

Safeguarding Children and Young People at St. Andrew's, Enfield

The safeguarding of children and adults is an integral part of the life and ministry of the church. This safeguarding children and young people policy sits together with the safeguarding adults' policy. This policy is drawn from the policy for safeguarding children in the Church of England, *Protecting All God's Children 2010*. It provides the basis for ensuring that within our diocese we provide the safest possible environment to enable our children to grow and flourish.

It represents therefore the Diocese of London's commitment to safeguarding children and young people and reflects our policy statement and guiding principles. The Diocese believes that the welfare of the child is paramount and that all children should be protected from harm or abuse. To do so we will work in partnership with children, parents, carers and other agencies to promote and safeguard the welfare of our children.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the broader activities through which we are vigilant and responsive to promoting the welfare of our children and young people. The primary concept in safeguarding is recognising and responding to the potential significant harm of children. Significant harm is any single or multiple maltreatment or impairment to the health and development of a child and is determined by careful assessment.

Why is safeguarding important?

For too long, children have died or been abused at the hands of those who should have protected them. Therefore, the work of safeguarding children and young people is now guided by a significant body of legislation and policy. They serve to reinforce the importance of this work and the basis from which we should be operating. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) challenges us to take measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Within England this is reflected in the Children Act 1989, which provides the statutory powers for the Local Authority to investigate and intervene where there are concerns for significant harm to a child. More specifically, statutory and voluntary organisations are guided by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010), HM Government, which provides specific guidance for faith organisations. This policy has been developed against this legislation.

How might children be harmed?

Children can be harmed in many ways. Maltreatment of a child occurs where: their health, physical, emotional, intellectual, sexual, spiritual or social development is damaged by other people. All abuse is a betrayal of trust and a misuse of relationships and power. Church communities must be particularly vigilant to identify the inappropriate use of any religious belief or practice which may harm somebody spiritually, emotionally or physically. Abuse can be an act of commission, such as sexual abuse, or omission, such as neglect or failure to protect.

Child abuse affects girls and boys, babies and young people of all ages up to 18, including children with learning difficulties, children with physical disabilities and children from all kinds of family background. It occurs in all cultures, religions and classes. Digital technology such as the internet and mobile phones are being increasingly used as a medium for abuse. Amongst their peers children may experience 'sexting' or be enticed to have taken or send explicit photographs of themselves. With adults it may also take the form of the production and distribution of photos or video displaying abusive images of children. Children can be entrapped by these practices.

Who might harm a child?

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. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or by another child or children, including bullying and abuse through the use of digital technology. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Most child abuse is perpetrated by an adult, male or female, who is well known to the child, often a family member.

Such trusted adults may be in the child's community; they may be trusted professionals, leaders or members of a child's church.

What is the impact on children?

Child abuse can result in a child suffering significant harm and the need for court proceedings to safeguard their welfare. Abuse prevents children from achieving their full potential and undermines their dignity and rights. The harm it causes will affect children both while it is happening and in later life. It can be educational, emotional, psychological and relational. Historic accounts are therefore to be responded to with the same diligence. When abuse occurs within the context of the Church or by a Christian, it may affect the person's faith and spiritual development.

Children may suffer both directly and indirectly if they live in households where there is domestic violence. Domestic violence includes any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults or young people, who are or who have been intimate partners, family members or extended family members, regardless of gender and sexuality. If there is domestic violence it is now accepted that there will always be at least emotional abuse of any children in the household, and there may also be direct abuse of them.

Categories and definitions of abuse

There are four categories of abuse described in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010*, from which the following definitions are taken.

1. Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve 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.

2. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

3. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4. Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ridiculing what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These

may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may also involve: seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, for example in domestic violence situations; serious bullying (including cyber-bullying); causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger; exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child but it may occur as the sole or main form of abuse.

Why children don't tell and adults don't act

It is commonly believed that a child or young person would resist abuse at all costs or immediately tell a trusted adult. In fact children often need to overcome a number of barriers, which may be emotional or intellectual, but are very real for them. Children and young people often don't tell because they:

- are scared because they have been threatened
- believe they will be taken away from home and put in care
- believe they are to blame
- think it is what happens to all children
- feel embarrassed and guilty
- don't want the abuser to get into trouble
- have communication or learning difficulties
- may not have the vocabulary to explain what happened
- are afraid they won't be believed

All of us have a natural revulsion upon hearing someone has maltreated a child and must resist our inclination to dismiss its possible truth in favour of a more comfortable rationale. The reasons adults do not share their concerns may be because we:

- find it hard to believe what we are seeing or hearing
- cannot believe the suspicion that may be about someone we know
- fear we might 'get it wrong' or make it worse
- fear the consequences of getting it wrong – for the child, young person or vulnerable adult, their family and/or for ourselves
- simply 'don't want to be involved'
- believe we do not have the information on what to do or who to contact.

Procedures to follow if there is a concern about a child

Concerns about a child or young person may present themselves 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
- discuss your concerns with your Church Safeguarding Officer
- 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
- ensure safeguarding action is taken

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

Making a referral to Children's Social Care

If it is agreed that a referral should be made to your local Social Care office, this will normally be done by the Incumbent, Church Safeguarding Officer or a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST). The following points should be kept in mind:

- give the social worker as much detail as possible: descriptions, dates, times, and what was actually said
- distinguish between fact and opinion and between what you have seen and what others have told you
- follow up your contact with the children's social care by a letter confirming what you have said to them (within 24 hours)

- keep a record
- be prepared to have further discussions with the social services and/or a police investigation team
- continue to support the child
- you may need support for yourself - from others in the parish who know what is happening or from your clergy

Allegations against church officers

The guidance below relates to circumstances where it is alleged that a church officer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved in a way that indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with children.

Where there are concerns for the behaviour of or allegations against a church worker these should be directed immediately to the Church Safeguarding Officer who will confirm the appropriate next action. These concerns must be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and will be addressed drawing on the relevant policy procedures guiding paid and voluntary workers. This may involve: providing advice, supervision and training, the use of disciplinary and statutory processes or a combination of these. In England, any allegation against those working with children must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where any of the three circumstances identified above exists. This is a useful means of consultation as the LADO will advise if the situation meets the criteria and contains sufficient information to proceed and will provide support throughout the process.

Caring for those who may or have harmed children

For the purpose of work with children or adults at risk, no offence is considered spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. It is the policy of the Church of England that all people with positive criminal records checks should undergo a risk assessment proportionate to their role and the matters disclosed. Old, minor and unrelated offences will not prohibit otherwise suitable people from working with children. The Diocesan Safeguarding Team should always be involved in this.

As well as people with cautions and convictions against children, there are others whose behaviour may be considered to pose a risk to children. A protocol for 'Managing Offenders' should be completed for those with cautions or convictions. A 'Covenant of Care' agreement should be completed with those who may potentially present a risk to children even where they have not been cautioned or convicted of an offence. Your Safeguarding Officer and Clergy will work with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in drawing up these Protocols and Covenants.

Why should the Church be concerned?

Research from the Lucy Faithful Foundation has indicated that a higher proportion of convicted offenders against children may be found in church congregations than in the population generally. It is therefore probable that congregations will have people who have abused children among their worshippers, some of whom will be known. Not all will have committed sexual offences; some will have been guilty of neglect, physical or emotional abuse. They may still present a risk to children. The Church is a community of sinners being forgiven, and has a duty to minister to all people. This imposes a particular responsibility to not place people in the way of temptation, and not to compromise the safety of children.

Safeguarding responsibilities

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 by the Diocese, in the Episcopal Areas and by Parochial Church Councils (PCC) and with specified safeguarding personnel.

1. Diocese of London

In line with General Synod guidance the Diocese has:

- adopted the national House of Bishops' safeguarding children policy (*Protecting All God's Children, 2010*)
- provided a structure to manage safeguarding in the Diocese
- established a Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) to coordinate the management of all aspects of safeguarding
- provided a code of 'Safer Working Practice' for all in the Diocese to follow
- ensured the appointment of Episcopal Area Safeguarding Coordinators
- ensured safeguarding training and development opportunities are available to all

2. Episcopal Areas

Area Bishops hold Area responsibility for safeguarding on behalf of the Diocese. This responsibility is to ensure that it is carried out in accordance with the mandates of the Diocese of London and General Synod guidance. Episcopal Areas therefore play a key role in ensuring that safeguarding is consistently and appropriately undertaken. To that end their role is to:

- coordinate, with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, the management of safeguarding across the Area
- ensure the proper flow of safeguarding information to and from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
- ensure that the code of safer working practice is being followed across the Area
- identify and support training needs and promote good practice in safeguarding across the Area

3. Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) play a core role within our worshipping communities. Their influence and good management of safeguarding is fundamental in keeping all within our churches safe. Each parish 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 at least one Church Safeguarding Officer to work with the parish priest and the PCC to implement the policy and procedures. The Church Safeguarding Officer should attend the PCC at least twice a year
- appoint a person, who should be different from the Church Safeguarding Officer, to be a Children's Champion. This should be someone children know they could talk to about any problems, if they so wish
- display in church premises where children's activities take place, the contact details of the Church Safeguarding Officer and Children's Champion with, 'Childline' 0800 1111 and 'Parentline Plus' 0808 800 222 and NSPCC Helpline 0808 731 9256 numbers
- ensure that all those authorised to work with children are appropriately recruited according to safer recruitment practice and are trained and supported
- ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities which involve children undertaken in the name of the parish
- ensure all those hiring church premises undertake to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities towards children and young people
- review the implementation in the parish of the safeguarding children policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually. The report should be presented to the PCC by the Church Safeguarding Officer.
- where working within Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs), agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding children 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.

Roles in safeguarding children and young people

A complete description of all safeguarding roles can be found on the diocesan website. Below are details of the Church Safeguarding Officer and the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

1. *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.

2. *Church Safeguarding Officer*

The Church Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring the coordination of any concerns about a child, or the behaviour of an adult working with children. 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 followed:

- if the child is in immediate need of medical treatment or protection, contact the ambulance service or the police (very few situations will fall into this category)
- inform the rector/vicar/priest-in-charge (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 child and in line with the Child Protection policies and procedures. The Local Children's Social Care Department and the NSPCC are available for consultation on concerns.

Selecting, Recruiting and Supporting Workers

Safer recruitment practices form part of a network of checks and balances which will minimise the possibility 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/recruitment 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, 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 children's work 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 Children and Young People

The following areas are included as being specifically relevant and useful to safeguarding children and young people's activities.

1. Supervision and training

The PCC should make sure that paid staff and volunteers have the opportunity to meet together regularly to discuss any concerns, and to receive support and be helped to review their work. Supervision is the formal reviewing and planning of the work of employees and volunteers. Supervisors are responsible for making the work purposeful and focused.

Training is the ongoing activity of learning for the purpose of carrying out one's responsibilities well and to the required standard. All those working with children and young people should attend safeguarding training. A programme of learning opportunities is annually provided via the [Diocesan website](#).

2. Openness and accountability

Children and young people are best protected within environments and relationships that are trusting and open. This can be achieved by colleagues supporting each other to keep their practice within the Diocesan 'Code of Safer Working', and acting without delay on behaviour that puts a worker or vulnerable person at risk.

3. Confidentiality and information sharing

The highest level of confidentiality should be maintained at all times in relationships with both adults at risk and children. Concerns about abuse and maltreatment however, must not be kept secret or deemed confidential. Where a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm information must be shared promptly in order to protect the child (advice sought/matter reported within 24 hours). Research and experience affirm that keeping such secrets 'confidential' enables the abuse and its harm to continue and only serves to protect the abuser.

4. The hire of church premises

The welfare of children and young people is with those responsible for their care. Where external organisations are using church premises, hire arrangements must make it clear and agreed that the organisations are to abide by the PCC's safeguarding policy. A copy of the policy to be used should be attached to the hire agreement. Hirers should be asked to sign a copy of the parish safeguarding policy, even when the organisation have their own, to acknowledge that this has been seen and will be adhered to it.

5. Consent

It is important to ensure that children and young people can make an informed choice about whether to be involved in specific church activities. This can be done by sending the children and young people a briefing document or meeting with them before the event/activity and talking them through what it involves. Children and young people should be given the option at any time before or during an event or activity to say if they feel unhappy or uncomfortable with what is happening and they must be listened to.

Parental consent must be obtained for all children and young people up to the age of 18 years, unless they are 16 years or over and living and working independently to their parents/ guardians and are not part of the looked after system where the local authority should then be approached.

Declaration Form

I confirm that I have read the document *Safeguarding Children and Young People*.

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):