

St Peter's Harborne – Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Introduction

As members of the congregation of St Peter's, Harborne, we all have a responsibility as individuals to protect our children. We are aware that in the event of any allegation of misconduct in dealing with children, we must take action in the appropriate way. This document outlines how such an allegation may be dealt with when it occurs in the context of our Parish Church. For allegations in other contexts, or for a broader perspective, see the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board: <http://www.lscbbirmingham.org.uk/>

If you have any concerns about the safety and/or welfare of a child or young person in any context, telephone the Multi-Agency Safeguarding HUB (MASH) on 0121 303 1888 or email MASH@birmingham.gov.uk

Outside of normal office hours, call 0121 675 4806 for the Emergency Duty Team.

Statement of Values

In keeping with the Diocese of Birmingham, the Church of St Peter's, Harborne, seeks to demonstrate that in all its activities which include children and young people:-

1. The welfare of children will be made a priority.
2. The spiritual welfare of children will be seen as particularly important.
3. Well-informed, professional standards of care will be demonstrated
4. The procedures to protect children will be open and made clear to all.
5. The welfare of children will have priority over the interests of the establishment.

This document and its appendices reflect the principles and policies appropriate to St Peter's Harborne and follows the Diocese of Birmingham Safeguarding Policies document entitled "God's Children: Our Diocese" (Revised November 2011). [View Contents](#)

That document forms an integral part of the application of this policy.

The Role of the Vicar, other members of the parish church, Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser, Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator and Parish Children's Advocate is outlined in Section 7 of the Diocese Safeguarding Policies.

The Vicar has ultimate responsibility for the safe recruitment of suitable children's workers and youth workers and should ensure that the parish is implementing the diocesan policy, recognise the need for training, recognise conflicts of interest taking appropriate advice and not lose sight of Christ's perspective and his teaching on children. **If you are in any doubt about any matter concerning safeguarding, or have a concern related to the safety of children, refer the matter immediately to the Vicar, who is available at any time for consultation.**

Our Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator is Diane Reeves; she may also be contacted at any time, through the parish office to discuss any concern or matter regarding the safeguarding of children. In the event of any complaint regarding the Vicar, the Parish Safeguarding Officer may be advised; or the complainant may wish to go straight to the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser.

Members of the clergy and Parish staff, Pastoral Care Team and members of the congregation volunteering to work with children or young people may also become involved pastorally with issues involving child protection. In all cases they have a duty and responsibility to act in accordance with this policy and associated guidelines.

The Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser – Clare Wesley - has the overall task of promoting good practice in all aspects of Child Protection within the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Birmingham.

ClaireW@cofebirmingham.com (Tel: 0121 426 0432)

The Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser is appointed to take steps to ensure that good practice to protect children is observed throughout his diocese, and to advise the Bishop on procedures to be followed when allegations of child abuse arise and will offer guidance, support and expertise.

Following the Diocese Safeguarding Policies, designated people within the congregation have been appointed as Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator (PSC) & Children's Advocate.

Abuse

All those who are in positions where they are in direct contact with children and young people – including clergy, paid children and youth workers, volunteer helpers, captains of bell tower and music group leaders – need to be familiar with Sections S2 and S3 of the Diocese Safeguarding Policies. These sections form part of the Safeguarding training in the Parish.

The recognition of abuse, outlining the nature of child abuse, definitions of different types of abuse, signs and indicators of abuse and how to recognise when a child(ren) might be at risk are outlined in section 2 of the Diocese Safeguarding Policies.

In Section 3 of the Diocesan Safeguarding Policies are:

- i) a detailed description of what action must be taken when there are concerns about children and young people;
- ii) clear procedures to follow at a time often characterised by high anxiety;
- iii) information on what happens when children's social care services and the police pursue a matter reported by the church.

Action to be taken in relation to disclosure, concerns and suspicions, responding to a child and sharing concerns, health and safety and supervision ratios, are covered in sections S2, S3, S4 and S8 of the Diocese Safeguarding Policies.

In the event of concerns about any member of staff support should be sought from the Vicar or, if that concerns a conflict of interest, from the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser. The House of Bishops' (2010) Policy on responding to allegations of child abuse made against a member of the clergy or someone holding the Bishop's Licence is outlined in Section 10 of the Diocese Safeguarding Policies.

Victims of abuse and their families, church members and alleged abusers and their families will be supported in accordance with Section 7 of the Diocese Safeguarding Policies.

Records

The Church keeps records of significant issues that relate to child protection and safeguarding. These records are confidential and monitored by the Vicar and PSC. The Church's accident book is not for such incidents. The Vicar holds Confidential Declaration Forms securely. In a vacancy (i.e. when no vicar is appointed) these responsibilities fall to the Area Dean.

Working with Children and Young People

Ministerial staff are accountable for and ensure the appropriate supervision of group leaders (paid or volunteer) and helpers. Helpers (paid or volunteer) should never be in a 1-1 position with children/young people. Those under-18 year olds, including those in a 'developing leader' role, should not be regarded as responsible adults and should not be in a position of sole responsibility. They are recruited using the principles of Safe Recruitment counter signed by their parent.

Training and support in the nature of child abuse, protection and safeguarding at an appropriate level is required of and provided to ensure safe provision for those who are involved in work with children/young people.

This policy will be promoted to the congregation, those whose children attend activities and those who hire facilities. Its on-going implementation will be monitored.

Perpetrators of child sexual abuse

Section 5 of the Diocese Safeguarding Policies contains specific guidance on how to deal with situations involving those who may present a risk to children and young people in a parish context. This section is especially relevant to the clergy and other leaders in the parish, e.g. churchwardens.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) provide a framework to manage the risk posed by serious sexual and violent offenders. Section 5 provides guidance for churches on diocesan procedures to enable compliance with these arrangements where they have a perpetrator worshipping in their community.

Ministerial staff will follow the guidance of the Diocese and House of Bishops in relation to information received during confession.

Health and Safety

An outline of what should be in place so that the environment is suitable for children and young people and the activities in which they are participating including health and safety checks and risk assessments is found in the

The PCC has a duty of care to advise individuals and organisations working with children and young people who hire or use church property, of their responsibility as hirers for the welfare and safety of the children in their care and the importance of maintaining a healthy and safe environment.

All hirers are made aware of the Parish policy and a copy is available in the Parish office where rooms are hired. They are informed of the name and contact details of the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and made aware that their activity is not insured under church insurance.

Organisations who hire church premises for activities with children or young people sign a statement confirming that workers/volunteers who staff their activities will comply with all current safeguarding legislation and government guidance and will make themselves familiar with the Parish's Child Protection Policy. Private individuals who wish to hire church premises for ad-hoc events must sign the statement agreeing to take full responsibility for the children and young people at their event.

Safe Recruitment

All staff and volunteer leaders are recruited according to diocese policy and guidelines contained in the "Safe Recruitment" policy of the Diocese of Birmingham. [View Contents](#) That document forms an integral part of the application of this policy, and gives guidelines on what needs to be done in recruiting and appointing workers - paid and volunteer. It covers Equal Opportunities and the Human Rights Act; the recruitment and appointment process including role descriptions, confidential declaration forms and references; support and supervision, training, responding to concerns, the duty to refer and the use of the Criminal Records Bureau. The interview of group leaders and helpers is delegated to the relevant ministerial staff.

THIS POLICY WAS APPROVED BY THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH HARBORNE ON

NOVEMBER 15TH 2015