

## Safeguarding Adults

The Church recognises that everyone has strengths and weaknesses, capacities and restrictions. Yet, at some times, we may become vulnerable due to pressures, dangers or overwhelming circumstances. Some people, by reason of their physical or social circumstances, have higher levels of vulnerability than others. This may be because they have a disability, mental health concerns or dementia. It is the Christian duty of everyone to recognise and support those who are identified as being more vulnerable. In supporting a vulnerable person, we must do so with compassion and in a way that maintains dignity.

This document sets out the Diocese of London's commitment to working with others to promote and safeguard the welfare of adults at risk in its community. The commitment of the Diocese is mirrored in the pastoral practices of St. Andrew's, Enfield.

### **When is an adult at risk?**

Government guidance suggest that an adult can be at risk due to:

- sensory or physical disability or impairment
- learning disability
- physical illness
- chronic or acute mental ill health (including dementia)
- addiction to alcohol or drugs
- failing faculties in old age
- permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity through life events such as bereavement, abuse or trauma

Mistreatment or abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation.

### **Why should the Church be concerned?**

Every church has members who are or will become vulnerable and who look to the Church for support and care during these times. They entrust themselves to the care of their Christian community in good faith. At times they may not have the capacity to make decisions that may have consequences for themselves and/or for others. These may relate to daily care, health, finance or property. The Church has a duty to empower and protect such individuals and is supported by legislation.

All church activities which support an individual deemed vulnerable/at risk must follow these five principles:

- **presume capacity** – that people are capable of making decisions, unless there is evidence otherwise
- **support individuals to make their own decisions** – giving all practicable help before considering making any decisions on their behalf
- **distinguish unwise decisions** – recognise that the person retains the right to make seemingly eccentric or unwise decisions
- **act in their best interests** – in all decisions or activities on their behalf
- **take the least restrictive option** – in any action that might affect their basic rights and freedoms

### **How do I know it is mistreatment or significant harm?**

Abuse or mistreatment is a single or repeated act that violates an individual's human and/or civil rights. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, be an act of neglect or omission, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not given or cannot give consent.

The harm can be deemed significant where there is not only ill treatment but impairment and avoidable deterioration to physical, mental, social, sexual or emotional health. The seriousness or extent of abuse is often not clear and concerns should be assessed carefully taking the vulnerable person's demeanour and point of view into consideration. Each situation should consider the:

- **vulnerability** of the individual
- **nature and extent** of the abuse
- **length of time** it has been occurring
- **impact** on the individual
- risk of **repeated or increasingly serious** acts involving this or other adults at risk

### **Who might mistreat or abuse an adult at risk?**

Adults at Risk may be mistreated or abused by a wide range of people including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other vulnerable people, neighbours, friends, mere associates and strangers. The abuse can take place within a caring relationship or when the abuser is not well known to the victim.

It may be accepted or exacerbated by the behaviour or culture within an institution, in which case it is described as institutional abuse. Abuse concerns the misuse of influence or power where control and/or authority can result in harmful or criminal activity.

Someone may use their position of influence, power or authority to the detriment of the safety, welfare and general wellbeing of a vulnerable person unintentionally, or with intent and for personal gain. This could be seen as deliberate grooming.

### **General indications that abuse may be occurring**

It may not always be obvious that an adult at risk is being subjected to mistreatment or abuse; and it may not be appropriate to question them at the time. However there may be general indicators that something is amiss and that the adult is unhappy about their situation. Marked change in their behaviour or disclosure of concerns should be discussed with the Church Safeguarding Officer.

Some general indicators that may be noticed about the vulnerable person:

- covering up or rationalising, injuries or demeaning behaviours towards them
- confusion and / or denial that anything is amiss despite marked deterioration
- withdrawal from things that they normally engage with or do
- not being allowed to speak for themselves, or see others without permission
- flirtatious, precocious or expressive sexual behaviour out of character
- indications of unusual confinement e.g. closed off in a room

Behaviours that may be observed about the carer, family member or the person close to the adult at risk include:

- getting the vulnerable person to pay for their (i.e. carer's) shopping / petrol / tickets
- taking advantage of their naivety or trust
- attitudes of indifference or anger towards the vulnerable person
- blaming or chastising them e.g. that soiling themselves was deliberate
- aggressive or harsh behaviour (threats, insults, harassment)
- inappropriate display of affection or care
- social isolation or restriction of activity
- obvious absence of assistance or attendance

### **Categories of Abuse**

Nine categories of abuse have been identified. Any or all of these may be carried out as the result of: deliberate intent and targeting of vulnerable people, negligence or ignorance.

#### **1. Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is the act of physical ill treatment. It may include hitting, slapping, pushing, punching, kicking, burning, biting, suffocating, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

#### **2. Emotional or psychological abuse**

Emotional or psychological abuse is the use of threats or fear or the use of 'power over' relationships to deny the vulnerable person's independent wishes. This includes: threats of harm or

abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation and denial of dignity, blaming, controlling, bullying, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal of services/supportive networks.

### **3. Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is a sexual act (contact or non-contact) carried out without the informed consent or knowledge of the other individual. Non-contact abuse may include sexual suggestions, salacious exposure to indecent material and indecent behaviour. Contact abuse may include rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting. Victims suffer emotionally and psychologically.

### **4. Neglect**

Neglectful behaviour is any pattern of activity or omission which seriously impairs an individual. This includes: ignoring a need for medical or physical care, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care, religious or educational services, or the deliberate withholding of necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Also denying contact with family, failing to intervene in situations where there is danger to the vulnerable person or to others, particularly when a person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk.

### **5. Financial abuse**

Financial abuse is the willful use or manipulation of the vulnerable person's property, assets, or monies without their informed consent or authorisation. This can include theft or fraud of monies or possessions, exploitation, pressure or undue influence to change wills, financial arrangements, or the misuse of property, possessions or benefits.

### **6. Discriminatory abuse**

Discriminatory abuse is maltreatment or harassment that is based on any characteristic of a person's identity, such as their race, sex, or disability. Many of the signs of discriminatory abuse will be the same as for emotional abuse. The impact of discriminatory abuse can lead to significant self-harming.

### **7. Institutional abuse**

Institutional abuse is when a culture of poor practice or maltreatment within a setting becomes routine at the expense of good professional practice. It may be exercised through defamatory attitudes, negative stereotyping, and abusive behaviours which are not corrected.

### **8. Spiritual abuse**

Within faith communities harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practices. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership, penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, or intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in adults at risk experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual harm.

### **9. Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is the use of forms of control and/or maltreatment within an intimate or domestic relationship. Types of domestic abuse include: physical, verbal (also called emotional, mental, or psychological abuse), sexual, economic/financial, and spiritual abuse. Stalking and cyber-stalking are also forms of control and abuse. Church workers should remain alert to the use of words, physical or sexual practices to demean and control a vulnerable adult.

### **What to do with disclosures and concerns**

Concerns about vulnerable people emerge in a number of ways. The core actions that should always be taken are:

- Take any emergency action needed to alleviate any immediate risk to life or limb
- Make a brief factual note of what you have seen, heard or become concerned about (within an hour when possible)
- Listen, don't ask any leading questions and treat all information confidentially
- Discuss your concerns with your Church Safeguarding Officer

- Ensure safeguarding action is taken, supporting the adult, if they have capacity, to make a referral

**All situations of actual or suspected abuse should be reported without delay (within 24 hours) to the Diocese Safeguarding Team and their advice sought.**

### **Confidentiality and information sharing**

Any disclosure made by an adult at risk or any concerns that become apparent must be treated with sensitivity and any sharing of information must be carried out on a strictly 'need to know' basis. "The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable adults.

It is appropriate to ascertain the wishes of the vulnerable person about what they want to do about the situation, explaining the boundaries of confidentiality. However, care should be taken if telling the vulnerable person what you are going to do could make them more vulnerable or at further risk.

### **Responding to concerns and disclosures**

There are many reasons why individuals do not disclose mistreatment or abuse, perhaps personal or family reasons or fear. Some people blame themselves for what has happened or make excuses for their 'abusers' particularly where they rely on them for care, support, shelter or companionship. Fear of 'getting a loved one into trouble' or losing contact with them altogether may be very real. Consequently victims may refuse to speak to the police, especially in the initial stages even if the situation is extremely serious.

If someone tells you about mistreatment or abuse or you have concerns about a vulnerable person, your role is to respond sensitively and provide support. Ascertain what the vulnerable person wants to do about the situation and consult the Church Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours. The use of diagrams and sketches is often very useful in trying to accurately record a concern. Date and sign your notes and keep them safe.

In emergency situations contact the police, ambulance or social services directly and inform the Church Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible but within 24 hours. Make a record immediately afterwards and always let the police know all that you have seen and done in responding to the situation.

#### **Do:**

- stay calm, the person concerned is likely to be anxious and need reassuring
- listen attentively and accept what is being said, your role is to pass on the concern
- let the person tell you in their own words, avoid any assumptions or suggesting explanations.
- keep any questions to a minimum.
- record what is said and seen using their own words or actions and discuss with your Church Safeguarding Officer

#### **Do Not:**

- press for more details, someone more appropriate may do this at a later point
- be judgmental or voice your own opinion
- promise to keep secrets
- discuss the information with the alleged abuser
- attempt to deal with the problem alone, or try to investigate it

These simple actions will help to protect an adult at risk against further abuse.

### **Allegations against church workers**

Where there are concerns about the behaviour of or allegations against a church worker, these should be directed immediately to the Church Safeguarding Officer. These concerns must be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours and will be addressed drawing on the relevant policy procedures guiding paid and voluntary workers. A referral must be made to the

police and local authority where it appears that a criminal offence has occurred against an adult at risk.

Each Local Authority will have a Safeguarding Adults Coordinator, through whom all safeguarding cases should be recorded and monitored. They will liaise with the police and other statutory and voluntary organisations to arrange relevant meetings, either strategy/planning meetings or case conferences to decide appropriate interventions and support for the adult at risk.

### **Roles and Responsibilities in Safeguarding Adults at Risk**

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and most effectively undertaken when all are working within their clear roles and responsibilities. Within the Diocese of London, safeguarding responsibilities are held at the levels of the Diocese, Episcopal Areas and Parochial Church Councils (PCC) and with specified safeguarding personnel.

#### **1. Diocese of London**

In line with House of Bishops guidance

- adopted the national House of Bishops' safeguarding policy ('Promoting a Safe Church', 2006)
- provided a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese
- established a Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) to coordinate and manage of all aspects of safeguarding
- provided a code of safe working practice for all in the Diocese to follow
- ensured safeguarding training and development opportunities are available to all

#### **2. Episcopal Areas**

Area Bishops hold responsibility for safeguarding on behalf of the Diocese in their Areas. This responsibility is to ensure that ministry is carried out in accordance with the mandates of National and Diocesan guidance. Episcopal Areas play a key role in ensuring that safeguarding is consistently and appropriately undertaken by:

- ensuring the appointment of an Episcopal Area Safeguarding Coordinator
- coordinating with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in the management of safeguarding across the area
- ensuring the proper flow of safeguarding information to and from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
- ensuring that the code of safe working practice is being followed across the Area
- identifying and supporting training needs and promoting good practice in safeguarding across the Area

#### **3. Parochial Church Council (PCC)**

PCCs play a core role within our worshipping communities; their influence and good management of safeguarding is fundamental in keeping all in our churches safe. Each PCC should therefore:

- formally adopt and implement the Diocesan joint policy for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk 'Safeguarding in the Diocese of London' and the associated procedures provided by the Diocese. PCC's are strongly advised not to amend the suggested Policy Statement provided. Where helpful, Parish Guidelines which implement your adopted policy may be developed and appended. One copy of this policy statement should be kept with the PCC minutes, another copy sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and one copy displayed prominently in the church.
- appoint a Church Safeguarding Officer to work with the parish priest and the PCC to implement the policy and procedures. The safeguarding officer should attend the PCC at least twice a year
- communicate the policy to the whole congregation and display in church premises useful support contacts for those who are or may become vulnerable
- ensure that all those authorised to work with adults at risk are appropriately recruited according to safe recruitment practice and are trained and supported
- ensure where the PCC provides specific services to adults at risk, that these are properly supervised

- encourage the whole congregation to be committed to supporting one another, work only within their remit and pass on any concerns so they can be dealt with in a prompt manner
- ensure that the policy adopted by the PCC is being implemented and appropriately resourced
- review the implementation in the parish of the safeguarding policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually. The report is to be presented to the PCC by the Church Safeguarding Officer.
- where working within Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs), agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding adults at risk policy to follow, including where to seek advice in urgent situations. This decision should be ratified both by the bishop and other appropriate church leaders in the partnership
- in the event of a specific safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are also notified.

#### **4. Diocesan Safeguarding Officer**

The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer is a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST). Their role is to coordinate all the mechanisms for safeguarding practice across the Diocese through the provision of specialist advice, support, administration and monitoring.

#### **5. Church Safeguarding Officer**

The Church Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring the coordination of any concerns about an adult at risk or the behaviour of an adult working with them. Their role is to ensure that these are appropriately reported both to the statutory agencies and to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. They should attend the PCC at least twice a year and work with them to ensure the proper implementation of the safeguarding policy.

Where the Church Safeguarding Officer becomes aware of a suspicion or concern about abuse the following steps should be taken:

- if the adult at risk is in immediate need of medical treatment or protection, contact the ambulance service, the police or local authority
- inform the parish priest (unless there is a valid reason not to)
- inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team within 24 hours. This will allow you to discuss your concerns with someone experienced, and seek advice and guidance to agree the most appropriate action to take in the best interests of the person(s) concerned. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Adult Safeguarding Coordinator can also provide advice and guidance on safeguarding matters.

#### **Selecting, recruiting and supporting workers**

Safer recruitment practices form part of a network of checks and balances which will minimise the possibilities of appointing inappropriate individuals to work with vulnerable groups. They are one of the four elements of 'safe care' practice, which are:

- effective, clear appointment procedures and practices
- explicit and shared standards
- clear, reliable supervision arrangements
- access to appropriate training opportunities

Appointments to all roles should be in line with the Church of England's 'Protecting all God's Children', 2010, and 'Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment', 2010. Each appointment to a paid or voluntary post should be subject to a recruitment process and vetting checks and a mandatory six-month probationary period. Good appointment and support processes will therefore include:

- clarity about what the post involves and the kind of person to occupy it
- completion of confidential declaration forms enabling information to be openly explored
- consistent interviewing and assessment methods, where identity is verified
- using references to ascertain a person's suitability for the role
- checking and rechecking regularly that the individual is suitable to work with vulnerable people

- clear and thorough risk assessment to enable “safe” appointments to be made
- using the safeguarding declaration and codes of conduct to guide best practice
- provision of appropriate means of induction, supervision, training and support

Those appointing should use the recruitment process as an opportunity to satisfy themselves that the person has the personality, experience and integrity for the work. It is recommended that volunteers are not appointed to work with adults at risk until they have been regular members of the congregation for a sufficient length of time for them to become known and trusted by the wider church community.

### **Good Practice in Safeguarding Adults at Risk**

Good practice safeguards people who may be vulnerable. It also protects anyone from a congregation who comes into contact with them, in whatever context, from being wrongly accused of abuse or misconduct. The ‘Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy’ provide a good practice guide for all those involved in pastoral ministry in the Diocese. Everyone, whether paid or unpaid, clergy or lay, should be working within church guidelines.

### **Pastoral relationships**

Anyone whose ministry brings them into contact with vulnerable people should remain aware of their own behaviours and how these might be viewed by an adult at risk. Pastoral relationships will often run parallel with friendships and social contacts, but should always remain distinct. Perceptions can be difficult to manage and workers should always seek to have a clear understanding with vulnerable people of the nature and boundaries of their contact with them.

The following principles should be followed:

- exercise particular care when ministering to persons with whom there already exists a close personal friendship or family relationship
- be aware of the dangers of dependency in pastoral and professional relationships and seek advice or supervision when these concerns arise
- minister within your remit and limits - do not undertake any ministry that is beyond your competence or role (e.g. therapeutic counselling, deliverance ministry, or giving legal advice). Instead refer to the person or agency with appropriate expertise
- avoid behaviour that could give the impression of favouritism or special relationship.
- always respectfully encourage self-determination, independence and choice
- do not undertake any pastoral ministry whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **Conversations and interviews in a ministry context**

Church workers must always be aware of their language and behaviour and should consider in advance the:

- value of taking a colleague along with them
- place of the meeting, arrangement of the furniture and lighting, their own department
- balance of privacy for conversation with the opportunity for supervision (open doors or windows in doors, another person nearby);
- physical distance between people taking into account hospitality and respect, being aware that this may differ as a result of past trauma or abusive experiences
- circumstances and whether they suggest a professional or social interaction
- propriety or danger of visiting or being visited alone, especially in the evening
- personal safety and comfort of all participants
- the appropriateness of initiating or receiving any physical contact, for example gestures of comfort, which may be unwanted or misinterpreted.

Workers should establish the nature of the interview at the outset of each interaction in respect to subject matter, confidentiality and duration

## **Sexual conduct**

The sexual conduct of church workers will have an impact on their ministry within the Church. It is never appropriate for workers to take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with anyone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.

Workers should be aware of the power imbalance inherent in pastoral relationships and:

- must not engage in sexual activity with an adult or a child
- must take responsibility for their words and actions if wishing to make physical contact with another adult (e.g. a hug may be misunderstood) or to talk to them about sexual matters. This will include seeking permission, respecting the person's wishes, noticing and responding to non-verbal communication, refraining from such conduct if in doubt about the person's wishes
- must follow the Church's discipline on sexual matters
- must not view, possess or distribute sexual images of children and should refrain from viewing, possessing or distributing sexually exploitative images of adults
- should avoid situations where they feel vulnerable to temptation or where their conduct may be misinterpreted

## **Financial integrity**

Financial dealings can have an impact on the Church and the community, and must always be handled with integrity. Those with authority for such matters should maintain proper systems and not delegate that responsibility to anyone else. Church workers should:

- not seek personal financial gain from their position
- not be influenced by offers of money, or take inappropriate responsibility for such
- ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart and should avoid any conflict of interest
- ensure any monies received are handled by two unrelated lay people
- disclose any gifts received to a supervisor/senior and decide on its acceptance, confirmation and use
- not to canvass for church donations from those who may be vulnerable, e.g. the recently bereaved or those who lack capacity to make such decisions

## **Record keeping**

At the first opportunity (within 24 hours) church workers should make a note of anything that has been said and seen by them that causes them concern. They should aim to:

- note what was actually said using the individual's own words where possible
- describe the circumstances in which any disclosure or concern came about
- note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time
- separate out factual information and your own opinions, recording the reasons for the latter

## **Declaration Form**

I confirm that I have read the document *Safeguarding Adults*.

I confirm that I understand the information contained within this document and its implications for mission and ministry at St. Andrew's, Enfield.

I confirm that I am content to abide by the procedures contained within the document with regards to any ministry I may undertake at St. Andrew's, Enfield.

**SIGNED:**

**PRINT NAME:**

**DATE:**

**Counter-signature 1 (Safeguarding Officer):**

**Counter-signature 2: (Vicar):**