**Guidelines for Creating a Safe Environment for Children and Adults at Risk at Blackfriars Priory 62-64 St Giles Oxford**

The following guidelines have been approved by the vote of the Priory’s Chapter.

1. When the church is open to the public, the church, the choir, and the corridor leading to the sacristies are **Public Areas** to which children may have access, if properly supervised. Any child of primary school age attending a service must be accompanied by the child’s parent or carer or another adult who has been given responsibility for the child by the child’s parent or carer.
2. The remaining parts of the priory are divided into three zones (*see plan*) – **Red, Orange,** and **Green**. Children and adults at risk may never enter **Red zone** areas. They may not enter **Green zone** areas unless accompanied by a parent or carer, or another adult (other than a friar) who has the consent of the parent or carer. They may not enter **Orange zone** areas unless (a) accompanied in the same way and (b) invited by a friar assigned to the priory or by another authorised person.
3. Each friar, volunteer, or employee ought to ensure that he or she is not the only adult involved in any activities with children and young people who are under 18 years of age. Another adult ought to be within sight or hearing distance.
4. At least two adults must be present on any excursion or journey with children or young people undertaken on behalf of Blackfriars. Parental consent must be obtained in writing beforehand.
5. Any friar, volunteer, or employee who observes behaviour of an adult, child or young person which he or she considers to be unacceptable should challenge this in an appropriate way and bring the matter to the attention of the priory’s Local Safeguarding Friar or Lay Safeguarding Representatives.
6. All friars, volunteers, and employees should listen to any concerns brought to them by children and respond to these in a sensitive and caring way, ensuring that relevant information is shared with the Local Safeguarding Friar or Lay Safeguarding Representatives.
7. If anyone associated with the mission of Blackfriars Priory has any concerns about behaviour that they have witnessed, or has been brought to their attention, including breaches of these safeguarding norms and the Safeguarding Policy of the Province, they should communicate their concern to the Local Safeguarding Friar, the Lay Safeguarding Representatives or to the Province’s Designated Safeguarding Lead.
8. Any friar, volunteer, or employee who is concerned that a child or adult at risk might be suffering from neglect, or from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, should report this directly to the Religious Life Safeguarding Service (RLSS) at [safeguarding@religioussafeguarding.org](mailto:safeguarding@religioussafeguarding.org) or by telephone at 0151 5562311 or to the Local Safeguarding Friar or Lay Safeguarding Representatives who will forward the concern to the RLSS.
9. Any friar, volunteer, or employee who is concerned that a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger, at imminent risk or requires medical attention, must contact the relevant emergency service via 999. Local Social Services should also be contacted at the earliest opportunity in the case of a child or adult at risk. The RLSS should then be contacted as soon as possible and provided with a detailed written account of the concerns/allegations/account given by the person.
10. The person with responsibility for an event or activity must ensure that any incident or accident involving a child or adult at risk is recorded on an incident form within 24 hours and submitted by email to the Local Safeguarding Friar or Lay Safeguarding Representative. These forms are available from the Local Safeguarding Friar, the Lay Safeguarding Representative, the Prior or the 9.30 a.m. pastor.
11. The policies, procedures and guidelines adopted by Blackfriars Priory, the English Province of the Order of Preachers, and the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales must be adhered to by all groups using these premises.
12. These policies, procedures and guidelines must be adhered to by friars, volunteers, and employees even when they are working away from the premises of Blackfriars Priory, but working for the Priory, the English Dominican Province or any entity thereof.
13. All those involved in working with children and adults at risk in Blackfriars Priory must carefully read the policy documents given to them. They will be subject to the checks and procedures of the Child Protection Policy of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Policy last updated: April 2025 | Name: Dominic White OP, Prior |
| Date of next review: April 2026 | Date: 06/05/2025 |