safeguarding plans at defined intervals and after material changes.
- Document decisions, rationale, monitoring and any return-to-ministry process.
- Do not allow pastoral support for a respondent to compromise survivor support, evidence preservation or safeguarding decisions.

14. Safer Recruitment, DBS and Suitability

Divine UK will use robust safer recruitment for clergy, religious, employees and volunteers. Untested trust, reputation, long service, spiritual standing or personal recommendation is not a substitute for safer recruitment.

- Define the role, responsibilities, supervision and safeguarding requirements before recruitment.

- Use an application/personal details process and explore relevant gaps in history.
- Obtain and verify suitable references directly from referees.
- Verify identity and right to work where applicable.
- Use a safeguarding self-declaration where lawful and appropriate.
- Undertake the correct level of DBS check only where the role is legally eligible, including barred list information where the role constitutes regulated activity.
- Assess any disclosed or DBS information through a documented, proportionate risk process.
- Do not permit unsupervised regulated activity before required checks and approval are complete.
- Maintain a central safer recruitment register with role, check level, completion date, training and review status.
- Use ongoing supervision, conduct monitoring and renewal/update arrangements; DBS checking is not a one-off substitute for vigilance.
- Make referrals to the DBS where the legal referral conditions are met.

15. Visiting Clergy, Religious and External Ministers

Before active ministry, visiting clergy and religious must satisfy the vetting and suitability requirements applicable to their status and role. This includes appropriate confirmation of good standing, celebret/testimonial of suitability where required, identity verification, safeguarding expectations and any necessary DBS or equivalent checks.

Overseas personnel and those new to ministry in England and Wales and Wales must receive a safeguarding briefing or training appropriate to their role before undertaking active ministry. External speakers, contractors and partner organisations must be risk assessed and subject to proportionate safeguarding requirements.

16. Training, Induction and Competency

- All new personnel receive safeguarding induction appropriate to their role.
- Clergy, religious, employees and volunteers complete nationally or organisationally required safeguarding training.
- Specialist roles receive enhanced training in disclosures, case management, survivor engagement, respondent management, safer recruitment, record keeping and information sharing as relevant.
- A training needs analysis is maintained and reviewed.
- Training attendance, completion and refresh dates are recorded centrally.
- Non-compliance is followed up and may result in restriction from ministry or volunteering.
- Training effectiveness is evaluated through supervision, observation, case learning, feedback and audit rather than attendance alone.

17. Children and Young People

All Divine UK activities involving children and young people must be planned around their welfare, voice, developmental needs and right to protection.

- Obtain appropriate parental/carer information and consent where required, while recognising that a child's safeguarding disclosure does not require parental permission to be reported.
- Use safe supervision, collection and handover arrangements.
- Maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios based on activity and risk.
- Do not use corporal punishment, humiliating discipline, spiritual threats or coercive practices.
- Respond to child-on-child abuse as safeguarding, not merely misbehaviour.
- Take online harm, sexual harassment, exploitation, coercive control and abusive intimate relationships seriously.
- Consider additional vulnerability related to disability, communication needs, care status, migration, discrimination or family circumstances.
- Listen to children and create accessible ways for them to raise concerns.

18. Adults at Risk

Adult safeguarding practice will be person-centred and guided by safety, proportionality, prevention, partnership and accountability. Capacity, consent and wishes should be considered, while recognising that action may be required without consent where others are at risk, a serious crime may have occurred, coercion is present, the person lacks relevant capacity, or another lawful safeguarding basis applies.

Divine UK will pay particular attention to risks arising from dependency, accommodation, financial hardship, bereavement, disability, illness, homelessness, substance use, mental distress, social isolation and spiritual authority. These circumstances do not automatically mean an adult lacks capacity or is an 'adult at risk'; decisions must be individual and evidence-based.

19. Residential Retreats and Accommodation

- Accommodation is provided only within the scope, capacity and risk controls of Divine UK's charitable ministry; it is not an emergency housing or clinical service unless expressly commissioned as such.
- Residential admissions and exceptional accommodation requests must be risk assessed where safeguarding, behavioural, health, substance use, violence, exploitation or vulnerability concerns are known.
- Children must not be accommodated without appropriate safeguarding arrangements and lawful parental/carer responsibility.
- Separate and safe sleeping, bathroom and access arrangements must be maintained as appropriate.
- Medication, medical emergencies, withdrawal symptoms, intoxication or acute mental/physical health needs must be escalated to appropriate health or emergency services; volunteers must not provide care beyond competence.
- Behaviour that creates serious risk may lead to proportionate restrictions or exclusion, subject to safeguarding, equality and legal considerations.
- Incidents, missing persons, unauthorised visitors and serious boundary breaches must be recorded and escalated.

20. Pastoral, Spiritual and Ministry Safeguarding

Pastoral and spiritual ministry involves inherent power and trust. Divine UK prohibits misuse of spiritual authority, including coercion, manipulation, threats of spiritual consequences, exploitation of dependency,

inappropriate secrecy, grooming, sexualised conduct, financial exploitation or using prayer, confession-like conversations or spiritual direction to override a person's free choice.

- Prayer and pastoral support should respect dignity, consent and personal boundaries.
- Sensitive one-to-one ministry should take place in an accountable setting with appropriate visibility and safeguarding arrangements.
- Personnel must not present themselves as qualified counsellors, clinicians or legal advisers unless appropriately qualified and authorised.
- Safeguarding disclosures made during pastoral conversations must be acted upon in accordance with this policy; personnel must not promise absolute confidentiality.
- Any canonical confidentiality that may apply to a sacramental context must be handled in accordance with Church law and competent safeguarding advice; personnel should not extend sacramental confidentiality to ordinary pastoral conversations.

21. Online, Digital and Social Media Safeguarding

- Use approved organisational channels for ministry communications where practicable.
- Do not engage in secretive, sexualised, exploitative or boundary-blurring digital contact.
- Communications with children must follow parental/carer, group communication and record-keeping arrangements appropriate to the ministry.
- Livestreaming, photographs and recordings must follow consent, privacy and safeguarding procedures.
- Moderate online groups and respond to bullying, grooming, exploitation, threats and harmful content.
- Report suspected online child sexual abuse material or other criminal online harm to the appropriate authorities; do not copy or circulate illegal material.
- Protect personal data, account access and safeguarding records through appropriate cybersecurity controls.

22. Whistleblowing, Complaints and Speaking Up

Anyone may raise a concern about unsafe practice, poor safeguarding culture, concealment, retaliation, conflicts of interest or failure to follow this policy. Concerns may be raised through the Safeguarding Lead, Director, designated trustee or external/statutory route as appropriate.

No person should suffer retaliation for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith. Complaints about service quality and safeguarding concerns may overlap; a complaint process must never delay protective action or statutory reporting.

23. Partnership Working and External Bodies

Divine UK will cooperate with police, local authorities, health services, North Wales Safeguarding Board, DBS, Charity Commission, CSSA, diocesan/religious safeguarding services and other competent bodies. Memoranda, service arrangements or external safeguarding support do not transfer away Divine UK trustees' own legal and governance responsibilities.

Where another organisation runs an activity jointly with Divine UK, responsibilities for safeguarding, reporting, safer recruitment, information sharing and incident management must be agreed in advance and recorded.

24. Serious Incident Reporting and Regulatory Escalation

Trustees will consider whether a safeguarding incident, allegation, regulatory failure or significant reputational risk constitutes a serious incident that must be reported to the Charity Commission. Reporting to the Charity Commission does not replace referral to police, social services, DBS or other safeguarding authorities.

The Safeguarding Lead and trustees must ensure that regulatory reporting decisions are documented, including where a decision is made that a report is not required.

25. Quality Assurance, Audit and Continuous Improvement

Divine UK will align its safeguarding assurance with the CSSA Eight National Safeguarding Standards:

1. Safeguarding embedded in leadership, governance, ministry and culture.
 2. Communication of the Church's safeguarding message.
 3. Engagement with and care for those who report having been harmed.
 4. Effective management of allegations and concerns.
 5. Management and support of subjects of allegations and concerns (respondents).
 6. Robust human resource management.
 7. Training and support for safeguarding.
 8. Quality assurance and continuous improvement.
- Maintain a rolling Safeguarding Implementation Plan reviewed at least annually.
 - Conduct periodic file audits, safer recruitment audits, training audits and ministry compliance checks.
 - Analyse incidents, allegations, near misses, complaints and whistleblowing themes.
 - Track actions to completion with named owners and deadlines.
 - Provide trustees with regular qualitative and quantitative safeguarding assurance.
 - Publish an appropriate annual safeguarding statement/report for stakeholders.
 - Cooperate fully with CSSA audit/inspection and use recommendations to improve practice.

26. Policy Communication and Accessibility

This policy and essential reporting information will be made accessible to clergy, religious, employees, volunteers, retreatants, parents/carers, children and adults using Divine UK services. Key safeguarding contacts and reporting routes should be displayed at relevant premises and online. Accessible or easy-read formats should be considered where needed.

27. Breaches of Policy

Failure to follow this policy may result in safeguarding action, restriction from ministry or volunteering, disciplinary action, termination of engagement, referral to statutory or regulatory bodies, or canonical action as appropriate. The response will be proportionate to risk and applicable law.

28. Review and Approval

This policy must be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there is a significant safeguarding incident, audit recommendation, legal or statutory change, change to Catholic safeguarding standards, organisational restructuring, new ministry activity or evidence that the policy is not effective.

Policy title	Divine Retreat Centre – Pantasaph Safeguarding Policy 2026
Version	4.0
Adopted / approved	_____ 2026
Approved by	_____
Next review due	No later than 12 months after adoption, or sooner if required

Appendix A – Immediate Safeguarding Response

Situation	Immediate action	Then
Immediate danger / serious injury / crime in progress	Call 999 and make the person as safe as reasonably possible.	Inform Safeguarding Lead; record facts and actions.
Child safeguarding concern	Report without delay to Safeguarding Lead; refer to children's social services/police as required.	Consider follow the applicable Welsh process for allegations concerning a person working with children.
Adult safeguarding concern	Report without delay to Safeguarding Lead; consider adult social care/police and the adult's wishes/capacity.	Record consent, risk and reasons for information-sharing decisions.
Concern about Safeguarding Lead / senior leader	Use designated trustee/alternative safeguarding route or statutory authority directly.	Ensure the person concerned does not control the response.
Historic/non-recent allegation	Treat seriously; assess current risk and report appropriately.	Preserve records and consider survivor support and respondent management.

Never delay an urgent statutory referral while waiting for internal permission, a meeting, a form, or the availability of a particular office-holder.

Appendix B – Minimum Recording Standard

- Date, time and place of concern/disclosure.
- Name and contact details of person raising the concern where known.
- Name, age/date of birth and relevant details of person at risk where known.
- Exact words used for significant statements wherever possible.
- Observed injuries, behaviour or circumstances, without speculation.
- Immediate safety action taken.
- Who was informed, when, by whom and how.
- Advice received and referrals made, including reference numbers where available.
- Information-sharing and consent decisions with reasons.
- Any conflict of interest and how it was managed.
- Follow-up actions, responsible person and review date.
- Author's name, role, signature/electronic authentication and date.

Appendix C – Safeguarding Contacts Template

Complete and display the current details below. These details must be checked regularly and whenever personnel or service arrangements change.

Contact	Name / organisation	Current details
Divine UK Safeguarding Lead	Alister Fernandes	Safeguarding@divineuk.org 07415614690
Deputy / alternative safeguarding contact	Joan Fernandes	joanfernandes@divineuk.org

Designated Trustee for Safeguarding	Fr. Michael Payyapilly	frmichaelpayyapillyvc@divineuk.org
Flintshire Children's Social Services	Flintshire County Council	01352 701000 (office hours) 0345 053 3116 (out of hours) ChildProtectionReferral@flintshire.gov.uk
Flintshire Adult Safeguarding	Flintshire County Council	01352 702000 (office hours) 0345 053 3116 (out of hours) SSDuty@flintshire.gov.uk
North Wales Safeguarding Board	Regional safeguarding arrangements	regionalsafeguarding@denbighshire.gov.uk 01824 706054
North Wales Police / emergency	Police	999 in an emergency
Diocese of Wrexham Safeguarding Coordinator	Mary Rowlands	safeguarding@rcdwxm.org.uk 01978 262726 / 01978 536349
Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA)	CSSA	Use current CSSA reporting and safeguarding arrangements
Safe Spaces	Independent support for victims and survivors	0300 303 1056 safespaces@firstlight.org.uk

Appendix D – 2026 Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Trustees formally approve the 2026 policy and minute the decision.
- ☐ Safeguarding Lead and alternative reporting route are confirmed in writing.
- ☐ Safeguarding Committee terms of reference and meeting schedule are current.
- ☐ Safeguarding Implementation Plan is approved and tracked.
- ☐ All premises and ministry webpages display current safeguarding reporting information.
- ☐ Safer Recruitment Master Register is complete and audited.
- ☐ DBS eligibility and renewal/update arrangements are checked role by role.
- ☐ Visiting clergy/religious vetting and testimonial processes are documented.
- ☐ Training needs analysis and 2026 training plan are current.
- ☐ Residential retreat and accommodation safeguarding risk controls are reviewed.
- ☐ Children/youth activities and online ministry arrangements are risk assessed.
- ☐ Survivor engagement/support procedure is in place.
- ☐ Respondent management and safeguarding plan procedure is in place.
- ☐ Central incident/concern/allegation log and secure case-file system are operational.
- ☐ Whistleblowing and complaints routes align with safeguarding escalation.
- ☐ Serious incident reporting procedure is understood by trustees.
- ☐ Quarterly safeguarding assurance reporting to trustees is established.
- ☐ Annual safeguarding report and policy review are scheduled.

Appendix E – Reference Framework

Key 2026 reference points used for this revision include:

- Welsh Government, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguard

People statutory guidance.

- North Wales Safeguarding Board and Flintshire County Council safeguarding arrangements.
- Diocese of Wrexham safeguarding arrangements and Catholic safeguarding standards.
- Department for Education, Working Together to Safeguard People: Code of Safeguarding Practice.
- Charity Commission for England and Wales and Wales, Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees / Safeguarding for charities and trustees.
- Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, Eight National Safeguarding Standards.
- Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, Quality Assurance Framework for Religious Life Groups.
- Applicable North Wales Safeguarding Board, Flintshire safeguarding and adult safeguarding procedures.
- Applicable national Catholic safeguarding policies and canonical safeguarding requirements.

This policy is designed as a governance and operational safeguarding framework for Divine UK Ministries. It should be checked against current professional safeguarding advice, local statutory procedures and the organisation's Catholic safeguarding service arrangements before formal adoption.