

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Parish of St. Mary's Church, Selly Oak

January 2021

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Policy Context

In developing this policy the parish of St. Mary's, Selly Oak commits to following the safeguarding policies of the Church of England, safeguarding policy and guidance as issued by the Diocese of Birmingham and commits to working within legislation and statutory guidance as related to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults.

Policy Statement

The Parish Church Council of St. Mary's, Selly Oak recognises the need to safeguard the children, young people and adults in our care and guard against the possibility of any form of abuse of children, young people and adults 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 create policies and procedures that uphold the importance of our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults entrusted to our care. A Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator will be appointed to ensure the implementation of this policy.

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- 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.

The Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator (PSC) to work with the incumbent and the PCC 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 parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish 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 Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser (BSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- 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.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator for St. Mary's, Selly Oak is **Martin Sorby**.

Procedures for Handling Concerns Regarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

We are committed to acting promptly whenever a concern is raised about a child, young person or vulnerable adult or about the behaviour of an adult in a position of trust, and will work with the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser and the appropriate statutory bodies when necessary.

Any member of the church may see or hear something of concern or someone may tell you something of concern (a disclosure). If a child, young person or adult tells you that they have experienced abuse, are experiencing abuse or are concerned that they may be at risk:

Do	Don't
Listen. Try to move to a quiet space if possible	Tell them to speak to someone else
Let the person talk at their own pace and say what they want to say. If you need to clarify points ask open questions like: Tell me... what happened, Explain ... about the incident Describe ...where it was , what happened	Investigate. Ask leading questions e.g. why did they do that, was it 'name', did it hurt you?
Take it seriously	Try not to react as though unbelieving or shocked
Reassure. Confirm they are doing the right thing by telling you.	Tell them not to tell stories
Tell them you need to share the concern with the right people e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer, police, social care	Promise to keep a secret or tell people who don't need to know.
Record what was said and the facts as accurately as possible as soon as possible on our recording form (see appendix 3)	Try to just remember it
	Contact the person the allegation is about

Whether a child, young person or adult has shared a concern with you or you have seen or heard something of concern...

If the situation is urgent i.e. there is an imminent risk of harm: contact the police on 101 or 999 as appropriate or contact the Local Authority Children or Adults safeguarding Teams:

Children's Advice and Support Services (CASS)

Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 5:15pm

Friday: 8:45am to 4:15pm

Telephone: **0121 303 1888**

Emergency out of hours telephone: **0121 675 4806**

Adult and Communities Access Point (ACAP)

Telephone: **0121 303 1234**

Once you have sought advice from police or the local authority and the situation is made safe, inform the Parish Safeguarding

Co-ordinator as soon as possible of the concern and actions taken; provide a written record of this. If the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator contact the Incumbent or the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser.

If the situation is of concern but is not urgent: contact the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator to report the concern and provide a written record (if the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser). They will decide whether to discuss with the child, their parents or carers or the adult and any carers and whether a referral to the local authority Children or Adult Safeguarding Team is needed or any other action.

Confidentiality and Consent

Confidentiality: the parish of St. Mary's, Selly Oak accepts the principle that only those with a need to know should be made aware of safeguarding concerns or other confidential information. All staff, ministers and volunteers are expected to share confidential information appropriately and to ensure that written records and verbal information is shared responsibly and stored securely.

Consent: the parish of St. Mary's, Selly Oak accepts that all people have a right to make their own views and wishes known and that these wishes should be followed wherever possible.

Children: where there is a concern that a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect they may ask those that know not to tell anyone. The parish of St. Mary's, Selly Oak accepts that we can not do this; these concerns must be reported to the appropriate authorities to enable the child or young person to receive appropriate help and support. The parish asks all staff, ministers and volunteers to explain this to children in their care when appropriate where there is concern that a child is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect. The parish expects that parents and carers will be communicated with and will have their consent sought for information to be shared with the local authority or other agencies. This should happen except where there is concern that to do so would place a child at increased risk or where a parent or carer may be involved in the abuse of the child. In those circumstances advice of the local authority or police should be sought before informing the parents or carers of the concern. Where the allegation is against an individual who may have access to other children or vulnerable adults the referral should be made without seeking consent from parents or carers - how they are made aware of the concerns will be decided alongside statutory agencies.

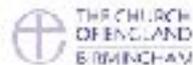
Adults: adults have the right to make their own decisions about their lives. Consent should be sought from an adult before information is shared about them. However, where an adult withholds consent for a safeguarding concern to be shared with statutory authorities (police and local authority), this should be accepted except where there may be others at risk (e.g. is the abuse or neglect is happening in a care home or hospital or the abuser has access to other vulnerable adults or children) or where there is reason to doubt that the individual has capacity to make that decision or where there is imminent risk of serious harm. Advice should be sought from statutory services (adult social care or police) or the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser where there is any doubt as to whether a concern should be referred.

Record Keeping

Records of all safeguarding concerns will be kept by the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator. They will keep a record of the initial concern and all actions taken. The records will be securely held in the vicar's study. All those involved with any safeguarding concern must ensure that they provide to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator any records related to that case for secure storage.

The parish of St. Mary's, Selly Oak does not have access to secure email systems. Therefore, great care should be taken where email is used to ensure that confidential information is not open to being accessed by unauthorised individuals. Individual's confidential information should not be communicated via email (e.g. any information should not make the individual identifiable by name, address etc.).

Records must be maintained of staff and volunteer training and DBS checks. These will be maintained by the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Parish Identity Verifier.



Safer Recruitment and Ongoing Support and Supervision

All recruitment of staff and volunteers will be undertaken in line with Church of England policy Safer Recruitment (2016). Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken by those delegated such responsibility from PCC. Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken according to agreed process. All recruited staff and volunteers will be made known to PCC.

No one who has not been safely recruited will be permitted to work unsupervised with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable. All staff and volunteers will:

- Have all recruitment checks completed and approved prior to starting in role.
- All eligible staff and volunteers will have a repeat DBS disclosure every 5 years. Any lapsed DBS check will require the post holder to stand down until the check has been completed.
- Attend safeguarding training as required by the Church of England.
- Attend any other training as decided by the PCC.
- Have a named supervisor.

For church officers involved in lone working, this parish adopts the guidelines produced by the Church of England Birmingham to help protect the health, safety and welfare of them and those they work with (appendix 4).

For church officers involved in working with children, this parish adopts the guidelines produced by the Church of England Birmingham for Safer Working Practice with Children (appendix 5).

Policy Implementation and Review

- This policy is agreed by the Parish of **St. Mary's, Selly Oak** PCC on **Tuesday 26th January 2021**
- All staff, volunteers and ministers are required to abide by this policy and associated good practice guidance.
- This policy will be made available on the Church website and in the church building.
- This policy will be monitored via annual audit and annual report to PCC.
- This policy is to be reviewed annually.

Next Review Due: January 2022

Incumbent: _____

Churchwarden: _____

Churchwarden: _____

Date: Tuesday 26th January 2021

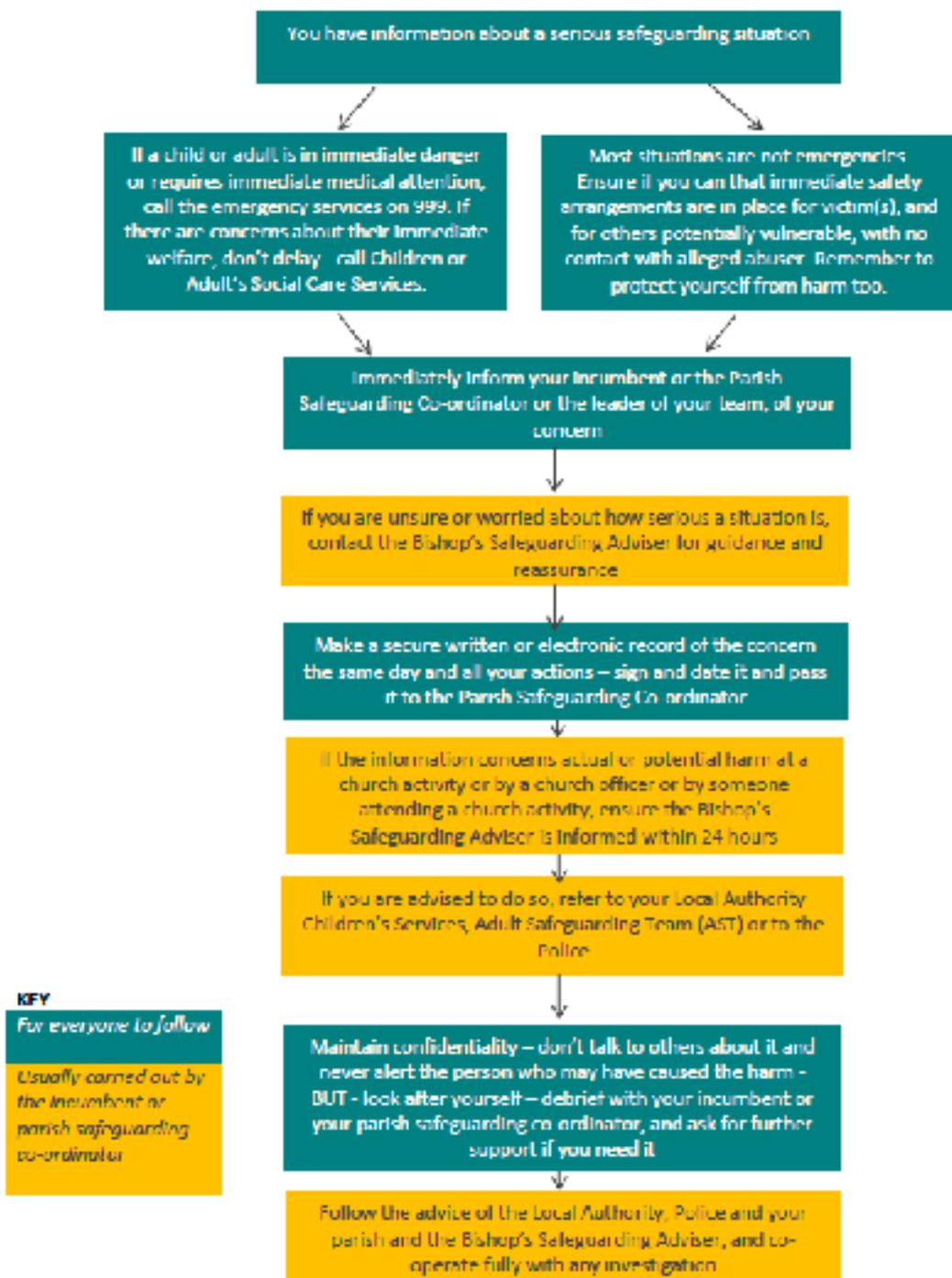
Appendices:

- 1. Useful Contact Numbers**
- 2. Flowchart**
- 3. Recording forms for Safeguarding Concerns**
- 4. Lone Working Guidelines**
- 5. Code of Safer Working Practice with Children**

Appendix 1: Useful Contact Numbers

Incumbent: Revd Hazel White	0121 471 3517
Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Martin Sorby	07982 850444
Assistant Priest: Revd Jayne Adams	07894 167552
Bishops Safeguarding Adviser: Steph Haynes	07342 993844 or 0121 426 0400
Church's Child Protection Advisory Service	0845 120 4550
CASS (Children's Advice Support Service)	0121 303 1888
(If you have access to secure email)	secure.cass@birmingham.gcsx.gov.uk
(If you do not have access to secure email)	cass@birmingham.gov.uk
Outside of normal office hours	0121 675 4806
ACAP (Adult and Communities Access Point)	0121 303 1234
Police:	
Bournville or Harborne Police Station	0845 113 5000
Non-emergency Police number	101
Emergency Police number	999
Anti-Terrorist Hotline	0800 789 321
NSPCC	0808 800 500
Childline	0800 1111
Action on Elder Abuse	0808 808 8141
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
NAPAC (support for adult survivors of childhood abuse)	0808 801 0331
Cruse (bereavement helpline)	0808 808 1677

Appendix 2: Flowchart for Responding to Safeguarding Concerns



Appendix 3: Recording Forms

Recording form for Safeguarding Concerns - Adult



Complete this form and pass it to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator if they have a safeguarding concern about a member of the congregation.

<p>NAME OF VOLUNTEER, WORKER OR CHURCH MEMBER CAUSING CONCERN:</p>	<p>POSITION IN CHURCH:</p>
<p>DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF OBSERVATIONS OR INCIDENT:</p>	<p>DATE AND TIME (of writing):</p>
<p>DETAILS OF THE CONCERN OR ALLEGATION:</p>	
<p>WHO HAVE YOU SPOKEN TO ABOUT YOUR CONCERNS:</p>	
<p>PARISH SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN CO-ORDINATOR/ DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD</p>	<p>YES / NO If yes, DATE:</p>
<p>INCUMBENT/PRIEST-IN-CHARGE</p>	<p>YES / NO If yes, DATE:</p>
<p>OTHER – NAME: POSITION IN PARISH:</p>	<p>YES / NO If yes, DATE:</p>
<p>SIGNED:</p>	
<p>PRINT NAME:</p>	<p>DATE:</p>
<p>CONTACT DETAILS:</p>	

Appendix 4: Lone Working Guidelines

St. Mary's, Selly Oak wishes to ensure church officers are not exposed to unnecessary risk if working alone. These guidelines apply when working alone at the church, or when making home visits, or attending other meetings/ activities away from the church, related to your role. These guidelines have been drawn up to minimise the risk to church officers of problems that may arise from seeing members of the public, either through allegations being made or having to deal with unwelcome/unacceptable behaviour. St. Mary's, Selly Oak through the incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator will assess any foreseeable risks of any role that requires a church officer to work alone on regular basis. Training will be provided to help minimise risks to church officers. A list of contact details, including next of kin, will be kept of all church officers – this will include car details for those carrying out home visits.

Church officers must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, or misuse, anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare. They must observe all health and safety rules and procedures at all times and report any unsafe conditions or practice.

The Risks of Lone Working

Risks that St. Mary's, Selly Oak will assess for each role or individual may include:

- physical accident (from injury, fire, etc. such as when using kitchen or maintenance equipment when there is no one available to fetch help if necessary)
- sudden illness, again when there is no one to raise the alarm
- violence or threat of abuse, in any form, from a visitor
- accusations by a visitor of inappropriate behaviour by church officers when there are no witnesses
- stress caused by working in isolation or from abusive phone calls or digital media

Lone Working on Church Premises

- Church officers must have the means (e.g. charged mobile phone) to summon help if anything happens that they do not feel able to deal with alone
- Church officers who need to work alone in the building must have easy access to contact details for those they should inform if they feel unsafe or threatened
- Church officers should know how to raise the alarm, who to inform and how to record, if they have an accident, or fall ill
- If a church officer is meeting someone in an office, meeting room or the church the seating arrangements should allow them to exit the room leaving the person behind
- Where possible, a third party should be aware that a church officer is working alone in the building, in order to raise the alarm, if they do not return home safely
- If a church officer is the only or last person in the building or responsible for locking up they should ensure that:
 - All windows and doors that could give visitors access to the premises are secured to prevent unauthorised access so that the working environment is as safe as possible
 - Doors are only opened to allow entry to expected visitors or other church officers after they have been positively identified
 - Keys should be kept secure and inaccessible to visitors
 - Windows are closed and doors locked and relevant alarms set, before leaving the premises
- If a church officer suspects there is an intruder they should:
 - Carry out a visual check of the building and if they feel it is safe to do so, carry out an internal inspection, so far as they can. They should not put themselves at any unnecessary risk and should only inspect the building externally, if that is the safer option.
 - If an intruder(s) is suspected call the police and inform the incumbent and Church Wardens
 - Leave the building and secure the door so the suspected intruder is locked in and wait for back up to arrive. Do not re-enter the building alone.

Visiting Alone

Please note that best practice is to visit in pairs (non-related individuals) where possible, with one visitor being the same gender as the person being visited.

Before the visit

- Gather as much relevant information as possible about the person being visited and use this to assess the risks of the visit and any measures that might need to be taken to reduce these:
 - What is known about the individual's current circumstances?
 -
 - Have they experienced some recent trauma that might increase the risk of assault? (Bereavement, separation from a partner, prosecution, removal of children etc.).
 - Have other church officers, or other agencies, had recent contact that could provide insight into the individual's current temperament?
 - Are there drug or alcohol issues?
 - Are other people going to be present – who and how are they related?
- Ensure an agreed person knows where you are going and when you expect to return
- If you're part of a team, keep a team diary (online if possible), recording when, where and who you are visiting, that all members of the team have access to
- Ensure you have a charged mobile phone with you
- Where appropriate, carry a torch and/or personal attack alarm
- Pre-arrange visits – avoid unannounced visits whenever possible
- Be clear about why you are visiting and the limit of your 'helping' relationship
- Carry identification with you that shows you are representing the Church

Before entering the premises

- Always try and park in a well-lit area, facing the way you need to leave
- Carry with you the minimum required for the purpose of the visit
- Listen and observe and try to evaluate what is happening within. If you are uncertain, it is better to leave than to put yourself at risk
- Before entering the premises consider the presentation, disposition and demeanour of the occupant
- Be aware of any dogs on the premises and ask the owner to put the dog in another room if you feel uncomfortable
- Always follow the person into the premises – do not walk in front of them
- Upon entering the room consider where the visit is to be conducted and try and position yourself in easy reach of a clear exit, unimpacted by furniture or a closed door

During the visit

- Keep your mobile phone on during the visit so that you can use it quickly in an emergency
- Never give or accept money or gifts of any kind from the person being visited. If they wish to donate to the church it should be done in an official way agreed by your treasurer and the nominated person for adults
- If you feel uncomfortable or threatened at any time, leave as soon as possible, or make an emergency alert call, in accordance with a pre-agreed procedure e.g. the church officer under threat contacts an agreed person and says, *"I'm running late, can you let Mr. Smith know!"* The person who receives this call should immediately notify the police, providing them with all relevant details of the church officer's location and circumstances and then contact the incumbent and Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator who should liaise with police and, if safe to do so, undertake a visit to the known location

After the visit

- Contact your agreed person to let them know you have arrived home safely
- Pass on any safeguarding concerns to your Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator
- Where appropriate, share information about the visit with other members of your visiting team
- Keep a record of visits – date, time, people present, any concerns

Emergency Contacts

- If you feel threatened dial 999 and give the address of the premises. Inform the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible.
- Provide those working alone with a list of contact details for all those who hold keys to Church premises

Appendix 5: Code of Safer Working Practice with Children

Guidelines for individual workers

You should:

- treat all children and young people with respect and dignity;
- ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful;
- always aim to work within sight of another adult;
- ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet; Toilet breaks should be organized for young children,
- ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern,
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around;
- if any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand;
- administer any necessary First Aid with others around;
- obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed;
- record any concerning incidents and give the information to your group Leader. Sign and date the record;
- always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the Parish Safeguarding Children Co Ordinator / Incumbent.

You should not:

- initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. for comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child;
- invade a child's privacy while washing or toileting,
- play rough physical or sexually provocative games,
- use any form of physical punishment,
- be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun,
- touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively,
- scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult,
- permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying,
- show favouritism to any one child or group,
- allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature;
- give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own;
- smoke tobacco in the presence of children;
- drink alcohol when responsible for young people,
- share sleeping accommodation with children,
- invite a child to your home alone,
- arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organized group occasions;
- allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person;
- allow strangers to give children lifts

Touch

Church-sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people, while avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Parish Safeguarding Children Co-Ordinator and/or incumbent.

All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

Additional guidelines for group leaders

In addition to the above the group leader should:

- ensure any health and safety requirements are adhered to,
- undertake risk assessments with appropriate action taken and record kept,
- keep register and consent forms up to date,
- have an awareness, at all times, of what is taking place and who is present,
- create space for children to talk – either formally or informally,
- liaise with the Parish Safeguarding Children Co-Ordinator / Incumbent / diocesan safeguarding team over good practice for safeguarding,
- Always inform the Parish Safeguarding Children Co-Ordinator and/or Incumbent of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The Parish Safeguarding Children Co-Ordinator or Incumbent should liaise with the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser;
- Liaise with the Church Council.