

# DIOCESE IN EUROPE

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THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

Diocesan Bishop:  
**The Right Reverend Dr Geoffrey Rowell**  
*Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe*



## **The Protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults: our Christian Responsibility**

Jesus uttered the most solemn warnings about those who harm and endanger children and the vulnerable. In recent years, it has become apparent that some clergy and others involved in pastoral work in the Church have betrayed the responsibilities of Christian ministry by abusing their position of pastoral intimacy and power.

The Church of England, in common with other Churches, is seeking to safeguard the highest possible standards of pastoral behaviour, not only for the sake of potential victims of abuse, but also to protect the overwhelming majority of clergy and Church workers who devote themselves faithfully and with integrity to the nurture of the young. In recent years it has been realized that under certain circumstances some adults may also be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

It is for this reason that the Church of England requires all ministers, ordained or lay, who have, or might have, contact with young people and vulnerable adults to complete a declaration form, which is then checked wherever possible with the records of public authorities. In many countries, it is possible for people to get certificates of good conduct from either the police or other public bodies.

I fully recognise that this can feel a burden and an intrusion but the Diocese takes the view that by allowing no exceptions to this policy nobody should have the grounds for feeling personally affronted, or their own integrity questioned.

I am very grateful to you and to all who are willing to serve the Church in this diocese, and hope very much that you will understand the reasons for this policy.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

+Geoffrey

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