Otter Vale Mission Community

SAFEGUARDING OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

Definitions
Recruitment and training
National Standards
Parish Dashboard
Code of safer working practice
Complementary policies
Appendix 1 Promoting A Safer Church Poster (example)
Appendix 2 Poster for inside churches "We want everyone to feel safe in our church"
Appendix 3 Responsibilities of Parish Safeguarding Representative/Team

What is Abuse?

2. Definitions | The Church of England

These definitions encompass such a wide range that the reader is directed to the link as shown above. If in any doubt consult this e-manual for the most recent and up-to-date information.

Who is a Child?

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Who is a Vulnerable Adult?

"a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired".
E-manual December 2021 based on Safeguarding & Clergy Discipline Measure 2016

Safer Recruitment & People Management Guidance

see for complete up-to-date- guidance the e-manual:
Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance | The Church of England

Display

Contact details of the Incumbent, PSR and Diocesan Safeguarding Team on a Promoting a Safer Church poster visible to all.
Information about where to get help with child and adult safeguarding issues, domestic abuse and key helplines e.g. ChildLine
Information for victim and survivors including SafeSpaces
Home page link to safeguarding on the website.

Training

- At earliest opportunity all staff and volunteers will be expected to attend awareness training about recognising abuse and their responsibilities if they suspect a child or vulnerable adult is being abused.

- Staff and volunteers must undertake the Church of England Modular Safeguarding Training. Which module will be determined by the role they undertake in church. This requires 3-yearly updates.

National Standards

The Standards are essenal for the Church to understand the quality and, most importantly, the impact of its safeguarding activity. All churches of the OVMC operate under the requirements of the 5 standards and understand what are mandatory obligations.
The Five Standards are:

1. **Culture, Leadership and Capacity**: Church bodies have safe and healthy cultures, effective leadership, resourcing and scruntiny arrangements necessary to deliver high-quality safeguarding practices and out comes.
2. **Prevention**: Church bodies have in place a planned range of measures which together are effective in preventing abuse in their context.
3. **Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk**: Risk assessments, safety plans and associated processes are of a high quality and result in positive outcomes. The assessment and management of risk is underpinned by effective partnership working.
4. **Victims and Survivors:** Victims and survivors experience the timeliness and quality of Church bodies' responses to disclosures, and their subsequent support, as positiv ely meeting their needs, including their search for justice and helping their healing process.
5. **Learning, Supervision and Support:** All those engaged in safeguarding-related activity in Church bodies receive the type and level of learning, professional development, support and supervision necessary to respond to safeguarding situations, victims and survivors, and respondents, effectively.

Parish Safeguarding Dashboard is an essential online tool to enable parishes to ensure they are up to date with the Safeguarding Code, Administration and Policies. It gives valuable assistance to ensure that PCC's are compliant with mandatory policies and practices. It is accessed by each Parish Safeguarding Representative and the Incumbent.

The Code of Safer Working Practice

For the avoidance of doubt this document does not apply to church services, including Holy Communion.
The Code of Safer Working Practice expresses our commitment to demonstrating God's love by placing the highest priority on the safety of those to whom we minister. It sets out what we expect from anyone who ministers in our church, in both paid or voluntary roles, and is one of the ways we ensure high standards of safeguarding in all we do.
Upholding the Code
All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Parish Safeguarding Officer. Staff and volunteers who breach this code may be subject to disciplinary procedures or asked to leave their role. Serious breaches may also result in a referral made to the relevant statutory agency.
All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity;
- Respect people's rights to personal privacy;
- Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful;
- Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern;
- Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or the Parish Safeguarding Officer. All written records should be signed and dated;
- Obtain written consent for any photographs or videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.

In addition, those working with children and young people must:

- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult;
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet; Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around;
- Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and of its nature before the activity takes place.

All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not:

- Use any form of physical punishment;
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual;
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group;
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying;
- Show favouritism to any one individual or group;
- Allow an individual to involve them in excessive attention seeking;
- Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person;
- Allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group; Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media;
- Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

In addition, for children and young people, must not:

- Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity);
- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people, except when this is a social situation with family members/carers present, e.g. a parish party
- Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

Acceptable Touch

Sympathetic attention, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, can be wholly appropriate. However, abusers can use touch that appears safe to 'normalise' physical contact which then becomes abusive. As a general rule, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility and those with whom they are working or volunteering should be initiated by the person themselves, and kept to the minimum. In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

- Ask permission before you touch someone;
- Allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention);
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive;
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors;
- Touch should be in response to a person's needs and not related to the worker's needs. Touch should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.
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Consideration should also be given to other relevant policies and guidance such as:
safer-environment-and-activities-oct19_0.pdf
OVMC Lone working policy
Running Church groups (Children) Registration and Consent (procedures doc)
Church lettings policy
Volunteer Driver paperwork

APPENDIX 1


Promoting
a safer church
The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church
House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy for children, young people & adults
IF YOU ARE CONCERNED
that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from a Safeguarding Adviser or if necessary report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Services or the Police without delay.
Local contacts available to speak to if you have any concerns:
Parish Safeguarding Officer
Mell Kaye: 07768 725380
safeguarding@otterystmary.org.uk
Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
Costa Nassaris
Tel: 01392 294969
Mobile: 07809 339501
Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
James May
Tel: 01392 345910
Mobile 07889 542646
Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): (children)
0345 155 1071
Devon – Care Direct: (adults)
0345 155 1007
IF THERE IS IMMEDIATE RISK OR DANGER PLEASE CONTACT THE POLICE ON 999
OUR COMMITMENTS
Promoting a safer environment and culture
Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults
Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse or other affected persons
Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns/allegations of abuse and other affected persons
Responding to those who may pose a present risk
HELPLINES
NSPCC: 0800 389 5344
Childline: 0800 1111
Stop It Now: 0808 1000 900
NAPAC: 0808 801 0331
Samaritans: 116 123
Family Lives: 0808 800 2222
Devon Domestic Abuse Service Helpline: 0345 155 1074
Action on Elder Abuse: 0800 0699 784
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding

APPENDIX 2

Otter Vale Mission Community

We want everyone to feel safe in our church

We commit to noticing people: you may not be able to express things in words, but you may show by behaviour that you are in need.

We commit to providing a place to talk that feels safe.

If you want to talk, we commit to listening not just hearing.

We won't put words into your mouth, your experiences need to be told in your own words.

We commit to showing you respect.

We commit to showing compassion.

We commit to making our church as safe as we can: emotionally, physically and spiritually.

APPENDIX 3

Responsibilities of the Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) or Parish Safeguarding Team

There are four main parts to the role which are

1. Advocacy
2. handling the reporting of concerns
3. overseeing safeguarding policy and practice in the parish
4. ensuring all DBS and training requirements are up-to-date

1. Advocacy

- The team works with the incumbent to the safeguarding statutory item on PCC agendas is used effectively.
- The team champions safeguarding in the church community and ensures that the culture of safeguarding is embedded at all levels.
- The team ensures that all volunteers and staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and keeps safeguarding information visible and up-to-date.

2. Reporting of concerns

- Being familiar with safeguarding procedures and knowing how to raise a safeguarding alert for a child or vulnerable adult with the relevant authority.
- PSR specific: Communicating to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team any safeguarding concern related to any member of the clergy, PCC member, volunteer or paid worker.
- PSR specific Alerting the Diocesan Safeguarding Team to the presence of any individual in the congregation who has a relevant conviction or that there is reason to believe that they may present a risk to vulnerable adults or children if this is made known to any Church officer.
- PSR specific Communicating with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team where any advice or support is required regarding any safeguarding issue in the congregation.
- PSR specific Being available for any child or adult to speak to regarding any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, including making themselves known to all in the Church and having their contact details displayed within Church premises.

3. Overseeing safeguarding policy and practice in the parish

- Using the Parish Dashboard to maintain transparency and accountability of practice
- Being familiar with the safeguarding policy and procedures of the Diocese of Exeter.
- Supporting the PCC and clergy with reviewing the Parish safeguarding policies and procedures and ensuring their implementation.
- Attending required training as provided by the Diocese of Exeter.

- Being involved in the Safer Recruitment process and ensuring that current Church of England Safer Recruitment policy and guidance is followed.

4. Ensuring all DBS and training requirements are up-to-date

- Maintaining records of training completed by staff and volunteers and contacting those with training due for renewal.
- Keeping the safeguarding hub up to date
- Ensuring appropriate steps are taken to satisfy insurers including recording names of all volunteers appointed to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the PCC minutes.
- Ensuring safe storage of all data and records related to safeguarding.