Terms of Reference: Safeguarding Committee & Safeguarding Panel

Safeguarding Committee

Parent Body

Ampleforth Abbey Trust (AAT)

Purpose

To scrutinise, advise and report to the Board on the overall performance and effectiveness of safeguarding across the activities of the Ampleforth Abbey Trust, enabling the trustees to discharge their duties in safeguarding.

Remit

In exercising its responsibilities, the Committee ***will make recommendations*** to the Board of AAT on:

1 Identification of performance indicators and annual objectives against which the trustees of AAT can monitor and measure the adequacy and effectiveness of safeguarding.

2 An effective strategic approach to safeguarding as part of a wider AAT strategy.

3 The adequacy and currency of the *Safeguarding Commitment* and *Commitment to Survivors*, and the performance of AAT in relation to the Commitments.

4 Approval of policies related to safeguarding.

5 Any changes to safeguarding-related regulation, and legal requirements and guidance which will affect the operation of AAT and how they should be implemented.

6 How best to improve and maintain a positive safeguarding culture.

7 Any safeguarding-related matters which may have a detrimental effect on the reputation or charitable status of AAT (including advising, on request, on Serious Incident reports to the Charity Commission and any civil claims), and any remedial action that might be necessary.

In exercising its delegated responsibility, the Committee ***will carry out*** the following, taking decisions as necessary, and report its activity in full to the Board of AAT:

8 Ensure that AAT safeguarding policies and related guidance are fit for purpose and comply with the law and best practice.

9 Oversee arrangements to ensure staff and volunteer well-being including, the application of policy relating to bullying, harassment and whistleblowing.

10 Oversee the application of safeguarding policies and related guidance across the activities of AAT.

11 Ensure the establishment and implementation of a risk assessment framework to assess those members of the monastic community who may pose a safeguarding risk to the communities in which they live or serve.

12 Review reports from the executive in relation to past and current safeguarding incidents, including reportable incidents, and to monitor the effectiveness of the handling of any such incidents.

13 Ensure the review of any major incidents in order to inform and improve future practice.

14 Oversee the development and implementation of any safeguarding-related action plans, to update these as and when required to ensure safeguarding is continually improved and enhanced, and best practice is adopted.

15 Oversee formulation of an Annual Review Report on Safeguarding for submission to AAT.

16 Ensure the establishment and implementation of a Safeguarding Quality Assurance Framework to support continuous improvement and learning.

17 Review the safeguarding risks on the AAT risk register, ensuring that these are correctly identified and the controls are operating satisfactorily.

18 Oversee the arrangements in place for the engagement of the Trust with victims and survivors of abuse.

19 Approve a training strategy for monks, staff and volunteers in relation to safeguarding and oversee its implementation.

20 Consider the annual safeguarding report from the Ampleforth Lourdes Pilgrimage.

21 Approve the appointment of the lead safeguarding volunteer for the Ampleforth Lourdes Pilgrimage.

22 Ensure that the Trust works in partnership with statutory agencies on matters relating to safeguarding, ensuring effective communication and dialogue with those agencies and to seek their guidance as appropriate.

23 Oversee any safeguarding-related compliance reporting to the Charity Commission and the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA).

24 Ensure that the sharing of personal data relating to safeguarding internally and externally, including through a protocol agreed with Ampleforth College, is carried out lawfully.

25 Review recommendations and decisions of the Safeguarding Panel, ensuring that they are compliant with civil law and regulation and in the best interests of the Trust.

26 Receive and review all minutes of the Safeguarding Panel.

27 Consider recommendations from the Safeguarding Panel, assessing in particular matters of reputational risk and possible mitigations, and confirm any recommendations to be made to the Religious Superior in relation to individual members of the monastic community.

28 To oversee the implementation of an agreed escalation procedure for concerns should the Religious Superior be seen to take unsafe decisions, contrary to the advice received by the Safeguarding Panel.

29 Liaise as appropriate, and as directed by AAT, with other safeguarding-related Committees in place from time to time, considering the impact of decisions of those bodies on the work of Committee.

30 Carry out any other functions as from time to time delegated to it by the Trustees of AAT.

Reporting and Review

The Committee shall ensure that minutes of all meetings are submitted to the Board of Trustees as soon as practicable following each meeting. The Committee Chair (or delegate) will deliver a summary report of Committee proceedings at each Board meeting.

The Committee shall review annually its terms of reference and its own effectiveness and recommend any changes to AAT.

Membership

3 to 6 members appointed by AAT including at least one AAT Trustee and the Religious Superior. Members may not be employees of AAT.

The Chair of the Committee will be an AAT trustee agreed by AAT.

The Chair of the Safeguarding Panel shall attend meetings as appropriate in order to present the recommendations of the Safeguarding Panel with regard to particularly complex cases.

In addition those members of the senior executive team as the Chair may require shall attend Committee meetings.

Quorum

3 members including at least 1 AAT Trustee.

Voting

Matters put to a formal vote at any meeting of the Committee shall be determined by a majority of votes of the Committee members present, and in the case of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Frequency of Meetings

To meet 4 times per year in the ordinary course.

Safeguarding Panel

The Safeguarding Panel will constitute a standing panel of independent co-opted experts with appropriate safeguarding expertise to manage individual casework, and make recommendations to the Religious Superior, via the Safeguarding Committee, in relation to the safeguarding arrangements for members of the monastic community about whom safeguarding concerns have been raised. The Panel will operate in accordance with procedures set out by the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency.

In particular the Safeguarding Panel will:

1. Implement a risk assessment framework to assess those members of the monastic community who may pose a safeguarding risk to the communities in which they live or serve.
2. Draw up, and recommend to the Religious Superior, safeguarding plans (or equivalent mitigation arrangements) in relation to those members of the monastic Community who,

following risk assessment, are deemed to require these. Any recommendations will be first be considered by the Safeguarding Committee to examine any issues of reputational risk.

3 Ensure the regular formal review of safeguarding plans (or equivalent arrangements) and report findings and any recommended changes or closures to the Safeguarding Committee.

4 Refer all matters of breach of safeguarding plan (or equivalent arrangements) to the Safeguarding Committee and make any recommendations for sanction.

5 Ensure that recommendations made to the Safeguarding Committee comply with CSSA procedures and with Canon Law.

The Safeguarding Panel shall ensure that minutes of all meetings are submitted to the Safeguarding Committee.

Panel Membership

The Safeguarding Panel shall have up to 6 members, external to Ampleforth Abbey Trust, who have appropriate professional safeguarding expertise and experience in, for example, adult and children's social care, police, probation, civil/canon law or healthcare.

The Safeguarding Trustee, Director of Safeguarding and Safeguarding Assessors will be in attendance at Safeguarding Panel meetings. Statutory partners will be invited to attend in an advisory capacity. The Religious Superior will be in attendance for any cases where there is significant impact on a member of the monastic community, with the exception of cases where criminal charges have been made, in which case the Religious Superior will not attend Panel meetings until the conclusion of any ensuing criminal proceedings[1]. The College DSL will be in attendance for any cases where there is significant impact on the beneficiaries of SLET.

Quorum

The quorum for the Safeguarding Panel will be 3 members. No business will take place unless the Director of Safeguarding (or delegate) is present.

Frequency of Meetings

The Safeguarding Panel will meet 5 times per year in the ordinary course, arranging extra meetings if the level of casework necessitates this.

Effective From: August 2024

Next Review: July 2026 (Delayed to October 2026 for review by new Safeguarding Trustee)

[1] This in order to preserve the independence of the Religious Superior as he will likely have to instigate an independent canonical process at the conclusion of any criminal process.