



## **CHILD, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Child, young people and vulnerable adult safeguarding policy dated:  
January 2020**

**Name:** St James by the Park, also known as Shirley Parish Church  
(hereafter, "The Church")

**Church Address:** 133 Church Street  
Southampton  
SO15 5LW

**Phone:** 023 8077 1755

**Web:** [www.stjamesbythepark.org](http://www.stjamesbythepark.org)

**Reviewed:**

**Amended:**

This policy supersedes all previous safeguarding policies & will be reviewed annually.

## **Table of Contents**

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
  - 2. WHY WE HAVE A SAFEGUARDING POLICY**
  - 3. MISSION STATEMENT**
  - 4. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**
  - 5. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE FOR ADULTS**
  - 6. SAFER RECRUITMENT**
  - 7. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS**
  - 8. CARING PASTORALLY FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF ABUSE AND AFFECTED OTHERS**
  - 9. CARING PASTORALLY FOR CHURCH OFFICERS WHO ARE THE SUBJECT OF CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND AFFECTED OTHERS**
  - 10. RESPONDING TO THOSE WHO MAY PRESENT A KNOWN RISK TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS WITHIN A CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION**
  - 11. A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND ACTIVITIES**
  - 12. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**
- CONTACT DETAILS**
- FURTHER INFORMATION**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this Safeguarding Policy, all references to:

*'child', 'children', 'young person', 'young people', 'youth'* – whether singular or plural – are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to those under 18 years of age.

*'child abuse'* refers to any of the recognised forms of abuse – physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect.

*'Church officer'* refers to anyone representing the church in any role

*'vulnerable adult'* refers to a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability, illness, old age, emotional fragility, distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired.

*'workers', 'staff', 'volunteers', 'leaders', 'helpers'* are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to anyone interacting with children on behalf of The Church.

## Definitions of abbreviations

CDF	Confidential Declaration Form
DBS	Disclosure & Barring Service
DSA	Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor/Officer or Manager
DSI	Diocesan Safeguarding & Inclusion =DSA
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
PSO	Parish Safeguarding Officer
PSA	Parish Safeguarding Administrator

Some factors that increase vulnerability include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A mental illness, chronic or acute.</li><li>• A sensory or physical disability or impairment.</li><li>• A learning disability.</li><li>• A physical illness.</li><li>• Dementia.</li><li>• An addiction to alcohol or drugs.</li><li>• Failing faculties of old age.</li><li>• Those who are homeless.</li><li>• Refugee families or individual (including those seeking asylum).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Victims/survivors of domestic abuse – direct violence and/or significant emotional coercion.</li><li>• Those who have suffered historic abuse in childhood.</li><li>• A permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events – for example bereavement or abuse or trauma.</li></ul>
---	---

These factors may not exist in isolation; for example, someone with a drink problem masking underlying dementia; or a frail housebound elderly person with underlying depression.

## **2. WHY WE HAVE A CHILD, YOUNG PERSON AND VULNERABLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Parochial Church Council (Hereafter known as PCC) recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

The PCC is committed to on-going training for all those who work with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults and will regularly review the Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

A Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy helps to create a safe and positive environment. Although no procedures or processes can offer complete protection following these procedures and implementing a policy minimises the risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and exploitation.

A Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy clarifies what The Church requires in relation to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It sets out standards of behaviour for staff and volunteers and what to do if they notice, or are told about, inappropriate behaviour by others.

A Child, Young Person and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates The Church's commitment to safeguard all from harm. It will help move The Church towards best practice in this area and deter those who would wish to harm children or vulnerable adults.

## **3. MISSION STATEMENT**

The PCC recognises the importance of its ministry with children, young people and vulnerable adults and its responsibility to protect and safeguard their welfare. The welfare of the individual is always paramount.

As part of its mission, The Church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within The Church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

#### **4. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The abuse of children and young people can take many forms. They have the same right to protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Those from minority ethnic groups and with disabilities (physical, sensory and/or learning difficulties) are especially vulnerable and need extra care and protection.

Children and Young People can be the victims of physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual abuse and neglect.

Potentially anyone, adult or child may abuse a child by inflicting harm. An adult may abuse a child by neglect or by failing to protect a child from harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

##### **Statutory Definitions**

The UK central government document “Working Together to Safeguard Children” categorises and defines child abuse in terms of:

##### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Physical abuse including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

##### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Emotional abuse including conveying to a child that they are inadequate, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, verbal abuse, isolation, seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying).

##### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities or grooming a child in preparation of abuse.

##### **NEGLECT**

Neglect including failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, to provide adequate

supervision and/or access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. See Appendix A 'Possible indicators of Abuse'.

## **OTHER TYPES OF ABUSE**

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

### **SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children or Young People may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed and exploited online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

### **BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING**

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, usually social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there is no escape because it can happen wherever they are, any time day or night.

### **ONLINE ABUSE**

With the ever-growing use of the internet, mobile telephones and online gaming, there has been a corresponding rise in the use of internet and electronic communications to target, groom and abuse children. Adults may target chatrooms, social networking sites, messaging services, mobile phones, online gaming sites and the internet generally. Children are particularly vulnerable to adults who pretend to be children of similar ages when online and who try to obtain images or engineer meetings.

### **ELECTRONIC IMAGES**

The downloading, keeping and/or distributing of indecent images of children (all classified as sexual images) are all criminal offences. Such offences are sometimes referred to as non-contact sexual offences. However, it must be remembered that children will have been abused in the making of the images. The texting of sexual messaging and photographs (sometimes referred to as Sexting) can be particularly problematic and abusive among children and young people.

See Appendix B 'Fact Sheet- Sexting (youth produced Sexual Imagery).

## **5. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE FOR ADULTS**

All adults, including vulnerable adults, have a fundamental human right to choose how and with whom they live, even if this appears to involve a degree of risk. They should be supported to make those choices, to live as independently as possible and treated with respect and dignity.

### **Who abuses adults?**

Potentially anyone, adult or child, can be the abuser of an adult. Abuse will sometimes be deliberate, but it may also be an unintended consequence of ignorance or lack of awareness. Alternatively, it may arise from frustration or lack of support. The list can include:

- Relatives of the vulnerable person including husband, wife, partner, son or daughter. It will sometimes include a relative who is a main carer.
- Neighbours.
- Paid or voluntary carers.
- Workers in places of worship.
- People who are themselves vulnerable and/or are users of a care service.
- Confidence tricksters who prey on people in their own homes or elsewhere.

### **Relatives who are Main Carers**

Carers can experience considerable stress, exhaustion and frustration without respite or support. This can lead to unintended poor care or abuse. Relatives who are the main carers may also be subject to abuse by those for whom they are caring. This abuse is often endured for long periods and unreported.

### **Institutions**

All people living in institutions are more likely to have a degree of vulnerability. The Care Quality Commission in England has responsibility for inspecting and regulating the quality of care in institutions such as residential care homes, domiciliary care services and hospitals. In addition, the Local Government Ombudsman deals with complaints that relate to adult social care. The HM Inspectorate of Prisons in England inspects prisons. Some members of the parish may be visiting adults in institutions -hospitals, prisons and residential homes. If, as part of these responsibilities, they have concerns about the care being given and/or the way that someone is being treated, the DSA should be contacted. You can also refer directly to the institution or raise concerns with the appropriate inspection and/or complaints body.

### **Definitions of Adult Abuse**

The UK central government document "Care and Support Statutory guidance" categorises and defines adult abuse in terms of:

## **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Physical abuse including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressurised into consenting.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE**

Psychological abuse including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

## **FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE**

Financial or material abuse including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

## **NEGLECT OR ACTS OF OMISSION**

Neglect or acts of omission including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

## **DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE**

Discriminatory abuse including racist, sexist, that is based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

## **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Domestic abuse that is usually a systematic, repeated and often escalating pattern of behaviour by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.

## **ORGANISATIONAL ABUSE**

Organisational abuse including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one

off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

## **MODERN SLAVERY**

Modern Slavery including human trafficking; forced labour and domestic servitude; traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

## 6.SAFER RECRUITMENT

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states, '*The Church will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church*'.

<p>The PCC is responsible for the appointment of those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, paid or unpaid. At least two individuals will be responsible for recruitment. All those involved in recruitment will be capable and competent, trained in safer recruitment and able to keep personal matters confidential.</p>	
<p><b>1. Job/ role description</b>            Paid-Construct a clear and accurate job description and person specification.            Unpaid - A role description will be written. These will include what level of DBS check is required.</p>	<p>Appendix C: Model volunteer job role</p>
<p><b>2. Advertise</b>            Paid – Role will be advertised widely.            Unpaid – Role will be advertised in Parish communications.</p>	
<p><b>3. Application form</b>            All roles – An application form will be completed. Two references will be taken up.</p>	<p>Appendix D: Application form            Appendix E: Reference request letter</p>
<p><b>4. Confidential Declaration Form</b>            All roles – Complete a Confidential Declaration Form.</p>	<p>Appendix F: Confidential Declaration Form</p>
<p><b>5. Shortlist</b>            Paid - Shortlist, carefully examining the application forms. Identify any gaps in employment/personal history and ensure those shortlisted have met the requirements of the person specification.            Unpaid - Review any interest from volunteers and assess suitability against requirements</p>	
<p><b>6. Interview</b>            Paid – Have a face-to-face interview with pre-planned and clear questions to assess applicants' suitability for the role. Seek explanations for gaps in employment/personal history. It may also be appropriate to ask the individual to complete a test or presentation if applicable. Check identification and the</p>	<p>Appendix G: Model Interview /discussion</p>

<p>Confidential Declaration Form (CDF). Unpaid – Have an informal discussion based on model interview questions.</p>	
<p><b>7. Offer the role</b> Paid - The decision will be made by the interviewing panel, subject to completion of all checks to the satisfaction of the PCC. No role can commence until satisfactory checks have been completed. Unpaid – Role can commence once all checks have been completed.</p>	
<p><b>8. Checks</b> Paid - Once the applicant has been offered the role, subject to satisfactory checks, ask the applicant to complete an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS). Any blemished DBS checks or information of concern on the CDF must be risk assessed by the DSA. In cases where someone has either never lived in the UK or spent a period of time overseas (i.e. lived abroad), the person making the appointment should request an additional check and ask the applicant to obtain criminality information from the country where he/she was resident. It is also recommended to undertake an occupational health check for paid roles where possible. Unpaid – Where relevant a DBS check will be undertaken.</p>	
<p><b>9. Appoint</b> Paid - Once all checks are satisfactory and support the interview decision, the person can be formally appointed. Unpaid – Ideally a potential end date will be discussed. This can always be extended but helps set expectations for both parties.</p>	<p>Appendix H: Model appointment letter</p>
<p><b>10. Probation (Paid), Trial (Unpaid) period</b> Paid – Probation period as set in role description and reviewed regularly. Unpaid – trial period as per role description</p>	

<p><b>11. Induct, Train and Support</b>  Paid - Induct new workers, including expectations in relation to behaviour. Ensure supervision/support is in place and arrange for attendance on the Church of England safeguarding training.  Unpaid – continuing training and support given</p>	<p>Appendix I: Safeguarding Training</p>

## 7. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS AND ALLEGATIONS

### 7.1 Appendix J Flowchart for responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.

### 7.2 What to do if you are concerned that a child or adult may be at risk from abuse or if you are concerned that a church officer may be abusing a child or adult.

- i. Respond well to the victim/survivor if it is a direct disclosure, to ensure they feel listened to and taken seriously. Explain what will happen next and check out support requirements. They should be informed that their identity and the identity of the respondent will be shared with key church officers and may be shared with the statutory agencies if there is any current risk to children or adults. If possible seek written consent to share the information with the relevant people using Consent to Share form. For children under the age of 18 parental consent should be sought if possible unless the parent/parents are involved in the abuse or it would put the child at greater risk.

The concern or allegation should not be shared with anyone other than those who need to know (e.g. the statutory agencies and appropriate church officers).

- ii. **EMERGENCY:** If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm, contact the emergency services on 999.

- iii. **NON-EMERGENCY:** Contact

Parish Safeguarding Officer/PSO on 07593 535570 or Incumbent/Vicar 023 80 779665 in the first instance.

They must then contact the DSA.

If neither are available, contact the DSA directly yourself.

DSA 01962 737317 or 07921 865374.

If the concern arises in an activity, discuss with the group/activity leader, who will contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer or incumbent.

- iv. Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSA within 24 hours.

- v. If the PSO/incumbent or the DSA are not available within 24 hours, contact

Children's Social Care, 023 80 915535 or 07789 616092 or

Adult Social Care, 023 80 833003.and/or the police on 101 directly, if the concern is that a child or adult is being abused.

Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or police if the concern is that a church officer may be abusing a child or adult.

Advise the Parish Safeguarding Officer, incumbent or DSA as soon as possible that you have made a referral.

**If in doubt don't delay, seek advice from statutory agencies.**

- vi. Do not contact the respondent or anyone who may be implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure, until advice has been sought from the DSA or statutory agencies.
- vii. Record the details of the concern or allegation. Where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time (usually it will not be), make a written record as soon as possible afterwards or before the end of the day. Record the time, date, location, persons present and how the concern or allegation was received, e.g. by telephone, face to face conversation, letter, etc. The record should include details of information provided to that person as well as the information received. Always sign and date the record. Keep it factual. Pass on a copy to the DSA (and/or the PSO /incumbent). The records should be kept secure and confidential – Appendix K: Parish Recording template

**If the concern is about a child or adult:**

- viii. The DSA will act in line with the House of Bishops' guidance. They will offer advice, support and guidance and help to make the required referrals. If there is a risk of harm, the concerns must be reported to the statutory agencies within 24 hours of the DSA receiving the concerns. This would be Children's or Adult Social Care and/or the police.

There should be close communication between the DSA, PSO/incumbent until the situation is resolved. The archdeacon should also be informed.

**If the concern is about a Church Officer:**

- ix. The DSA will act in line with the House of Bishops' guidance. They will offer advice, support and guidance and refer the concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and/or police within 24 hours. The DSA will now take over the management of the safeguarding concern in conjunction with the core group (which will be convened within 48 hours) and statutory agencies. There may also be a requirement for parish representatives to attend a subsequent core group(s). If there are doubts about whether or not to make a referral and under what route, the DSA will seek advice from the LADO.

Please note that the procedure is the same for non-recent abuse.

A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and adults and respecting the rights of the person against whom an allegation is made. In such circumstances the welfare of the child, young person or adult must come first. The

rights of the person against whom the allegation is made are important and must be given due weight, once the immediate safety and protection of the child, young person or adult has been assured.

### **7.3 Guidelines for Responding to a Person Disclosing Abuse**

#### **Do:**

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader/ Parish Safeguarding Officer/ DSA and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check out what the person hopes to result from the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

#### **Do Not**

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.

#### **Record**

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the DSA or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place, words used and how they appeared to you. Record the actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions

#### **Report**

- If there is immediate danger to a child or adult contact the police.

- Otherwise report to your activity leader/Parish Safeguarding Officer/incumbent immediately.
- Within 24 hours the PSO/incumbent reports the concerns to the DSA.
- The DSA will advise regarding reporting to statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt seek advice from Children's/Adult's Social Care or the police.

#### **7.4. Non-Recent Abuse**

Safeguarding concerns or allegations may be about something that is going on now and/or something that may happen in the future (recent) or something that happened in the past (non-recent). Non-recent allegations of abuse must be treated as seriously as recent allegations. Research evidences that it may take up to 25 years or longer for an adult to disclose sexual abuse that happened to him/her either as a child or younger adult. A victim/survivor needs to be aware that if a respondent is known to be currently working with children/vulnerable adults in either a paid or voluntary capacity a referral to the statutory services will be made. The DSA will make this referral.

#### **7.5. Domestic Abuse**

The House of Bishops' policy states that 'The Church is committed to those who have been victims and survivors of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse in all its forms is contrary to the will of God and an affront to human dignity. All need to play their part in preventing or halting it'. The welfare of the adult victim of domestic abuse is important, but where there are children in the family it must be understood that they too are victims of domestic abuse. Consideration of the child's welfare always comes first. In all circumstances, contact the DSA who will help clarify the issues and steps needed, which may involve contacting Children's Social Care. There may be a need for a risk assessment and for a Safeguarding Agreement to be put in place. The DSA will undertake this work in conjunction with the parish church and any statutory agencies.

See Appendix L Statement on Domestic Violence & Abuse.

#### **7.6. Ministry of Deliverance**

Concerns may be expressed that a child, young person or adult is troubled by or possessed by evil spirits or demons and that this may account for behavioural issues in the individual or be considered to justify harsh treatment by the family, guardians, friends or carers.

If a church officer, including a member of clergy, becomes aware of the above situation and/or a request is made for deliverance ministry, the parish **must** contact the **DSA** who will contact the appropriate person.

## **7.7 Record Keeping**

The PSO or incumbent must open a record, called a case file whenever a safeguarding concern or allegation occurs in the Church. This should be stored according to Diocesan and GDPR guidelines.

The procedure should follow:

- *Discuss concerns with the DSA 01962 737317 or 07921 865374.*
- *Suspensions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated (7.2i).*
- *A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with church procedures and kept in a secure place.*
- *The PCC will support the PSO in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.*
- *All reports or concerns must be treated seriously.*

## **8. CARING PASTORALLY FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF ABUSE AND AFFECTED OTHERS**

The PCC is committed to offering pastoral care and support to those attending the church who have been affected by abuse.

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy 2017 states that 'The Church will endeavour to offer care and support to all those that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred. Those who have suffered abuse within the Church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously. Our first response to those who have suffered abuse, especially abuse within the Church, should be compassionate; we must listen and take what we are hearing seriously.'

Further information can be found in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook safeguarding website – <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

## **9. CARING PASTORALLY FOR CHURCH OFFICERS WHO ARE THE SUBJECT OF CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND AFFECTED OTHERS**

All church officers who are the subject of a concern will be offered the support of a Link Person in line with Parish Safeguarding handbook.

The DSA will have be notified and will act in line with the House of Bishops' guidance.

## **10. RESPONDING TO THOSE WHO MAY PRESENT A KNOWN RISK TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS WITHIN A CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION**

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy 2017 states 'The Church, based on the message of the gospel, opens its doors to all. It will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of the church community whom may present a known risk'.

This means that there are likely to be those with criminal convictions for sexual offences and other forms of abuse attending church. In addition, there may be those who do not have convictions or cautions but where there are sound reasons for considering that they still might pose a risk to others. Where people may pose a risk to others, their position in a congregation will need to be carefully and sensitively assessed to decide whether they pose a present risk to others and to put in place arrangements to ensure that these risks are mitigated. In these circumstances it is not only about monitoring individuals but offering support to lead a fulfilled life. As such, the Church has an important role in contributing to the prevention of future abuse.

### **TAKING ACTION TO THOSE SUSPECTED OF POSING A RISK**

Always contact the DSA as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours, if you learn that any of the following people worship in your church:

1. Anyone placed on the sex offenders register, with a violent offence or conviction and/or who is barred from working with children or adults by the Disclosure and Barring Service.
2. Anyone who admits to being an abuser including non-recent abuse.
3. Anyone who is subject to an investigation for suspected abuse, including possession of indecent images of children, and/or is suspended from their usual role.
4. Anyone who may pose a risk to other church members due to their behaviour, irrespective of their criminal status.

Category (4) above may include a person in relation to whom:

- An allegation of abuse against a child or adult has been investigated, but the matter has not proceeded to court, or the person has been acquitted, or the matter is currently the subject of proceedings in the criminal or civil courts but the person may still pose a risk.
- A complaint or grievance has been received alleging inappropriate behaviour, which is not criminal.
- There have been concerns about the person's alleged abusive behaviour to a previous or current partner.

If the DSA is made aware by any other source of any person in the above categories who is intending to or is worshipping at a local parish church, they will notify the Parish Safeguarding Officer/incumbent in the first instance.

The DSA will determine the appropriate action to be taken to best safeguard the parish and its congregation, based on the particular facts and circumstances of each case. They will undertake a risk assessment and the formation of a risk management plan known as a Safeguarding Agreement.

## **11. A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND ACTIVITIES**

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy Statement states that 'The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults...The Church will strive to support all church officers to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge the abuse of power'.

### **11.1 CODE OF SAFER WORKING PRACTICE**

**All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must:**

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that their own language, tone of voice, and body language is respectful.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.
- Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer. Sign and date the record.
- Obtain written consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.
- Administer any First Aid with others around.

**In addition, for children and young people must:**

- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and its nature before the activity takes place.

**All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not:**

- Invade an individual's privacy whilst washing and toileting.

- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one individual or group.
- Allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking.
- Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults that may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person.
- Allow strangers to give children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group, lifts.
- Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media.
- Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

**In addition, for children and young people, must not;**

- Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).
- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people.
- Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include adult family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

## **11.2 ACCEPTABLE TOUCH**

Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, is wholly appropriate. The following guidelines regarding touching are suggested:

- **Always** ask permission.
- Be mindful of your body position.
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be in response to a child's needs and not related to the worker's needs. It should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the church officer.
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual and/or abusive/offensive.
- Allow the child to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention).

In addition:

- ✓ You can allow people you support to give you brief hugs if you feel comfortable with this.
- ✓ You can allow people you support to hold hands or link arms with you to help with travel and stability.
- ✓ You should discourage people you support from touching your face. You can offer your hand instead.
- ✓ You should discourage people you support from sitting on your lap. You can offer to sit side by side.
- ✓ You should avoid using touch if the person you support is very distressed and is unlikely to tolerate it.

Ensure that church officers at all levels must take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be encouraged to challenge one another if necessary. Concerns about possible abuse or inappropriate behaviour should always be reported.

### 11.3 CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Church groups that involve children need to ensure good practice standards across a wide range of areas including: recruitment of activity leaders; DBS checking; staffing ratios; suitability of premises; health and safety arrangements; and facilities for children with special needs.

The minimum staffing levels for groups should be as follows:

0 – 2 years	1 adult to 3 children	1:3
2 – 3 years	1 adult to 4 children	1:4
4 – 8 years	1 adult to 6 children	1:6
9 – 12 years	1 adult to 8 children	1:8
13 – 18 years	1 adult to 10 children	1:10

Each group should have at least two workers, even for smaller groups, and if possible one male and one female. Staff ratios for all groups should always be based on a risk assessment. For example, staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered higher risk, potentially dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved.

For all groups and activities:

- Undertake a health and safety risk assessment
- A registration form must be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities which should include up to date information on parents' contact numbers, medical information (e.g. allergies) and any special needs

- An attendance register must be kept and be available at all group meetings.
- A First Aid kit must be available on any premises that are used by children.
- An accident and incident logbook must be available, and all accidents recorded. The logbook should be stored in a secure place. Any significant incidents must be recorded (e.g. a fight between children).
- There should be access to a telephone, if possible.
- In church premises where children's groups meet, the Childline and Family Lives telephone numbers should be displayed.
- Parents must sign a consent form before children are transported in a private car, and before any photography or images are taken.

In addition, when taking children offsite

- The church leadership must be informed and agree to the activity.
- Details of the activity and any itinerary must be given in advance to parent/s and consent forms received in advance of the activity taking place.
- Details of the activity and a list of contacts must be left with someone in the church.
- Details of the activity and arrangements must be given to the incumbent and/or PSO.
- A risk assessment must be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the activity is covered by PCC insurance.
- A leader must be designated to take responsibility for First Aid.

Many of these items are equally applicable to groups involving vulnerable adults.

## **11.4 VISITING ADULTS**

Visiting vulnerable adults in their homes is an essential element of many church officers' roles. Many parishioners will be well known to the church officer and where there have been no previous concerns the level of risk to the church officer or parishioner during visits will usually be low. However, unexpected circumstances can be encountered, some of which may place a church officer at risk. For example, the unexpected presence in the home of a relative or friend with a history of violence or threatening behaviour. Unfortunately, case histories also show that a parishioner may be at risk from a church officer. For these reasons it is very important for parishes to ensure their church officers and parishioners are as safe as they can be, and that there is accountability and transparency in the manner in which church officers engage in lone working or visits to homes.

To assure the person you are visiting of their safety, and for your own as a church officer:

- If possible undertake a risk assessment before an initial visit, especially if you do not know the person. If there are any concerns or risks known before a visit is made, you are advised always to undertake a risk assessment. In these circumstances, consider whether the visit is necessary, or whether you should

be accompanied by another church officer. In addition, visiting in pairs may be advisable, especially if the adult is perceived to be vulnerable.

- Do not call unannounced; call by appointment, if appropriate telephoning the person just before visiting.
- Be clear about what support you can offer and the purpose and limitations of any pastoral care/ support that is available.
- Do not make referrals to any agency that could provide help without the adult's permission, and ideally encourage them to set up the contact, unless there are safeguarding concerns.
- Never offer "over the counter" remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so.
- Do not accept any gifts from adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family. If someone wants to make a donation to the church, put it in an envelope, mark it on the outside as a donation and obtain a receipt from the Treasurer.
- Make a note of the date when you visit people, report back about the visit to the agreed named person and say what is concerning or going well. They will report safeguarding concerns to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and/or incumbent or directly to the DSA if they are not available.

## **12. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media sites enable users to create and share content and keep in touch with other users. They include maintaining a profile on a networking site such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat; writing or commenting on a blog, whether it is your own or the blog of another person; and taking part in discussions on web forums or message boards. For many, especially young people, using social media is an extension of physical face-to-face relationships. It is therefore important that churches also engage with their community and worshippers through these platforms. However, this must be done safely to avoid the risk of:

- Forming inappropriate relationships.
- Saying things you should not, such as offensive, sexual or suggestive comments.
- Blurring the boundaries between public work/ministry and your private life.
- Grooming and impersonation.
- Bullying and harassment.

Guidance for church officers

### **Do:**

- ✓ Have your eyes open and be vigilant.
- ✓ Maintain the upmost integrity – honesty, transparency, consistency and accountability are key. Treat online communication with children, young people and adults as you would communication that is face to face. Always maintain the same level of confidentiality.

- ✓ Report any safeguarding concerns that arise on social media to the PSO and the DSA.
- ✓ Always assume that everything you write is permanent and may be viewed by anyone at any time; and that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues or the church. Always think before you post.
- ✓ Draw clear boundaries around your social media usage associated with your private life and your use of different social media for public ministry. Keep church account/s and profiles separate from your personal social media account/s e.g. only use a Facebook page, Twitter or blogs for public ministry, while keeping a separate Facebook profile for private life.
- ✓ Always ask parents/carers for written consent to:
  - Use and store photographs of children/young people from activities or events in official church publications, or on the church's social media, website and displays.
  - Use telephone, text message, email and other messaging services to communicate with young people.
  - Allow young people to connect to the church's social media page
- ✓ Only use an approved church/ministry account to communicate with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The named person should be able to access this and review conversations, and the account should be visible to young people and their parents. Young people must be made aware that any communication will be viewed by all users. Save any messages and threads through social networking sites, so that you can provide evidence to the named person of your exchange when required.
- ✓ Avoid one-to-one communication with a child or young person.
- ✓ Use clear and unambiguous language in all communications and avoid abbreviations that could be misinterpreted.
- ✓ Save and download to hard copy any inappropriate material received through social networking sites or other electronic means and show immediately to the named person, PSO, incumbent or, if appropriate, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- ✓ Use passwords and log off promptly after use to ensure that nobody else can use social media pretending to be you.

**Do not:**

- Use a personal Facebook or any other social media account in your work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Add children, young people or vulnerable adults as friends on your personal accounts.
- Facebook stalk (i.e. dig through people's Facebook pages to find out about them).
- Say anything on social media that you would not be happy saying in a public meeting, to someone's face, writing in a local newspaper or on headed notepaper.
- Comment on photos or posts, or share content, unless appropriate to your church role.

- Use visual media (e.g. Skype, Facetime) for one-to-one conversations with young people – use only in group settings.

**In particular, do not allow content to contain or share links to other sites that contain:**

- Libellous, defamatory, bullying or harassing statements.
- Breaches of copyright and data protection.
- Material of an illegal nature.
- Offensive sexual or abusive references.
- Inappropriate language.
- Anything which may be harmful to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or which may bring the church into disrepute or compromise its reputation.

## **CONTACT DETAILS:**

DSA/ Safeguarding Manager: Jackie Rowlands  
Email: [safeguarding@winchester.anglican.org](mailto:safeguarding@winchester.anglican.org)  
Tel: 01962 737317  
Mobile 07921865374  
Out of hours number: 0300 555 1373

Southampton Children First team: 023 8083 3336  
[children.first@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:children.first@southampton.gov.uk)  
Out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 023 8023 3344

Adult Social Care 02380833003  
Out of office hours 02380233344  
[adultsocialcareconnect@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:adultsocialcareconnect@southampton.gov.uk)

If a child young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, contact the Police on 999

Parish Safeguarding officer: Rosemary Brooks  
Email: [rosemary.brooks@stjamesbythepark.org](mailto:rosemary.brooks@stjamesbythepark.org)  
Tel: 07593 535570

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

The Diocesan website gives access to a number of relevant documents at [www.winchester.anglican.org/safeguarding/](http://www.winchester.anglican.org/safeguarding/)