



social care
institute for excellence

A Positive Safeguarding Culture in Faith-Based Organisations

Webinar and Your Questions Answered

23rd June 2021

Session Outline



- The rationale for safeguarding and why it is everybody's business
- What is meant by a safeguarding culture
- What does a positive safeguarding culture look like
- Being outward-facing
- Monitoring a safeguarding culture

Safeguarding Training Fund

A safeguarding initiative with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), NCVO and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Between 2020 and 2022, SCIE are working with faith-based organisations to:

- Promote and champion safeguarding and safe culture
- Enable local networking and self-support
- Distribute and promote NCVO resources



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport



Safeguarding Training Fund

SCIE will do this, at no cost to organisations, by:

- Bringing together experts in safeguarding in faith-based organisations, to discuss the challenges faced and help shape SCIE's work in the area;
- Offering local learning opportunities and networks through online and local events
- Disseminating and sharing the NCVO materials
- Providing training opportunities
- Publishing resources to support safeguarding practices



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport



Quick poll:



How confident are you that your faith-based organisation currently has a positive safeguarding culture?

- 1. Confident**
- 2. Partly confident**
- 3. Lacking confidence**

What is Safeguarding?



Safeguarding is the process of protecting the children and adults that come into contact with us from harm through **safe** and **effective** care.

It includes all aspects of our work, from governance and leadership, recruitment, policies and procedures through to training and culture.

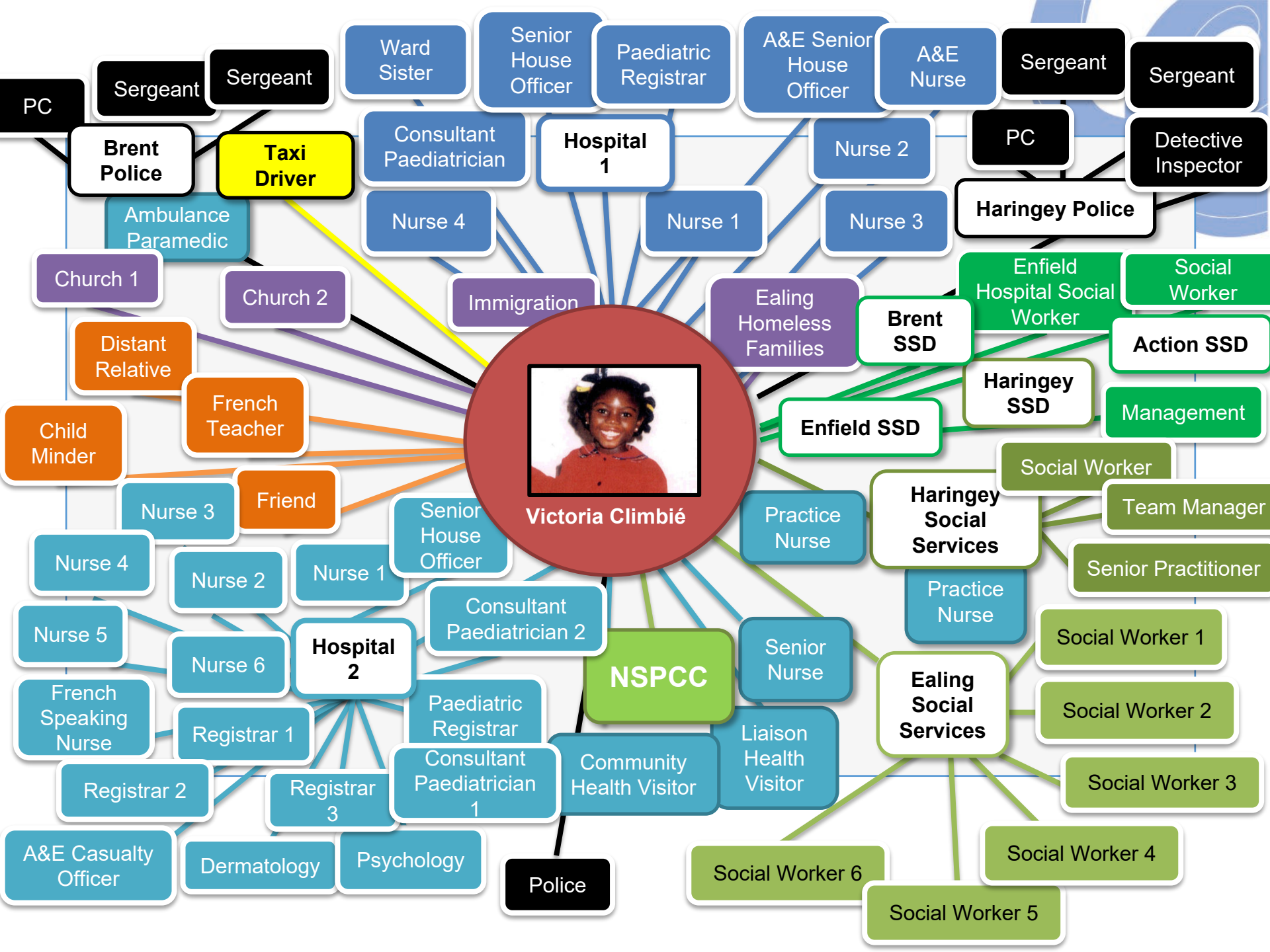
Child and adult protection are core parts of safeguarding about how we recognise and protect individuals who are suffering, or who are likely to suffer significant harm.

Equal opportunities



‘All children have a right to grow up safe from harm.’

It is important that professionals are sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and to child-rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. At the same time they must be clear that child abuse cannot be condoned for any reason including culture, faith, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class, gender, age etc.



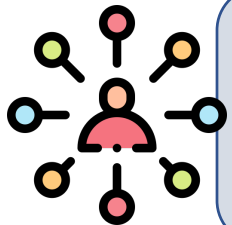
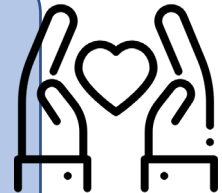
Why Safeguarding in Faith-Based Organisations?

People may turn to their faith in times of personal struggle, hardship, bereavement and loneliness and when they feel most vulnerable.



This may include when things happening in their lives make them unsafe.

Faith groups play a major role in the lives of adults, children and young people; nurture, respect and caring are central values in all faiths.



Faith organisations and their leaders have significant reach within their community, to influence change and support those in need

What is a Culture of Safeguarding?



Creating a culture of safety means embedding safeguarding into **everything** an organisation does.

Embedding a culture of safety starts at the **very top** of the organisation with those in senior positions pledging absolute commitment and support, including ensuring the resources are available to make it happen. This commitment **cascades** through to the staff who know that abuse can and does happen and are prepared to take action if the need arises.

National Learning



Save the Children

Management of allegations of harassment were poorly handled and reported;

A reliance on policies and procedures, with lack of attention to organisational culture;

A defensive approach to managing concerns both internally and externally.



OXFAM

Culture and safeguarding processes repeatedly ‘fell below’ expectations;

Culture of tolerating of poor behaviour;

“the organisation’s mission and values are not sufficiently embedded in the day to day actions and behaviours... to reinforce the expected ways of working...”

National Learning: IICSA



“A culture of vigilance ... depends fundamentally on engaging ‘hearts and minds’ from the leadership down through to the grass roots...”

Key findings:

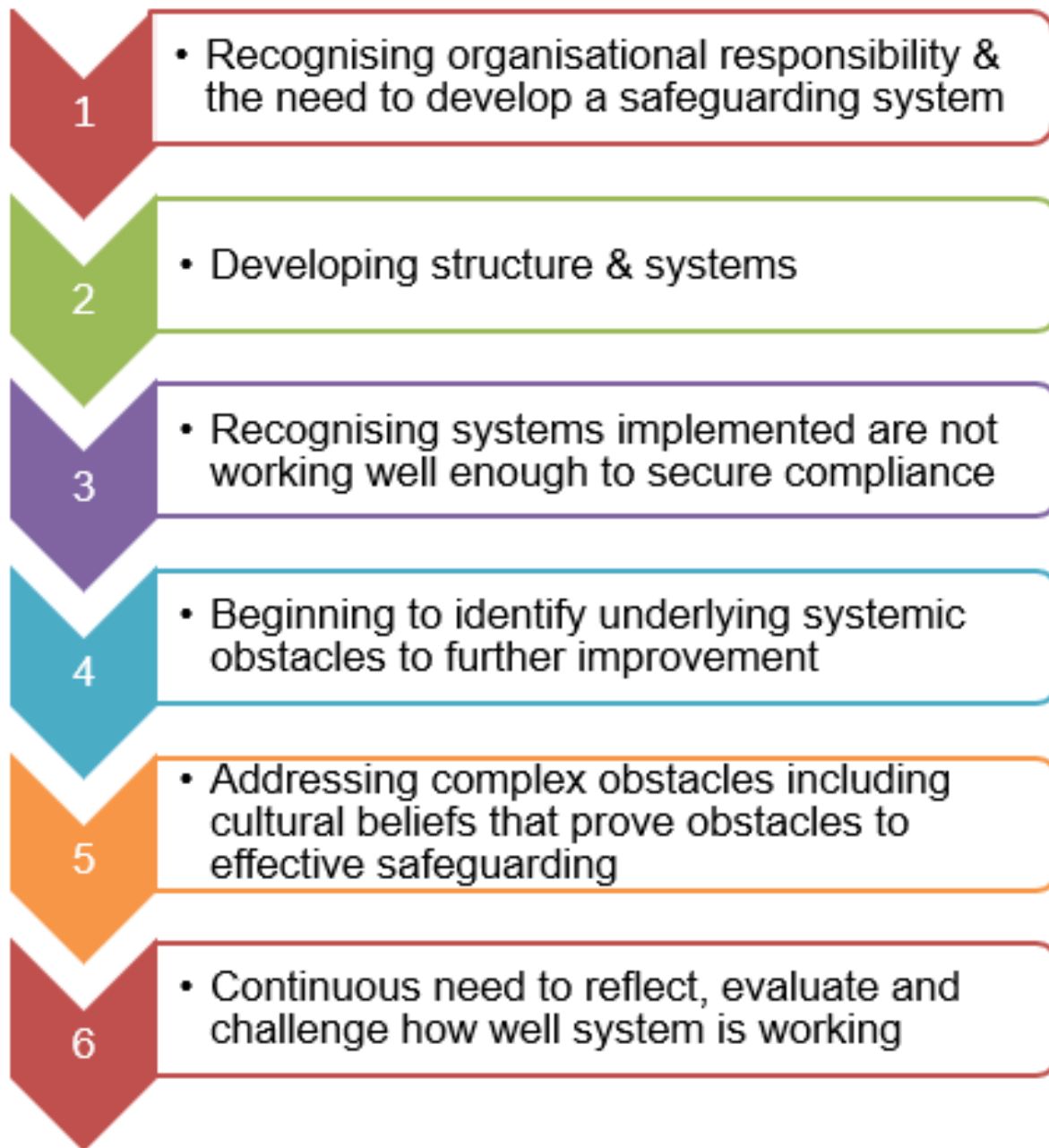
- ‘Culture of acceptance’?
- Focussing on needs of clergy as opposed to victims and survivors (‘culture of sensitivity’)
- Culture can be a place that abusers can hide
- Moving beyond a culture of platitudes
- Defensive cultures inhibit development of open learning environment
- Moving towards a culture of vigilance
- Resourcing and prioritisation of safeguarding

What Does a Safeguarding Culture Look Like?



A positive culture of safeguarding has several different aspects key to it:

1. A safeguarding policy and procedure that are understood and shared to those who need to see it
2. Effectively resourced and prioritised function
3. Appropriate safeguarding training
4. A code of conduct for volunteers and staff (trustees)
5. Approaches that are child and adult focussed



The Journey of Safeguarding

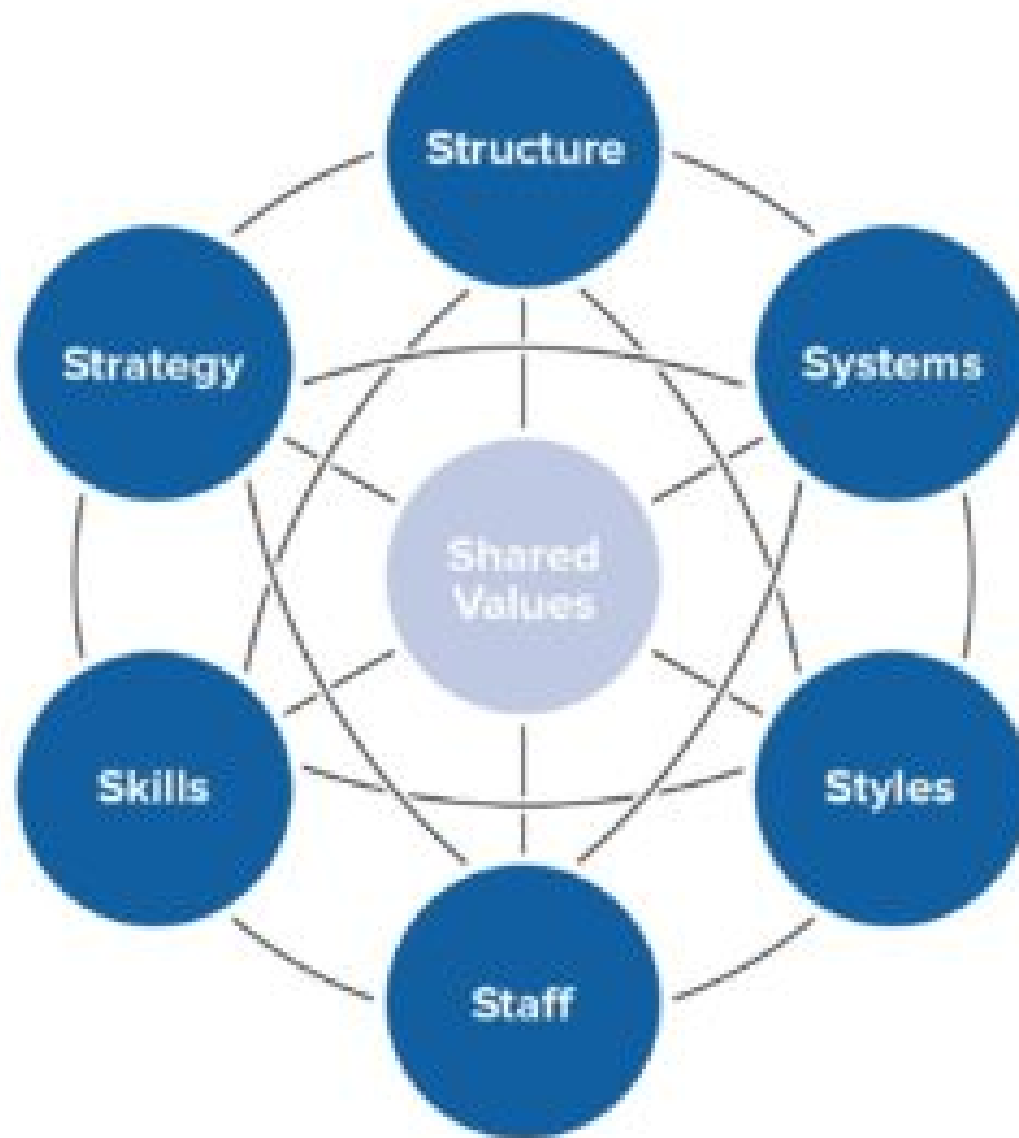
Credit: Edi Carmi (SCIE)

What Does a Safeguarding Culture Look Like?



But a positive culture must also go beyond, into the behaviours and values of people:

1. Leaders model appropriate behaviours
2. A commitment to safeguarding, clearly articulated
3. A clear understanding of how safeguarding fits with the wider values of the organisation
4. Respect modelled to everyone
5. An open learning environment



Quick poll:



Where would you place your organisation on the safeguarding development journey?

- 1. Early recognition and implementation of policies and systems**
- 2. Identifying persisting needs and gaps**
- 3. Actively addressing underlying barriers (incl. culture)**

Leaders who live and breathe the values



Survivor-centred approaches

Avoid tokenism

Equal voice to raise concerns

Recognise diversity and impact on openness

Key principles of meaningful survivor engagement

- Genuine efforts toward co-production and being treated as equal partners
 - Compassion, courtesy and respect
- Recognise the burden of the progress of people's individual cases
- Remunerated to reflect the nature of the task & payment of reasonable travel and other expenses associated with the task
- Individuals will expect the right to privacy and anonymity
- Venues used in which participants can feel safe and well



Inclusive

Independent

Empowered

Supported

Resourced

Strategic

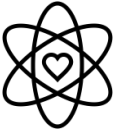
Professional

Resistance to change?



Achieving safeguarding and cultural change is complex, and resistance is not uncommon from those who are a part of the process. Consider:

 Bringing people along with you on the journey and rationale for change?

 Giving clarity about how safeguarding sits with wider values?

 Addressing feelings of mistrust and judgement?

Tackling practical barriers (e.g. understanding, IT access)?

 Giving a clear imperative and directive for change?

Quick for reflection:



Do you recognise any of these barriers to change?

What might help to overcome and address them, and who is needed to support this change?

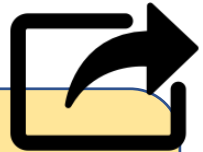
High vs. Low Reporting Culture?



If you received a report of a safeguarding concern, how would you feel?



Would you feel that your safeguarding efforts were succeeding or failing?



Would you feel able or reluctant to share it?



Would you feel that you have to manage it internally (and quietly) or able to report it to other professionals?

Partnership Working

Central to good safeguarding are links with other professionals and agencies that support children and adults to stay safe:

- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Local Safeguarding Adult Board
- Social Services (children and adults)
- Local schools and colleges
- Charities, food banks and support services

Be aware that sharing information with some professionals is a legal requirement



Monitoring Your Culture



Continuing to check that your culture is safe is vital and should be part of your ongoing work. Look out for:

- Language: does this always reflect a safe and respectful attitude to others?
- Awareness: do people talk about safeguarding, or demonstrate any misunderstandings?
- Behaviours: do we receive reports, or have conversations about concerns?
- Partnership: do we have links with children, parents, other interested adults, other professionals, or groups, to help us to safeguard?

Thank you!



To find out more about SCIE's work with faith-based organisations or to get in touch, please follow the links below.

SCIE and the Safeguarding Training Fund:
scie.org.uk/safeguarding/charities/resources

Safeguarding for faith groups:
scie.org.uk/safeguarding/faith-groups

Sign-up to SCIE's e-bulletin to find out about future events and resources:
scie.org.uk/myscie/register



Thank you

Any questions?