

## SAFE PARISH

# Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults: Policy and Procedure

The Parish Church of St Mary's Rushden.

This Policy and Procedure was adopted at a Parochial Church Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

It is consistent with the Church of England House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy and Practice.

*Each person who works with children and Vulnerable adults will agree to abide by this Policy*

*It will be reviewed annually, accepted and written in the minutes of the PCC.*

## **Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for Children and Young People**

This safeguarding policy relates to all groups and organisations of St Mary's Church with responsibility for working with children and young people from 0-18 years of age.

St Mary's PCC takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care.

Each of us has a responsibility to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people. We must also report any abuse or suspected abuse if discovered.

### **The Golden Rule**

**'Keep all relationships and communications with children and young people open, observable, readily understood and shared with more than one responsible adult. All work with children and young people must be well supervised and the people doing it carefully selected, well trained and advised of their safeguarding duties.'**

### **Objectives:**

- a) To keep all children, young people and those who work with them safe from harm.
- b) To try to ensure that every child entrusted in our care is never subjected to any form of abuse by church members.
- c) To know the procedures to follow in the event of any concern about a child's welfare or where there are complaints/allegations of abuse made within or without the church organisation.

### **Working policy**

#### **1) Recruitment Procedure**

- a) All leaders will be required to complete and sign the Diocesan Declaration form; this will include those adult members of mixed age activities, such as bellringers, choirs and worship groups, who are in a leadership role. This also includes people aged 16 and 17 who are in a helping role.
- b) A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced check will be required in circumstances where the frequency standard is met. (This is done online and information on how to do this is available from our parish Safeguarding Officer.)
- c) All records are confidential and must be kept in a safe place. This is the responsibility of the Rector. During an interregnum the Rural Dean is responsible for any records. The Church Wardens will liaise with the Rural Dean in the appointment of new workers or any child protection issues which may arise.

#### **2) Leader Child Ratio**

- a) At least two adults (18+) to be present with a child or group of children.
- b) Children must be adequately supervised.
- c) The following ratio of children to leaders is a mandatory minimum:
  - 0-2 yrs 1 adult to 3 children
  - 2-3 yrs 1 adult to 4 children
  - 4-8 yrs 1 adult to 6 children
  - 9-12 yrs 1 adult to 8 children
  - 13-18 yrs 1 adult to 10 young people

- d) More adults may be required for certain outside activities if risk assessment shows this is required.
- e) No adult should be expected to work with children alone (except as part of a formal mentoring project, for which the child's consent has been obtained and where mentoring will take place in a room specified for this purpose which must have a door with a transparent glass panel). A second adult should be within earshot.

### 3) Prevention - health and safety

- a) Make sure the premises are safe for the age of the children using them. Furniture and equipment that may be dangerous needs to be made secure or fenced off.
- b) A register of attendance for each group must be kept including the names of leaders and helpers.
- c) Fire exits should be marked.
- d) A first aid kit should be available at the venue of the children's activity and be clearly marked.
- e) An accident/incident report book should be kept.
- f) Adequate insurance should be in place.

### 4) Parental Consent and Responsibility

- a) Parental consent for a child or young person to attend a particular activity is needed.
- b) A contact number is required in case of emergency.
- c) Further parental consent is needed if children are taken off the premises.
- d) Children should never be driven alone and should always occupy the back seat of the vehicle. It is recommended that the adults should not be a couple. Parents must be informed of the destination and place and times of departure and return. Drivers should check their personal insurance policy and be fully compliant with the law regarding booster seats.
- e) The church accepts responsibility for children and young people only when attending an activity organised by the church. They are the responsibility of parents or guardians before and after any such activity.
- f) In residential circumstances parents/guardians are responsible for their children at all times except for specific church organised activities.

### 5) Reporting

- a) The wellbeing of the child is paramount at all times.
- b) If there is a concern of abuse by another child within the group it must be reported immediately to one of the following: **Leader, the Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Rector**, who will take advice from the relevant agency.
- c) If there is a complaint of abuse by a leader within the church community report to one of the following: **The Rector, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or Lead Agency**.
- d) If there is a complaint of abuse by the rector or a member of the clergy team report to one of the following: **Churchwardens, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or Lead Agency**.
- e) If there is obvious concern about a child's wellbeing or a child complains of abuse outside the church organisation report to one of the following: **The Rector, Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or Lead Agency**.
- f) St Mary's PCC will appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). This means that information, procedures and training have a direct line to leaders and workers.
- g) A lead agency may be contacted for advice. (Social Services, Police)
- h) Further protection procedures are held by the Rector, Curate and PSO.

## **6) Training**

St Mary's PCC will make every effort to train leaders and volunteers to the level of their responsibility, using the diocesan training scheme. All adults working with children or young people require C1 training and in addition leaders require C2 training. Clergy, Readers etc. require C3 training. All training to be refreshed by C5 after 5 years. The diocese has an obligation to train clergy, licensed workers and leaders. At least one representative will attend safeguarding training and support provided by the Diocese of Peterborough.

## **7) Guidance for Bellringers**

We welcome young people from our own and other parishes and value their contribution to bellringing. We recognise our responsibility as bellringers to create a safe environment in which they are able to learn and practise the art of bellringing with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Therefore we require:

- a) Permission form.
- b) At least 2 adults should be in attendance, at least one of whom should have been DBS checked.
- c) Instruction should be given without physical contact except in exceptional circumstances. In an emergency safety overrides all else.
- d) All visiting teams must be made aware that St Mary's has a safeguarding policy and procedures in place. A copy of the policy will be available in the ringing room and visiting teams should be made aware of this.

## **8) Choir and Worship Group**

- a) A permission form is required.
- b) At least 2 adults should be in attendance, at least one of whom should have been DBS checked.
- c) All other issues concerning Choir and Worship Group activities when children are in attendance must follow policy guidance.

## **9) Organisations using the Church Building/Hall**

- a) This safeguarding policy will be displayed on the church and hall notice boards as well as being available in the rector's vestry, church office and ringing chamber.
- b) Visiting groups will be made aware of the policy and be expected to have the correct ratio of adults to children.
- c) They should be aware of health and safety issues in the building and their responsibilities where children are present.
- d) Groups meeting under the name of another organisation (e.g. Uniformed) must operate within their own safeguarding guidelines.

## **10) Photography and Video**

Permission must be granted by parent/carer before images of children can be taken or used. Parent/carer should fill in a consent form which includes choices of where the photographs and/or video can be used.

Photographs or video taken on a mobile phone should be downloaded to a secure location and deleted from the phone as soon as possible.

## 11) Electronic communication

- a) Mobile phones  
Mobile phones and text messaging should not be used as a means of communication with young people except in an emergency.
- b) Facebook  
The churches Facebook account will be private except to friends. Leaders of activities which relate to children and young people should only set up a secure secret Facebook group. Each secret group to have a nominated person who can add friends. Written parental permission is required before a young person can be added to a group.
- c) Twitter  
The church will have a twitter account, but no members of the leadership shall be a follower of any young person under 18.
- d) No church member shall interact with or follow any young person under 18 on social media platforms. (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp.)

## Policy and Procedure for Vulnerable Adults

- a) All adults can be vulnerable at some time in their lives and we recognise this.
- b) We will listen to vulnerable adults encouraging them to be active contributors to the church community and to lead as independent a life as possible.
- c) We will ensure that any person working with vulnerable adults will have appropriate checks according to diocesan guidelines.
- d) We will aim to supervise any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or vulnerable adult or pose a risk to them.
- e) Visitors to vulnerable adults in their own home or in residential facilities will carry identification, having previously made an appointment.
- f) A mobile phone will be carried and someone else should be informed of the visit.
- g) Reporting abuse will follow the same guidelines as those for children and young people.

### **Important Note:**

**Clergy and Diocesan Officers are NOT authorised to investigate any allegations and must never attempt to do so; only the Police or Social Services are authorised to investigate safeguarding cases. They are called the Lead Agencies and will coordinate the responses. The present Parish Safeguarding Officer is Brenda Dixon, the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer is Beverly Huff and the Rector is Revd Stephen Prior.**

### **Telephone numbers**

Rector	Revd Stephen Prior	01933 312554
PSO	Brenda Dixon	01933 358982
DSO	Beverly Huff	01733 887040
Churchwarden	Don Merrifield	01933 358218
Churchwarden	Kate Woodfield	01933 412836