



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

established in accordance with the guidelines, definitions and policies of the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults "Promoting a Safer Church"¹

ADOPTED: February 2023

REVIEW DATE: January 2024

AUTHOR: PCC

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Revd. Karen Cribb - 0114 223 0223

DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Sian Checkley - 01709 309149 / 07741 013775

¹ This can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>



St Mary's Church and Community Centre Safeguarding Policy

St Marys Church and Community Centre Safeguarding Policy is established in accordance with the guidelines, definitions and policies of the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults "Promoting a Safer Church"²

St Mary's Church and Community Centre is committed to Safeguarding being an integral part of our work and ministry and all officers, post-holders, staff and volunteers must agree to abide by and work within the procedures and guidance set out in this policy.

The Policy has 6 overarching policy commitments to which St Mary's Church and Centre, all staff and volunteers are committed to :

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within St Mary's.
- 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.

"Promoting A Safer Church" Action Plan – sets out how the policy is put into action and reviewed. St Mary's Church and Community Centre will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent the PCC and the staff team to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the Church and Centre.
- Display in St Mary's premises and on the website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer appropriate support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred, and signpost as appropriate to professional and specialist sources of advice and support.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually by the PCC and Centre Trustees.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Revd. Karen Cribb is currently appointed by the PCC as the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

² This can be found at <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>



Practice Guidance

Statutory definitions on the abuse and neglect of Children, the Abuse and Neglect of Adults and Domestic Abuse are fully outlined in Appendix 1 of this document and in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook³

Responsibilities of all staff and volunteers in responding to Safeguarding concerns and allegations is set out in full in the Parish Safeguarding Handbook but the key responses are summarised below

- In an emergency, if a child or adult is in immediate danger or requires medical attention call the police/ambulance/social services on 999. Once the immediate danger is passed, record in writing all the information and contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Incumbent (vicar).
- In a non-emergency contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible within 24 hrs and record in writing all the information.
- In responding your priority is to listen, to take what is disclosed seriously, to offer reassurance and to let the person know you have to refer this to the Safeguarding officer.
- Do not promise to keep confidentiality, do not investigate, do not contact anyone else.
- Record the information you have been given – in notes at the time if appropriate, record the time date place and actual words used – record facts and things you observe not assumptions or your interpretations.
- Non-recent allegations must be taken as seriously as current or recent allegations.
- There may be circumstances when staff or volunteers suspect that a child or adult is being abused or neglected, it is vital that you discuss this immediately with your line manager and the Safeguarding Officer before taking any action.

Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding checks

All staff and volunteer appointments will be made in line with the safer recruitment guidelines found in the Parish Safeguarding handbook, namely an application form must be completed, two references provided and a confidential declaration form completed. Any staff and volunteers who are likely to be working with children or alone with vulnerable adults will also be required to completed a Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS). It should be noted that having a criminal record does not prevent someone from being recruited.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer will work with all staff and volunteers, PCC and Trustees to ensure this Safeguarding policy is implemented and that any concerns are reported to the DSA and referred to statutory agencies whenever appropriate.

This policy was approved by the PCC on 15th February 2023 Signed (warden) : *Miriam Cavanagh*

This policy was approved by the Centre Trustees Signed (Incumbent) : *Claire Dawson*

Date for Policy Review: Jan2024

³ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

Appendix One

Abuse and neglect of children

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. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities (physical, sensory and/or learning difficulties) are especially vulnerable and need special care and protection

Statutory definitions –

- **Physical abuse** - including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.
- **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** 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 for abuse.
- **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.
- **Domestic abuse** Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse¹⁷, 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.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and mandatory reporting to the Police commenced from October 2015. FGM is classified as a form of child abuse for girls under 18 years old,
- **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, using 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, at any time of day or night.
- **Online abuse** With the ever-growing use of the internet, mobile telephones and online gaming (e.g. Xbox/PlayStation), there has been a corresponding rise in the use of the internet and other electronic communication to target, groom and abuse children. Adults may target chat rooms, social networking sites, messaging services, mobile phones, online gaming sites and the internet generally. Children are particularly vulnerable to abuse by 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 or distributing of indecent images of children are all classified as sexual offences¹⁸. 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 messages and photographs (sometimes referred to as 'sexting' –see Fact Sheet –Sexting) can be particularly problematic and abusive amongst children and young people.

Abuse and neglect of 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 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.

Definitions of adult abuse

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

- **Physical abuse** including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- **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** 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** 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** 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** including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.



- **Domestic abuse** that is usually a systematic, repeated and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.
- **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 ongoing 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** including human trafficking; forced labour and domestic servitude; and 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.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is illegal in the UK and mandatory reporting to the Police commenced from October 2015.