

Vulnerable Adults and Child protection Safeguarding policy

Aims

It is the intention of this Church Council that the church should always be a place where children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe and made welcome. Their spiritual needs and development are our specific concern and it is important that these are addressed in an environment of security and trust. It is our intention that children be kept safe from abuse, harm and radicalisation so they can worship and grow in Christ safely.

The Church will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child/adult that may occur. The Church's DSL (Designated Safeguarding Leader) procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

There will be a DSL available at all times to contact. The DSL coordinates issues and liaises with external agencies (eg Social Care, LSCB and Ofsted).

The Church's designated DSL is

Martin Sorby

Procedure

To this end, we, the PCC of St Mary's, require all who wish to work with children and young people in the name of the parish to

- a) meet with the incumbent/DSL to discuss the role
- b) complete relevant forms and provide references and confidential self-declaration form.

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for volunteer positions, St Mary's Church seeks to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about. St Mary's is committed to the fair treatment of all volunteers and staff regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

Any records are to be retained at the vicarage to ensure confidentiality.

In the long-term absence of an incumbent, a responsible person will be appointed by the PCC to oversee work with young people and any records normally kept by the incumbent will be lodged with the Area Dean.

Practical guidelines

1. Adults should try to not be working alone with a child or group of children
2. Where possible (junior church) children's information should be collected (date of birth, full name, address) this information should be kept in a locked cupboard.
3. Avoid any unnecessary physical contact with children and on no account is there to be any physical punishment.
4. Risk assessments are taken place when needed
5. Accidents should always be recorded in an accident book which is kept in the vestry.
6. Consent forms are required for any activity taking place away from the church premises.
7. Special supervision is required if a known child abuser attends the church and advice will be sought from the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser.
8. If people are found to be in possession of illegal drugs they will be asked to leave the premises and the police should be called.

If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child/adult makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- reassure the child/adult that they were not to blame and were right to speak out
- listen to the child/adult but turn not question them
- give reassurance that you will take action
- record the incident as soon as possible (see *Logging an incident* below).
- Any suspicion of abuse is to be reported without delay to the incumbent, and/or Parish DSL.

If you are a member of church and witnesses or suspects abuse, we ask that you record the matter straight away and report the details to a church warden or the DSL.

If the concern is urgent or the child is in danger, contact the emergency services and/or Out of Hours Children's Social Care Team immediately.

All who work with young people must familiarise themselves with diocesan procedure in this regard.

Allegations against church staff

If anyone makes an allegation of child/adult abuse against a member of church staff:

- The allegation will be recorded on an **Incident record** form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the DSL and LADO they will advise if other agencies (eg police) should be informed, and the church will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member from church pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate the church will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Confession

If child abuse is disclosed within the formal context of sacramental confession, it may be necessary to withhold the words of absolution if the penitent refuses to seek professional help.

Training

Whenever possible and when required, the PCC will undertake to ensure any training in the nature of child abuse and child protection. This must be up-dated every three years.

Insurance

The EIG will cover all normal children's activities as long as they have been agreed by the PCC.

Groups hiring the church premises.

PCC should see a copy of the hirer's child protection policy and receive assurance that it is being implemented.

Publicity

The Child Protection Policy will be on permanent display on the notice board and brought to the attention of all who use the church. Any changes will be announced through the Newsletter.

Safeguarding records must be kept securely and indefinitely.

Policy review.

This policy is to be reviewed annually to ensure it fulfils all necessary requirements. (Last reviewed 2018) A copy of the Safeguarding Complaints Procedures is available, if required, on the 'Church of England- Birmingham' website.

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Abuse and neglect

Abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child/adult directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of abuse and neglect are listed below.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/adult so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve

making the child/adult feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child/adult, though it may occur alone.

- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child/adult. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child/adult.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child/adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child/adult is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's/adults basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect them from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

Signs of abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- significant changes in a child's/adults behaviour
- deterioration in adult's general well-being
- unexplained bruising or marks
- comments made which give cause for concern
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of the church, or any other persons involved/attending church. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role.

Extremism and radicalisation

We all have a legal duty to protect children/adults from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child/adult might be vulnerable to radicalisation, Eg:

- feeling alienated or alone
- seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

Signs of radicalisation

Signs that someone might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- viewing violent extremist material online
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of church suspects that a child/adult is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will need to record any relevant information , and refer the matter to the DSL.

Logging a concern

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on the **Logging a concern** form as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern
- date and time at which the record was made
- name and date of birth of the child/adult involved (were possible)

- a factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's/ adults own words
- name, signature and job title of the person making the record.

The record will be given to the Club's DSL who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about child abuse, the DSL will contact Social Care or get advice from the Bishops safeguarding advisers. The DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of the church thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly. (Number at back)

For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSL will contact the Police using 999.

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Contact numbers

Associate Priest, Jayne Adams	07894 167552
Parish DSL, Martin Sorby	07982850 444
Bishops safeguarding adviser Steph Haynes	07342 993 844 (426 0400)
Church's child Protection Advisory Service	0845 120 4550
NSPCC	0808 800 500
Childline	0800 1111
CASS (Children's Advice Support Service)	0121 303 1888
(if you have access to secure email)	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 please call	0121 675 4806
Police	
Harborne police station	0345 113 5000
101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)	
www.west-midlands.police.uk/np/birminghamsouth/	
Anti-terrorist hotline:	0800 789 321