

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION, HALL GREEN

PARISH SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES



Introduction

The Parish Church Council of the Ascension, Hall Green, recognises the need to safeguard the children, young people and adults in our care and guard against the possibility of any form of abuse by persons who may be acting in the name of our parish. We aim to create a safe environment for the nurture and development of children, young people and adults, in order for them to feel valued and confident to ask for support and help. We will adopt and implement policies and procedures that uphold our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults in our care.

The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a safer Church for all.

This policy was adopted by the Church of the Ascension at a Parish Church Council meeting held on **8th November 2018**.

Our Policy Commitments

- We commit to providing a safe physical environment for work with children, young people and adults.
- We recognize that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.
- As members of this parish we commit ourselves to respectful pastoral care for all adults to whom we minister.
- We commit ourselves to the safeguarding of people who may be vulnerable, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church.
- We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
- The parish commits itself to promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be vulnerable.
- We commit to informing the whole church community about our safeguarding policy and procedures and recognise that it is the responsibility of each of us to prevent and report abuse that we discover or suspect
- We will ensure the children, young people and adults in our care know who they can talk to if they have any concerns.
- We recognise our responsibility to always respond to and report abuse in whatever context, inside or outside the church environment and will always listen to and take seriously any child, young person or adult who reports that they have been abused.

- We will always report allegations of abuse and concerns about a child, young person or an adult who is experiencing or at risk of abuse due to their, illness or disability in accordance with our procedures.
- We will always report all allegations of abuse against Church Officers¹ to the appropriate statutory agency and to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser and co-operate with any investigation.
- We will keep all records in relation to safeguarding concerns, allegations and the recruitment of volunteers and paid workers securely.
- We commit to the safe recruitment of all new and current Church Officers who have contact with children, young people and adults experiencing or at risk of abuse due to their, illness or disability.
- We will assess all new and current Church Officer roles and, in every case where the role is deemed to be eligible, apply for an appropriate level criminal record check every five years.
- We commit to providing every Church Officer with clear instructions and information in respect of their role, adequate resources and support and regular opportunities for review.
- We will ensure that all Church Officers working with children, young people and adults experiencing or at risk of abuse due to their age illness disability or are in a trusted role attend Church of England safeguarding training every three years
- We will inform the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser, and ensure appropriate supervision, of anyone who is known to have offended against a child, young person or an adult at risk of abuse due to their age, illness or disability who attends activities organised by the PCC of the Ascension, Hall Green and will follow all recommendations of the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser in this regard
- We require all hirers of our premises to have their own safeguarding policy and procedures, to provide us with an assurance that these are implemented and to provide us with a copy
- **The parish adopts the policy and practice guidance of The Church of England and The Church of England – Birmingham**
- The policy will be reviewed each year to monitor the progress which has been achieved
- We will review our safeguarding policy annually to ensure that it meets all current legislation, House of Bishop's and The Church of England – Birmingham policies and practice guidance
- Each person who works with vulnerable people will agree to abide by these commitments and the guidelines established by this church.

¹ A 'Church Officer' is anyone appointed by on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid.

PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Parochial Church Council (PCC)

- Reviews Parish Safeguarding Policy annually and ensures it is being implemented.
- Appoints PCC Safeguarding Lead, Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s), Children's Advocate and Lead Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.
- Ensure that all concerns / allegations against church officers or relating to church activities are reported to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser.
- Ensures insurance cover is adequate.
- Ensures premises are of an acceptable standard.

Vicar: Rev Nejb Boumenjel (07769 624598)

- Ensure that everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults has been recruited safely, in accordance with Parish Procedures.
- Will raise any issues at PCC meetings regarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and represent their needs in regard to ministry, worship and pastoral care.

Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators: Sarah Barnes (07506 062833) and Margaret Hyde (0121 777 7930)

- Provide support, advice and take action where necessary on concerns about a child, parent or vulnerable adult, in liaison with the Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor.
- Acts as a link between the parish and diocese in terms of information sharing and training opportunities.
- Ensure safeguarding records are being maintained and kept securely.
- Ensure safeguarding information is treated sensitively and confidentiality is maintained.

Children's Advocate: Jon Meadows (0121 778 6367)

- First point of contact for children & parents to report worries or concerns. If he is unavailable, the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators are the nominated deputies.
- Report allegations and concerns about a child to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser and, where appropriate, social services.

Parish Lead Person for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults: Chris Walton (07891 872222)

- Advocacy at the PCC and other meetings (in the church and the community) with regard to the concerns of those who are vulnerable.
- Listening to concerns about their care raised by adults who are vulnerable. Being a point of contact with the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser where there are concerns about care,

Lead Parish Identity Verifier: Sarah Barnes (07506 062833)

- Verify the identity of those applying for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check in accordance with DBS guidelines.

PARISH SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Recruitment and Creating a Safe Environment:

The Vicar and the PCC have overall responsibility for the recruitment of paid workers and volunteers and for creating a safe environment

- We will assess all new and current volunteer and paid worker roles and, where the role is deemed to be eligible, apply for an appropriate level criminal record check.
- In the event of the disclosure check revealing previous offences, this will be referred to the Diocese in accordance with Diocesan policy.
- We will keep a Parish Information log of Disclosure and Barring Applications and renew application every 5 years.
- We will ensure that all activities that the PCC is responsible for are risk assessed, adequately ensured, take place in premises that are suitable for the activity and that employees and volunteers are adequately trained and, where appropriate, supervised.
- A minimum of 2 adults should be present with a group of children or young people.
- We will ensure appropriate supervision of anyone known to have offended against a child or young person who attends activities organised by us.

Leaders and regular helpers that work with children and young people or vulnerable adults will:

- Complete an application form and confidential declaration.
- Name 2 referees, one of whom should ideally be from a current or recent employer or previous church.
- Complete a disclosure if required.
- Have an appropriate interview.
- Be open to support and review.
- Attend safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role on appointment and attend a refresher at least every 3 years.
- Receive supervision and support in their role.
- Inform the vicar of any relevant change in circumstances.

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns, Allegations and Disclosures about Domestic Violence:

- Staff and volunteers are responsible for reporting suspected cases of abuse to the child advocate or the Parish Safeguarding Coordinators. **IT IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS TO INVESTIGATE SUSPECTED ABUSE.**
- If a child reveals they are being abused, staff / volunteers should reassure them and tell them that they were right to reveal the abuse. They should not promise to keep it secret.
- The child advocate or the Parish Safeguarding Coordinators will report safeguarding concerns, allegations and disclosures about domestic abuse to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser and, where appropriate, social care services.

- If there is urgent concern that a person is not safe and needs immediate help, we will dial 999 or contact social care services.
- If there are concerns about a volunteer, or an allegation has been made against that individual, the volunteer will cease to act in that role until the results of the investigation are made clear.
- We commit to providing appropriate support to any individual within our church community who is accused of causing harm to someone in our care.
- We commit to the support of adult and child survivors of abuse.

Other Responsibilities:

- Records relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults should be kept securely and for the period set out in guidance.
http://cofebirmingham.contentfiles.net/media/documents/document/2016/04/SAFEGUARDING_RECORDS_RETENTION.pdf
- All accidents involving staff or volunteers or participants will be recorded in the accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible.
- Staff and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with building safety issues, such as fire procedures, location of emergency exits and first aid equipment.

Photography:

- Permission should be obtained for use of any images of children or young people.
- Even if permission has been granted, children must not be identified. Images must not be displayed on the Internet (e.g. the Church's website or Facebook Page) without explicit separate approval from parents.

Signed:

Incumbent: Rev Nejb Boumenjel

Churchwarden: Clive Jones

Churchwarden: Tina Pickering

Date: 8th November 2018

APPENDIX 1: Useful Contacts:

Diocese of Birmingham:

If you have any concerns about a child, a young person or an adult who may be vulnerable, the matter should be referred to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser, Steph Haynes:

StephH@birmingham.anglican.org or 07342 993 844

NSPCC - A registered charity established to prevent cruelty to children. Help line for concerns about a child's welfare: 0808 800 5000, web-site www.nspcc.org.uk

Local Authority Children's Social Care:

0121 303 1888 (Birmingham)

0121 788 4333 (Solihull)

Local Authority Adult Social Care:

0121 303 1234 (Birmingham)

0121 704 8007 (Solihull)

Other Contacts:

Childline

0800 1111

Family Lives Helpline

0808 800 2222

Samaritans

116 123

Elder Abuse

0808 808 8141

Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 801 0327

LGBT Domestic Violence Helpline

0300 999 5428

National Association of People Abused in Childhood

0800 085 3330

Stop It Now! Helpline

0808 1000 900

APPENDIX 2, Church of the Ascension Safeguarding Policy, Approved 8/11/18

The abuse of a child or adult involves significant harm that will have an impact on them not just whilst it is happening but potentially for the rest of their lives. Any action that causes significant harm, whether intentional or unintentional, is abuse.

Someone up to the age of 18 is a child. Promoting a Safer Church 2017 defines a vulnerable adult as someone aged 18 or over whose ability to protect themselves is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress or otherwise, either temporarily or indefinitely. Both need special care and protection.

Anyone can perpetrate abuse – a child or adult of any gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religion, ethnicity or culture.

Knowledge of and sensitivity to racial, cultural and religious patterns is crucial to good safeguarding practice – **BUT** none of these can ever be used to justify or condone the abuse of a person.

The following categories of abuse apply to both adults and children:

Physical Abuse ...

... is the causing of physical harm to a person and can include fabricating or inducing illness in a child, inappropriate restraint, the misuse of medicines or force-feeding

Neglect ...

... includes failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs or withholding adequate care of a vulnerable adult which means their basic needs are

not met. A mother can neglect her unborn child through substance misuse and an adult can self-neglect

Emotional Abuse ...

... includes making a person feel worthless, humiliated, ashamed or afraid to the extent that it affects their emotional health and development. It can include bullying and harassment, control or coercion or depriving a person of social contact with others

Sexual Abuse ...

... of a child includes both physical sexual abuse and non-physical sexual abuse – making, watching, distributing sexual images of a child, sexting, grooming for sexual abuse or encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour. Child Sexual Exploitation can include organised gangs manipulating or coercing young people into sexual activity. Sexual abuse of an adult occurs when informed consent for sexual activity (including non-contact sexual activity such as indecent exposure) is not freely given - e.g. when a person is controlled or coerced or they lack cognitive capacity to give consent. Sexual activity with a child under 18 or a vulnerable adult for whom you have pastoral responsibility will always be sexual abuse

Domestic Abuse ...

... includes any form of abuse, violent, sexual or controlling behaviours by over 16s who are, or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Children can be directly or indirectly affected by domestic abuse in their household

Spiritual Abuse ...

... is not a formally recognised category of abuse but is of concern to faith communities. It includes using religious belief to justify abuse – such as using physical or emotional harm to 'deliver' a person from evil spirits or witchcraft - or for the control or coercion of a person.

Grooming ...

... is using a power imbalance in a relationship to control or coerce a person into doing something they do not want to do or gaining a person's total trust or 'love' so that they will do anything their abuser asks

The following additional categories of abuse apply to adults:

Financial Abuse ...

... is misusing or refusing access to someone else's money, property or possessions, or manipulating or extorting someone into handing over their money

Institutional Abuse ...

... occurs when an organisation's policies and practices are more important than the individual person's needs and wishes so that good standards of care according to individual choice are not provided

Discriminatory Abuse ...

... includes any form of abuse that is based on a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, culture or ethnicity

The internet, social media, smart phones etc ... can be used by adults and children to form relationships in order to abuse or to disclose abuse

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or to perpetrate abuse – such as distributing images or bullying

The trafficking ... of adults and children can be for sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, ‘sweat-shop labour’ or any other form of exploitation

Signs of Abuse

There are many different signs of abuse some of which may indicate that something other than abuse is happening in the person’s life. We should always be concerned when a person’s:

- behaviour is out of character for them
- appearance or hygiene deteriorates
- behaviour is fearful
- trying to hide something
- physical injuries have no satisfactory explanation or occur repeatedly

It is reasonable to say ‘That bruise looks painful, how did it happen?’ or ‘You don’t seem yourself at the moment, are you okay?’ to explore concerns

If you work with children or vulnerable adults you must understand what abuse is and the signs to look for. For a more detailed guide to abuse see the factsheets on the safeguarding children and adult pages of our website at

www.cofebirmingham.com/hub/safeguarding or complete the CO Basic Safeguarding Awareness e-learning module at <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

Report

NEVER promise to keep a secret

ALWAYS report any concerns, however small they may seem, all disclosures and all allegations

TELL Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Vicar...



... or, when the concern is about them/you can’t get in touch with them/you don’t want to tell anyone at your church, tell the Bishop’s Safeguarding Adviser

If you need immediate advice and can’t wait to get in touch with any of the above call the duty social care team or NSPCC helpline

If a situation is not safe and someone is in danger or needs immediate help call the police

Contact Numbers:

Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator:
Vicar:
Bishop’s Safeguarding Adviser: 07324 993844
Children’s Social Services:
Adult Social Services:
31:8 (formerly CCPAS): 0303 003 11 11
Police: 101 or 999
NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
ChildLine: 0808 11 11
Elder Abuse: 0808 808 8141
Samaritans: 08457 909090
Domestic Violence: 0808 2000 247



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
BIRMINGHAM

SAFEGUARDING

A Brief Guide to the Categories of Abuse for Leaders & Helpers

