

# **Order of Buddhist Contemplatives**

## **Safeguarding and Ethics Statement**

The OBC is committed to protecting from harm or abuse all who engage with its work, activities and teaching – regardless of their frequency of contact or level of involvement.

We will undertake to ensure that procedures for raising concerns are accessible to all and widely communicated.

We will respond to all concerns in a proportionate, transparent and timely way.

We will ensure that all those in safeguarding roles and positions of trust receive suitable training in recognising signs of abuse and responding to disclosures.

### **Key Principles**

We will take all appropriate steps to address harmful speech and behaviour. This helps protect people from being harmed, which in turn helps to maintain the ethical integrity and harmony of the Sangha.

The Precept of not speaking against others should not be interpreted as preventing people from raising legitimate concerns; rather it should ensure that truthfulness and compassion shape the way concerns are discussed and investigated.

The OBC works within the legal framework in each of the countries where it operates, and each monastery and priory must comply with all legal requirements in their own specific jurisdiction. In some situations legal responsibility for responding to safeguarding incidents will lie with those individual temples.

Although no organisation can guarantee that harmful behaviour will never occur, we are committed to providing a safe environment for all who practise with us, firmly based on Buddhist ethical values and teachings.

### **Understanding harm and abuse**

We acknowledge that anyone may experience harm, but that some are more vulnerable due to factors such as:

- Biological sex
- Age
- Physical illness or disability
- Mental health, psychological difficulties or emotional distress
- Sexual orientation or gender identity
- Imbalance of power in a particular situation or relationship

We recognise that there are different types of harmful behaviour and abuse, including physical, verbal, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse, as well as coercive control and neglect.

## How to raise a concern

To raise an ethical concern or to explore a safeguarding question, please contact one of the OBC Safeguarding Contacts for the UK and Europe:

Rev. Master Elinore Agnew  
Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey  
Tel: 01434 345204

Rev. Master Roland  
Throssel Hole Buddhist Abbey  
Tel: 01434 345204

Mo Henderson  
OBC Lay Minister (in France)  
Tel: 0033 296 848759 (from the UK)

Neil Rothwell  
OBC Lay Minister  
Tel: 0843 713 0076

You can also contact them by email them via the OBC website at:

<https://obcon.org/about-us/safeguarding-and-ethics/safeguarding-contacts-uk-eu/>

The role of the Safeguarding Contacts is to respond to any concern that is raised – they will listen and offer support, and will consult with the Senior Safeguarding Team, who will then come to a decision on what action it would be appropriate to take. We understand that it is difficult to raise safeguarding concerns, and we will always endeavour to respond with compassion, and to offer the appropriate help. The confidentiality of all parties will be respected.

## Other key documents

This statement should be read alongside:

- Rules of the OBC, especially Section IV. Monastic Discipline (Each temple should have a copy of the rules available)
- The OBC Confidentiality Policy:  
<https://obcon.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/OBC-Confidentiality-Statement-public.pdf>
- Ethical Guidelines for Spiritual Counselling and Teaching Relationships:  
<https://obcon.org/about-us/safeguarding-and-ethics/teaching-relationships/>

---

We acknowledge with gratitude the UK safeguarding organization, [thirtyone:eight](#) for their help with producing this statement.