



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Care Agency Provides Safeguarding Training for faith groups

Faith groups and places of worship play a major role in the lives of many children and young people within our community. Safeguarding must therefore be a key consideration in these settings.

In order to develop further in this regard, members from the Child Protection Committee have been meeting with different faith groups in Gibraltar, to agree a way forward in which robust safeguarding procedures may be implemented for the benefit of children and young persons in our community. Some faith groups already have these procedures in place, which include reporting concerns to the relevant authorities.

The Care Agency has today held a seminar to provide Safeguarding Training (Tier 1) to leaders and designate officers from faith groups at Bleak House. The training highlighted different issues faced by faith groups, providing information on how to identify concerns and how best to respond to concerns. It also provided information on the current systems in place regarding the reporting of concerns to relevant authorities, and how these referrals are handled. The development and implementation of safeguarding practices and policies also formed part of the training.

The Chair of the Child Protection Committee and Chief Executive Officer of the Care Agency, Mrs Natalie Tavares opened the training seminar, addressing those in attendance. She said: "Faith groups in Gibraltar are very active within our community and liaise frequently with the Care Agency. As part of our on-going work, we have met with leaders from the different faith groups and discussed the developments in the area of safeguarding. Gibraltar's different faith groups have always worked well together, and this is another great example of these partnerships."

The Honourable Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP commented: "To have systems in place to safeguard children and young people is crucial in any setting in which they regularly attend; be it schools, sports clubs, or, as in this case, places of worship. It is important for all sectors of our community to work together to protect children and keep them safe. I am, therefore, very pleased to report that the Child Protection Committee have been working together with various faith groups. I would like to thank Mrs Natalie Tavares, the members of the Care Agency and the Child Protection Committee for their hard work, commitment and diligence, in respect of the safeguarding of children and young persons within our community. This is a vital area within our services; one which HM Government and I will always fully support."

Ministry of Health, Care and Justice

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Persons interested in attending safeguarding training sessions in future, may contact Karen Dawson, stating the organisation you belong to, on 20078528 or [karen.dawson@careagency.gov.gi](mailto:karen.dawson@careagency.gov.gi)