



SAFEGUARDING HANDBOOK

A Guide to Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults



March 2017

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Introduction

St Mary the Virgin Parish Church, Chessington is the Church of England Parish Church of Chessington in the Diocese of Guildford.

Safeguarding at St Mary the Virgin Parish Church, Chessington

The Church of England, along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

St Mary's Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable are paramount.

St Mary's Church recognises that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible.

Our Safeguarding policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

St Mary's Church recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect.

St Mary's Church commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

St Mary's Church commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

St Mary's Church affirms and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

St Mary's Church is committed to implementing the Church of England's Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Practice Guidance documents.

St Mary's Church appoints Jane Gates as Parish Safeguarding Representative and supports her in her role which is to:

- i) support and advise the minister and the Parochial Church Council in fulfilling their roles.
- ii) Provide a point of reference to advice on safeguarding issues.
- iii) Promote safeguarding best practice within the local church.

The purposes of this safeguarding handbook is to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about their roles and responsibilities regarding children and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises.

Dated15th March 2017.....

Signed ...Revd Scott Edwards.....

Vicar & Chair of Parochial Church Council

Children and Young People

Safer Working Practices - To minimise situations where abuse may occur

At St Mary's we will use the following safer working practices to help us to:

- Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults from taking up, in our Churches, positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others.

1. Recruitment

It is the responsibility of the PCC to establish a system so that those who are recruited to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults (either as paid employees or as volunteers) are recruited safely. At St Mary's the following procedure will be followed:

1. Responsibility for appointing clergy and licensed lay ministers normally rests with the Bishop. Responsibility for the appointment and approval of paid officers and volunteers rests with the PCC.
2. In general people should be involved in the life of the church for at least six months before being asked to help with children or vulnerable adults.
3. Over the age of 18 years. Young people between the ages of 14-18 should be treated as visitors. They should be supervised and supported and should not be responsible for the group. A DBS check cannot be requested for anyone under the age of 16.
4. A Job Description (paid employee) or Role Description (voluntary post) should be written defining the role and what is expected of the post-holder. A typical role description should include: Job title, responsible for/to, main duties, time commitment, skills required, and terms and conditions for paid workers only. The Job Description/Role Description is to state whether the job/role is eligible for and requires a criminal records check (DBS), and the level of the check.
5. Seeking possible applicants or volunteers. Either a written advert in a newspaper, church newsletter etc or a verbal advertising of the post to the current members of the congregation. If a DBS check is required for the post this must be stated in the written advertisement or explained in the verbal notice that any appointment is conditional upon the completion of the appropriate DBS check being made.
6. Volunteer Application Form. All applicants are to complete a Volunteer Application Form.

7. Diocesan Policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders. All applicants must be provided with a copy of the Diocesan Policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders prior to their interview.
8. Interview/Discussion. The interview is an opportunity for both the interviewer and the applicant to find out more about each other and the role to be filled. A formal interview is required for paid posts but an informal and relaxed meeting might be more appropriate for a voluntary post. The following topics should be covered: the role description and your expectations of the post holder; the applicants relevant skills, interests and experience; the applicants motivation for applying for the role; the applicant's awareness and understanding of safeguarding in working with children and/or vulnerable adults; the applicant's willingness to undertake training or be supported in the work.
9. Recruitment Documentation. If at this stage we wish to appoint the applicant to a paid or voluntary role, we must ensure that they complete the following documents BEFORE they start.
 - a. Confidential Declaration Form.
 - b. DBS Enhanced Check or DBS Enhanced Plus Check Form if the post requires it.
 - c. Details of two referees. If the person has a current position working or volunteering with children or vulnerable adults, one referee should be from that employer. If the person has attended another church within the last five years, you should ask for a reference from their minister. References from relatives or people under the age of 18 are not acceptable.
10. DBS Enhanced Check or DBS Enhanced Plus Check. To be processed where necessary. We are legally only allowed to seek a DBS check where the voluntary role to be undertaken makes the person eligible to be checked. Only a tiny proportion of adults who abuse children/vulnerable adults get caught and fewer still get convicted. Whilst DBS criminal record checks have a crucial role to play in the safe recruitment of staff or volunteers, it must only be one element of safeguarding. This highlights the importance for the need of seeking references etc.
11. Chase Up outcome. One recent change that has come into place from 17th June 2013 is what is called 'Single Certificate Service.' This means that from now on the DBS will only issue one 'Disclosure Certificate' that will be sent directly to the applicant (volunteer). Up until now the diocese has also received a copy. As a church we therefore need to ensure that the applicant send their Disclosure Certificate to the diocese. They should take a copy for themselves and send the original to the diocese which will be returned to them once it has been seen and recorded. The Diocese will then send a 'Disclosure Outcome Letter' to the applicant which the diocese previously sent to the incumbent. It is the responsibility of the applicant to give this to the incumbent. It is important that the church chases up these documents and no one should be employed in either a paid or voluntary capacity until the 'Outcome letter' has been seen by the parish.
12. Positive Disclosures and/or Confidential Declaration Forms.
 - a. If the disclosure certificate is negative (clear).

The appointment may proceed with a probationary period of 6 months to begin with. A 'Volunteer Agreement' should be signed.

- b. If the disclosure is positive (a conviction or concern is disclosed).
The incumbent to discuss whether it is appropriate to appoint the applicant with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.
13. Volunteer Agreement. Written Volunteer Agreement to be given to the applicant and to be signed.
14. Good Practice Guidelines. The volunteer to be given information upon good practice for running activities and events and information on how to respond to concerns.
15. Probationary Period/Settling in Period. A probationary period or settling in period of six months to enable both the volunteer and the church to see whether a person is suited to the particular role.
16. Renewal of DBS. Every 5 years DBS checks need to be renewed where required.

2. Children and young People

The following procedures apply whenever children and young people under the age of 18 take part in church organised events and activities.

These include:

- One-off events or regular meetings specifically for children and young people in the parish, i.e. Sunday School, Youth Group, Mother and Toddler, etc.
- Day trips or outings which are non-residential.
- Residential Events.
- Any mixed aged activities or events including choir practice, bell-ringing, music groups, etc.

3. Leadership

- One person must be designated Group leader for every activity or event.
- Young people under 18 years are welcome and encouraged to assist with events or activities, however, they must not be left in charge of a group of children of any age and should always be supervised by an adult leader.
- Parents and carers can assist with groups and occasional activities, but they must always be supervised, and be responsible to an appointed leader. If they become part of a regular rota, they must be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.

4. Supervision Ratios: (NB an adult is someone over 18)

It is important to ensure that in planning and running activities and events for children and young people there is an adequate staffing/supervision ratio of adults to participants.

Indoor Activities. Under 8 years.

The standard ratios required are as follows:

- 0 – 2 years = 1 member of staff to 3 children. (2 Leaders = Max number of children 6)
- 2 – 3 years = 1 member of staff to 4 children. (2 Leaders = Max number of children 8)
- 3 – 8 years = 1 member of staff to 8 children. (2 Leaders = Max Children 16)
- Over 8 years = 1 member of staff to 10 children. (2 Leader = Max Children 20)

The minimum number of adults should always be two.

It is recommended that there be one male and one female leader where possible.

If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them it is possible to have only 1 adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity.

For Outdoor Activities a risk assessment may indicate the need for a greater level of supervision.

5. General Administration

- For all church activities and events, the person with parental responsibility for each child or young person under 18 will be required to complete and sign the following documentation before their child/ren take part:
 1. Registration Record for Activities Form.
 2. Photo Consent Form.
- Before any outing, day trip or residential events, parents/carers must give their further written consent, and under no circumstance should a child be included in the pursuit without first obtaining written permission from their parent/carer (Parent Consent and Medical Information Form).

6. Attendance Register

An attendance register should be kept of every child and adult attending each activity, event or outing.

7. General Guidelines for all workers

You should:

- treat everyone 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;
- toilet breaks should be organised where applicable;
- ensure another adult is informed if a person needs to be taken to the toilet;
- ensure that young people and vulnerable adults know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern;
- respond appropriately to people's needs and concerns ensuring there are other adults around;
- if any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child, young person, vulnerable adult and their parents/carers 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, young person or vulnerable adult or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or Parish Safeguarding Representative.

You should not:

- initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact should be initiated by the individual;
- invade the individual'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 an individual even in fun;
- touch an individual inappropriately or obtrusively;
- scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group;
- permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying;

- show favouritism to any individual or group;
- allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature;
- give lifts to an individual on their own or on your own;
- drink alcohol when responsible for children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- share sleeping accommodation inappropriately;
- invite a child, young person or vulnerable adult to your home alone;
- arrange social occasions with children, young people or vulnerable adults (other than family members) outside organised group occasions;
- allow unknown adults access to children, young people or vulnerable adults. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person;
- allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

8. Additional guidelines for group leaders

In addition to the above the group leader should:

- ensure that all adult helpers have been adequately vetted and recruited in accordance with the Safer Recruitment procedures;
- 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;
- that parents and carers have been clearly informed of the arrangements of the activity/event in order that children can be collected;
- ensure that appropriate adult/child supervision ratios are in place, so that the children are adequately supervised at all times;
- Ensure that you have a phone available for emergencies (If this is a mobile phone ensure that it is fully charged before the activity);
- 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 Representative over good practice for safeguarding;
- always inform the Parish Safeguarding Representative of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The Parish Safeguarding Representative will liaise with the Vicar or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser as appropriate;
- liaise with the PCC.

9. Good practice with colleagues

If you see another Leader or Worker acting in a way, which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to your group leader about your concerns. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

10. General Safety Checklist.

CHECK THAT:

- Premises, including the lighting, and equipment used with children, young people or vulnerable adults are safe, well maintained and suitable for the purpose.
- Undertake a risk assessment for each activity and in greater detail for an unusual activity or when away from the usual location.
- An up to date First Aid kit is available and a nominated person should be responsible for maintaining the kit and all adults should know where to find it.
- Encourage staff and volunteer workers to have some First Aid knowledge and provide access to First Aid training.
- The First Aid kit can travel with you.
- All workers know what to do in an emergency.
- No medication is given to a child under 18 years without the written consent of a guardian / parent.
- All accidents/incidents are recorded in the accident book

- Procedures are in place for dealing with sick or injured children, and for accompanying young children to the toilet. Remember that ratios still need to be correct if an adult goes out of the room.
- A parental consent form and a health form have been completed for each child/ young person.
- Consent forms, completed by a parent/guardian, should always be used for anyone under 18 when undertaking activities outside the normal meeting place.
- A register should be kept, and regularly updated, of all children or young people attending the group with details of home addresses, telephone number and a parent/carer or guardian's name. In the event of a fire the leader should take the register to check that everyone is out of the building.
- Fire notices are displayed informing people what to do in case of fire.
- Leaders and children/young people know what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Fire appliances and smoke detectors are suitable, serviced regularly and that leaders know where they can be found and how to use them.
- It is clear who is responsible for children after the activity is over, and who they are going home with.
- The rooms are secure from unwelcome people.
- Young people cannot go outside without leaders' agreement.
- Ensure that a telephone is available for all emergencies.
- Ensure that car insurances are appropriate for transporting members.
- Ensure that house insurances are appropriate for group meetings.
- Adult/ Children ratios are right for the group and occasion.

11. Late Collection of Children

Parents/carers should be made aware that it is not the church's responsibility to transport children home on behalf of parents who have been delayed. It is recommended that parents are provided with a staff/volunteer contact number in order that they can phone if there is a likelihood of a late collection.

In the case of late collection, the group leader should:

- Attempt to contact the child's parent/carer on the contact numbers provided in the Registration Form.
- Use the emergency contact name/number in an emergency (i.e. contact number for a grandparent)
- Wait with the child/young person, with other staff/volunteers or parents present if at all possible.
- Not take the child home or to any other location without the permission of the parent/carer.
- Not send the child home with another person without the permission of the parent/carer.

There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency or where not giving a lift may place a child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to the Parish Safeguarding Representative and parent/carer. If the child appears to have been abandoned, statutory services must be contacted.

12. Unaccompanied Children

Children may begin attending church services or church activities without their parents' or carers' knowledge. In this event, the following is recommended:

- Welcome the child/ren and try to establish whether their parents are aware of where they are.
- Depending on the age and competence of the child, ring the parents, or ask the young person to ring, to gain their consent to allow the child to remain. Complete a Registration Form as far as possible.
- Make sure that an adult recruited for work with children takes care of the child- this is particularly important during public worship where unknown adults may attend and attempt to befriend the child.
- Give the child written information about the church service or activity to take home with a Registration Form.
- If the child comes regularly, endeavour to establish contact with the parents or carers.
- Never take the child on outings or transport them without their parents/carers permission.

13. First Aid

- Ensure that there is an up to date First Aid kit available and accessible.
- Staff and volunteers working with children or young people should be aware of basic first aid techniques.
- Ideally one of the leaders in a children's or youth group should have attended a recognised First Aid Course and hold a current first aid certificate.
- Where first aid is required, wherever possible, adults should ensure that at least one other adult is aware of the action being taken.
- Parents and carers should always be informed when first aid has been administered, and the incident noted in the Accident Book.
- If the injury appears to be serious, the emergency services should be called without delay, and parents/carers contacted promptly.

14. Administering Prescribed Medication

When a medical practitioner has prescribed medication that must be administered during an event or activity, key points to remember are:

- Depending upon the age/understanding of the child, they should be encouraged to self-administer medication or treatment.
- Parents of children who require regular prescribed medication to be administered must complete a written request, and establish a health care plan with the group leader.

15. Dealing with Medical Emergencies

In an emergency the emergency services should be called without delay. Where an emergency response requires the immediate administration of the child's medication to prevent serious illness or injury, this should be undertaken without delay. e.g. Ventolin for an asthma attack etc.

16. Touch – Physical Contact

A 'no touch' approach is both inappropriate and impractical, as physical contact is needed as part of expression and understanding of human relationships. However, when physical contact is made with children it should never be abusive or intrusive. The following good practice guidelines should be followed:

- Church workers should be aware that even well intended physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described.
- All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.
- Not all children and young people feel comfortable about physical contact and adults should therefore not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to touch as a means of communication.
- Young children may sometimes need comforting, make sure they are responded to warmly, in an appropriate way for the age of the child but with other adults around.
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- If an activity, for example bell ringing, requires physical contact make sure that the child or young person and their parents are aware of this and its nature.
- Touch should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child or young person rather than the adult.
- If you do touch or hug, hands should always be outside the person's clothing and never on any part of the body which might be considered inappropriate (knees, bottom, breasts).
- Children and young people are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.
- Some role responsibilities necessitate intimate physical contact with children, for example assisting with toileting. All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of a physical or intimate nature is required and depending on their abilities, age and maturity should be encouraged to act as independently as possible. When taking young children to the toilet, make sure another adult is informed, and that the same adult is not always undertaking the toilet trips.
- When giving first aid (applying sun cream etc) encourage the child or young person to do what they can manage themselves. First aid should be administered with others around.
- 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 church safeguarding representative.
- Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and constructively challenge anything that may be misunderstood or misconstrued.
- Where a child or young person seeks or initiates inappropriate physical contact with an adult, the situation should be handled sensitively and with care to avoid hurt, distress or embarrassment as far as possible. In these situations it is the responsibility of the adult to deter the child and to help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with the vicar and/or Parish Safeguarding Representative.

17. Drugs and Alcohol Use and Children and Young People

The possession or use of illegal/unauthorised drugs during church activities is unacceptable, and should be dealt with firmly, promptly and fairly.

In any incident involving drugs and/or alcohol, the church must place the utmost priority on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning medical help before addressing further issues. If the Group Leader is in doubt they should seek medical assistance immediately. Unless they are unconscious, a child or young person may be intoxicated but no medical emergency may exist, and it is recommended that arrangements are made with a parent/carer for the child or young person to be collected or escorted home.

Further advice can be found on the diocesan website.

18. Home Visits

No child or young person should be invited into the home of an adult who works or volunteers with them unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and the Parochial Church Council.

It is advisable that activities for children and young people take place on church premises. The use of a leaders house for church activities which include children or young people must be agreed with the Parochial Church Council who will provide safeguarding guidelines and procedures.

- Rooms should be checked for physical hazards and be hygienic
- Bedrooms should not be used in any circumstances
- Two adults (preferably unrelated) should be present from before the first child arrives until after the last one leave.

19. Holidays, Residential Trips and overnight Events

No child under the age of 8 years can be taken away on Residential activities without his or her parent or guardian.

A detailed description of any holiday or trip should be presented to the Parochial Church Council so that permission may be given, and the event covered by parish insurance. In this situation the PCC will provide Safeguarding guidelines and procedures to be followed.

20. Money/Gifts

If you are given money or gifts for any reason, ensure the donation is acknowledged (by receipt and/or thank you letter) as soon as possible. This both preserves the audit trail for the donation and protects you against any complaint that money has been taken without the knowledge or consent of the vulnerable adult, young person or child.

21. Transporting children on behalf of the church

Drivers:

- All those who drive children on church-organised activities should be over 25 years and should have held a full and clean driving licence for over two years.
- Drivers who are not children's workers should be recruited for the task through the normal recruitment process.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the church/parish safeguarding representative.
- Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children for the church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state i.e. not over-tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of medicine which may induce drowsiness.

Private car:

- Children and young people should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parents or carers. This also applies to formally arranged lifts to and from a church activity.
- Any driver using their own vehicle for the transportation of children or vulnerable adults is responsible for ensuring the vehicle is roadworthy and comprehensively insured. (Drivers to check with their Insurance Company regarding the requirement for business cover). All cars that carry children should be in a roadworthy condition.
- All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts, additional children should not be carried.
- At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number.

- There should be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.

Minibus or coach:

- When children are being transported by minibus or coach, workers and helpers should sit among the group and not together.
- If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored.
- Before using a minibus, ensure you know the up-to-date regulations for its use and that the driver is fully qualified and experienced to drive the minibus or coach in question.

22. E-SAFETY

All communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit boundaries, and only for reasons related to the work of the church, so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny, and maintain a good and open relationship with parents and carers regarding communication with their children.

1. Email

When using e-mail to communicate with children and young people, workers should:

- Make sure the child's parents/carers know and have agreed to this method of communication. This is done most simply when an individual registers to join a group, and email consent wording can be added to the general consent that is signed on the form.
- This is done most simply when an individual registers to join a group, and email consent wording can be added to the general consent that is signed on the form.
- Use clear, appropriate language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation.
- When communicating with a group of young people, the appropriate adult should send exactly the same email/text message to all recipients, as individually written ones with the same subject could be misinterpreted as favouritism.
- Where possible, have a separate e-mail account for church activity communications, which can be accessed by other adults in the group as required.
- Never use terms such as 'love' or 'xxx' to end the message.
- Not forward chain e-mails to young people.
- Make sure images, if sent, are appropriate.
- Make sure that any hyperlinks do not lead to inappropriate content.

- Always copy another adult into the e-mails, and save copies sent.

2. Mobile Phones/Text Messages

Most young people have a mobile phone, and with these also come text messages. The benefit of text is the ability to communicate and respond immediately in a given situation, but it is important to ensure that the content of the message cannot be misinterpreted.

When using mobile phones and texting to communicate with children and young people, workers should:

- Make sure the child's parents/carers know and have agreed to this method of communication.
- Where possible use a separate mobile phone from your personal one (this way all calls and texts can be accounted for via an itemised phone bill).
- Only give out to young people contact details that the church has placed within the public domain.
- Not use the phone outside reasonable hours, with a curfew from, say, 10pm to 8am
- Use appropriate language, and do not include words or phrases which could be misinterpreted.
- Never use a kiss at the end of a text or within a signature.
- Always copy another adult into the text message.

3. Social Networking Sites

- Facebook, Twitter and the like raise issues that go beyond those covered in previous sections. All the general guidance surrounding language, curfew and parental consent should be followed.
- Workers should consider having two profiles, with a dedicated one for work. This will protect young people from being messaged by contacts of the worker through the worker's profile.
- Some social networking websites and programs offer the option for one or both users in a conversation to display a live image of themselves via a webcam. Due to the increased risks of abuse with webcams, adults must not use webcams with young people; neither displaying themselves nor viewing young people.
- Adults who minister to children and young people are strongly encouraged to set very stringent privacy settings on any social networking profile.
- Adults should not submit "friend" requests to young people. Young people may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between young people and adults. Young people may ask to be "friends", and adults should discern

the level of contact they want to maintain with young people prior to responding to these requests.

- Workers should only accept friend requests for this profile from young people known to them whom they have met offline.
- Communication should be in the public domain where possible (by using group mailings or public wall posts).
- Where groups are set up, they should be closed, and not open to the general public. The worker should retain administrative rights and moderate the group, only sharing those rights with other trusted workers.
- Photographs posted on these sites are subject to all the restrictions of posting any photograph on the internet, and workers should comply with their photographic policy at all times.
- Content that raises issues or concerns for the worker should be saved/printed and shown to or discussed with the worker's supervisor.

23. Taking and Publishing Photographs and Videos

St Mary's commits itself to ensuring that all published images represent participants appropriately.

- When planning community celebrations or public events such as the Crib Service or Church Fete, at which parents may wish to take photographs and/or professional photographers may be present, those attending should be advised of this in advance. If they decide to participate in the event, their consent to photographs being taken will be assumed.
- In all other circumstances, the consent of parents/carers must be obtained before taking and using images of children and young people.
- If pictures are to be displayed on a noticeboard, used in a parish magazine or put on the internet specific consent should be obtained using the Diocese of Guildford 'Photo Consent Form.'
- Pictures of children and young people should not be taken without another adult being present.
- The photograph or video should focus on the activity rather than on a particular child.
- All children and young people featured in photographs should be appropriately dressed.
- Parents should be advised that any photographs they take that include other children or young people should be for personal use only and should not be displayed in any public domain such as face book without the child/ren and their parents/carers consent.

Vulnerable Adults

Safer Working Practices - To minimise situations where abuse may occur

The following guidelines apply whenever adults who may be vulnerable take part in church organised events and activities.

These include:

- During worship
- Day trips or outings which are non-residential
- Holidays and Residential Events
- Home or Pastoral Visiting/Home Communion

1. Leadership and Supervision

One person must be designated Group Leader for every activity or event. It is the Group Leader's responsibility to clarify with the worker or volunteer their roles and responsibilities regarding their relationships with vulnerable adults with whom they may be in contact. Regular supervision for staff and volunteers will ensure their work is monitored and also offers the opportunity for them to raise any issues.

For specific activities or groups for vulnerable adults, a minimum of two adults must always be present, and one of these should be the designated Group Leader, however a risk assessment may well indicate the need for an enhanced level of supervision and staffing for a particular activity.

All regular leaders and helpers of activities with vulnerable adults should be recruited according to the Diocese of Guildford Safer Recruitment and Selection process, including taking up references and obtaining a DBS Check as appropriate.

2. Running Activities and Events

Parishes are encouraged to create an environment where all vulnerable adults are encouraged to participate and contribute. The Group Leader should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event or activity, and should ensure that:

- The activity, event and transport arrangements are covered by insurance. This should include public liability

- The vulnerable adults and/or their carers are consulted in order to identify their specific needs, and how these can best be met
- Vulnerable adults are informed about the aims and objectives of any trips or activities and the dates, duration and details of venue and travel arrangements
- Vulnerable adults are given choices about where they sit, and what activities they participate in, and offered assistance in such a way as to maximise their independence
- Vulnerable adults are given a chance to do things that other people might take for granted
- Vulnerable adults are given the best quality of support and protection
- The needs of carers are taken into consideration, and they are offered breaks and practical assistance if feasible.

3. Holidays, Residential Trips and Overnight Events

There should be sufficient staff to make the holiday safe and enjoyable, and always a minimum of two leaders on the trip. Careful consideration should be given to:

- The appropriateness of the venue/accommodation
- Length of journey and mode of transport
- Proximity to any necessary support facilities (i.e. hospitals, doctors, etc.) Advice should be sought if a person has complex health needs, and agreements made in advance for administering medication and care plans for the duration of the holiday.

4. Home Visiting (including Residential homes)

There are some church activities where home visits are an integral part of the work. In these circumstances it is essential that the following safeguards are put in place to protect both the vulnerable adult and the worker/volunteer.

Wherever possible, workers should avoid lone working with a vulnerable adult.

- A risk assessment should be undertaken before visiting someone in their own home and if there are any concerns or risks, careful consideration should be given as to whether the visit is absolutely necessary, and whether another adult should be present
- The worker/volunteer should always carry a mobile phone on a home visit, and ensure that someone else within the activity/group knows about the arrangement, including times and location

- Don't call unannounced – call by arrangement, if appropriate telephoning the person just before you go
- Carry identification, or a note of introduction from your church at all times
- Rather than give out personal information, give those you visit a central contact point within the church
- Be clear about boundaries – keep to agreed limits on how much time you will spend with someone and how often you visit
- Be clear about what behaviour is acceptable – and what is not – from the vulnerable adult
- In the event of any problems, seek advice from the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Guidelines –Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Procedure if abuse is suspected or disclosed.

Introduction

This Section covers responding to, and reporting concerns, observations or allegations in relation to children, young people and vulnerable adults. It also sets out the procedures which should be followed when concerns are expressed, or allegations made about those in positions of trust, i.e. an adult acting in some capacity within any parish, congregation or other church setting. The procedures relate to any disclosures, observations or suspicions which occur on church premises (including in situations where the premises are hired), in church- related activities, and regarding those who attend the church and any related activities.

If any person in the church reasonably suspects or is told that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being, has been or is likely to be abused they **MUST** take action immediately. Do not delay. Do not act alone. Do not start to investigate.

There are several ways in which concerns can become apparent:

- A child or vulnerable adult discloses alleged abuse
- An adult expresses concern for a child or vulnerable adult
- By observing signs and symptoms of potential abuse
- By admission from someone who says they are harming a child or vulnerable adult

In an emergency: Anyone receiving information about or observing a serious safeguarding situation where a child or adult is in immediate danger or requires immediate medical attention must call the emergency services on 999. Do not delay.

Most situations are not emergencies. However if a child or vulnerable adult needs immediate medical help, call emergency services and ensure that ambulance and hospital staff are informed of any protection concerns. Or, if you are sufficiently concerned for their safety, emergency social care services or the police must be contacted.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse should be reported as soon as possible to the Parish Safeguarding Representative or the Incumbent who, in turn should share the information immediately with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. In most circumstances the DSA of the diocese in which the abuse is alleged to have taken place should be the prime communicator with statutory agencies.

You should NEVER:

- Do Nothing
- Give Up (if your concerns are not taken seriously, you can contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser directly)
- Conduct investigations or enquiries yourself
- Alert the parents/carers or the alleged abuser under any circumstances either directly or indirectly, as this could alert a perpetrator who could silence the child or vulnerable adult, and important evidence may be lost.

Formal investigations will be carried out by the Police and Children/Adult Services.

Hearing a Disclosure of Abuse or Mistreatment from a child, young person or vulnerable adult

All disclosures must be taken seriously. It is of vital importance that if a child or vulnerable adult discloses experience of abuse or mistreatment, you LISTEN carefully to the child or adult disclosing:

- Take him or her seriously, and don't judge.
- Be aware that they may be frightened.
- Don't interrupt if the child or adult is freely recalling significant events
- Don't pressurise the child or adult to tell you more than s/he wishes to. Do not press for information.
- Be aware that the child or vulnerable adult's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, language and communication skills and disability
- Don't promise to keep it secret.
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else.
- Write an account of the conversation as soon as possible writing down exactly what the child or vulnerable adult said, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (i.e. an activity, etc.). Record the vocabulary used by the child/vulnerable adult
- Sign the account and keep all records in a safe, secure place.
- Ensure that you get support, ideally through the incumbent.

Concerns from another Adult

If the concerns or allegations are raised by another person, these must be taken seriously. Make notes of the information and contact the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or the Incumbent immediately for consultation about what action to take. The adult needs to

be made aware that the information may ultimately be referred to Children or Adult Services, whether or not the adult with concerns wishes this to happen. It is the responsibility of the Church to inform the Social Services Department of the allegation so that the child or young person, other children or vulnerable adults are protected.

Disclosures from Abusers

People who abuse children rarely admit to what they have done. It is however, possible that admissions may be made to clergy and pastoral counsellors. Whilst there is a general presumption in favour of confidentiality and indeed the secrecy of pastoral conversations of all kinds, this cannot apply in the case of admission of the abuse of children or vulnerable adults. Thus whilst a person's right to confidentiality is of great importance, it is not absolute. If a person hearing an admission considers that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm he or she must make it clear to the person that the information will be passed to the Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Representative for consultation and further action to be taken.

It is also possible that abuse may be admitted in the particular and privileged context of confession. The 'seal of the confessional' should be regarded as absolute. Nevertheless, a priest should not only urge the person to report his or her behaviour, but may indeed either make this a condition of absolution or withhold absolution until this evidence of repentance has been demonstrated. It is in everyone's interest to recognise the difference between what is heard in confession (however this might take place), and disclosures made in other kinds of pastoral conversation. For this reason it may be helpful if confessions are normally heard at advertised times or otherwise by arrangement.

Observing Signs of Potential Abuse or Mistreatment

If you observe injuries or behaviours in children or vulnerable adults which cause you concern, or you have a strong suspicion about abuse, you should record the reasons for your concerns, what you have seen/heard, when, where, etc. in writing and consult the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or Incumbent.

Child Abuse

The term 'child abuse' is used to describe a range of ways in which people, usually adults, harm children. Often the adult is a person who is known and trusted by the child.

Child abuse is neglect, physical injury, sexual abuse or emotional abuse inflicted or knowingly not prevented, which causes significant harm or death. It can be inflicted or

knowingly not prevented by the person who cares for the child, a person known to the child who is not the carer or by someone else not known to the child. In many cases children are subjected to a combination of forms of abuse, e.g. neglect and emotional abuse. Child abuse can take place in the home, at school or anywhere where children spend their time. Some forms of abuse are obvious, for example when an adult strikes out at a child in anger, but others are much more difficult for outsiders to detect.

The following facts about abuse are based on research findings and may help to dispel the many myths that surround child abuse:

- Most children are abused by adults whom they know and trust
- Although the overwhelming majority of child abusers are male, in around 5- 10% of cases the abuse is by a woman
- Disabled children are more likely to be abused because they are more vulnerable, dependent on others and may be less able to communicate what has happened to them
- Children rarely lie about abuse, and their great fear is that they will not be believed. Abusers often tell their victims that no-one will believe them if they report what has happened
- Abusers come from a very wide range of social and intellectual backgrounds and may be well liked and respected members of society
- Child protection professionals recognise that there are many benefits in keeping a child with his or her birth family, so they will try to protect a child within the home where possible, and will only remove children where they are in real danger of harm.

Forms of Abuse

Child abuse can take different forms, all of which can cause long term damage to a child: Physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and sexual abuse. Bullying and domestic violence are also forms of child abuse.

Physical Abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer deliberately causes, or feigns symptoms of ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This is known as FII or Fabricated Induced Illness. Physical abuse can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Sexual Abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact, penetrative acts such as rape or buggery, or non-penetrative acts. It may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of the child's basic emotional needs.

Emotional Abuse

This area can be harder to classify than the previous forms of abuse. Emotional abuse is the persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection that has, or is likely to have, a serious effect on the child's development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may feature developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on the child. It may involve causing children to feel frequently frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a pattern of abusive behaviour by one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, cohabitation, dating, family or friends. Domestic violence has many forms including physical aggression, threats, intimidation, stalking, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and economic deprivation. Alcohol abuse and mental illness have frequently been associated with spousal abuse. Children in the family are also victims of domestic abuse, directly or indirectly. Being a victim or witness of domestic abuse can have a severe effect on a child's behaviour, health or educational performance.

Spiritual Abuse

This is the attempt to 'force' religious values or ideas onto children and young people, particularly those who may be vulnerable to such practices. Within faith communities harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; this can include the misuse of the authority of leadership, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing and

deliverance ministries, which result in children or young people experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm.

Identifying possible signs of abuse

Children and young people often find it very difficult to talk about the abuse they are experiencing, so adults have a vital role to play in looking out for the possible signs. Your knowledge of a child over time will be a valuable aid in assessing whether a change in behaviour or physical appearance is significant, and you should NEVER ignore what your judgement is telling you.

In considering whether a child is suffering from some form of abuse, you should look at two areas:

- Physical Signs
- Behavioural Signs

Although it is sometimes hard to be 100 per cent certain that a child is being abused, here are some of the signs to watch out for:

- A baby who cries constantly
- A child who is often bruised or injured
- A child who is often very withdrawn
- A child who is often very dirty or smelly
- A child who is often hungry, or under or over-dressed for the time of year.
- A child who is often left at home alone
- A child who is often left in unsafe situations or without medical attention when they need it
- A child who is constantly 'put down', insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- A child who seems very afraid of particular adults, and reluctant to be alone with them
- A child who has unexplained changeable emotions, such as depression, anxiety or severe aggression
- A child who shows sexual knowledge or behaviour that is inappropriate for their age
- A child who is growing up in a home where there is domestic violence

- A child who is living with parents or carers who are involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse.

This list does not cover every possibility. You may see other things in the child's behaviour or circumstances that worry you. The most important thing to remember is that if you have a gut feeling that something is not right, trust your judgement and take action.

Abuse of Vulnerable Adults

Abuse is mistreatment by any other person or persons that violates a person's human and civil rights. The abuse can vary, from treating someone with disrespect in a way that significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical or mental suffering.

The abuse may be a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, and which causes harm or distress to the individual.

Abuse can occur in any setting including:

- Family or individual's home setting
- Residential or nursing home
- Hospital or intermediate care setting
- Day Care Setting
- Social settings
- Public Places

The person responsible for the abuse is often well known to the person being abused, including:

- Relatives and family members
- Professional staff
- Paid care workers
- Volunteers
- Other service users
- Neighbours, friends and/or associates

Others may be strangers who:

- Befriend vulnerable people with the intention of exploiting them
- Deceive people into believing they are from legitimate businesses, services or utility providers
- Intimidate vulnerable people into financial transactions they do not want or cannot understand.

Adults who are most at risk of abuse at home include:

- Those who are isolated and don't have much contact with friends, family or neighbours
- Those with memory problems, or who have difficulty communicating with others
- Those who don't get on with their carer
- Those whose carer is addicted to drugs or alcohol, or
- Those whose carer depends on them for a home and financial and emotional support.

Other vulnerable adults include people who are open to abuse because of learning difficulties, physical disabilities or mental illness.

Becoming dependant on someone else, whether a carer, family member, friend or hospital, can put vulnerable people at risk of abuse. Abusers may create a feeling of dependency and may also make the vulnerable person feel isolated, that nobody else cares for them and that they're on their own.

Forms of abuse

Physical Abuse

The ill-treatment of an adult, which may or may not cause physical injury, is regarded as physical abuse. This may include hitting, slapping, shaking, pushing, kicking, pinching, inappropriate restraint, withholding or misuse of medication, biting, suffocating and poisoning. It could include racially or religiously motivated attacks.

Sexual Abuse

A sexual act carried out without the informed consent of the other individual is abuse. Such behaviour includes contact and non-contact abuse. Non-contact abuse may include sexual remarks and suggestions, introduction to indecent material and/or indecent exposure. Contact abuse may include rape or sexual assault; being forced to touch another person, sexual intercourse or being pressurised into consenting to sexual acts.

Physiological or emotional abuse

This concerns the use of threats or fear or the power of the carer's or other adult's position to negate the vulnerable adult's independent wishes. It includes lack of privacy or choice, denial or dignity, deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation making someone feel worthless, lack of love or affection, threats, verbal abuse, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, fear and/or ignoring the person. Other behaviours which may take place within a working relationship include public or unreasonable criticism, verbal abuse, ignoring a person's wishes or point of view and prevention from receiving services or support.

Financial or Material Abuse

The wilful extortion or manipulation of the vulnerable person's legal or civil rights is construed as abuse, and is also potentially fraud. Such activity may include misappropriation of monies or goods, the misuse of finances, property or possessions, withholding money, theft or exploitation; pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance. Such abuse may involve the use of a position of authority or friendship to persuade a person to make gifts, to leave legacies or change a will.

Neglect or acts of Omission

Neglectful behaviour is any pattern of activity by another person, which seriously impairs an individual. Neglect can include failure to intervene in situations where there is danger to a vulnerable person or to others, (particularly when a person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk) not giving personal care, deliberately withholding visual or hearing aids, withholding food, drink, light and clothing, restricting access to medical services, denying social, religious or cultural contacts, denying contact with family and/or lack of appropriate supervision.

Spiritual Abuse

Churches need to be sensitive so that they do not, in their pastoral care, attempt to 'force' religious values or ideas onto people, particularly those who may be vulnerable to such practices. Careful supervision and mentoring of those entrusted with the pastoral care of adults should help to prevent harm occurring in this way. Other forms of spiritual abuse include the denial to vulnerable people of the right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Professional/Institutional Abuse

Professional and/or institutional abuse can occur in residential homes, nursing homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect and/or poor practice that affects the whole of that service. It can also include disrespect and unethical practice, ill treatment and professional misconduct. Any of these forms of abuse

can be deliberate, or be the result of either ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way they are also being abused in other ways.

Identifying possible signs of abuse

It is not always easy to spot the symptoms of abuse. Someone being abused may make excuses for why they're bruised, they don't want to go out or talk to people, or why they are short of money. It is important to know the signs of abuse as the vulnerable adult is unlikely to talk about the abuse they may be experiencing.

In considering whether a vulnerable adult is suffering from some form of abuse, you should look at two areas:

- Physical Signs
- Behavioural Signs

Some of the physical signs to look for include:

- Bruises, wounds, fractures and other untreated injuries
- Injuries the person cannot give a good reason for
- Deterioration of health for no apparent reason
- Looking unkempt, dirty or thinner than usual
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing
- A carer who is unwilling to allow access to the person

Behaviour signs to watch out for include:

- Becoming quiet, withdrawn
- Being aggressive or angry for no obvious reason
- Sudden changes in their normal character, such as appearing helpless, depressed or tearful,
- Being unusually light-hearted and insisting there's nothing wrong
- An unwillingness to be alone with a particular carer

There are also material signs to watch out for such as:

- A sudden change in finances

- Not having as much money as usual to pay for shopping or regular outings
- Getting into debt
- Official or financial documents that seem unusual, or documents relating to finances that suddenly go missing

This list does not cover every possibility. You may see other things in the vulnerable adult's behaviour or circumstances that worry you.

If you feel someone you know is showing signs of abuse, talk to them to see if there's anything you can do to help. If they're being abused they may not want to talk about it straight away, especially if they've become used to making excuses for their injuries or change in personality. Don't ignore your concerns, though. That could allow any abuse to carry on.

The most important thing to remember is that if you have a gut feeling that something is not right, trust your judgement and take action.

The abuse of Children and Vulnerable Adults is covered in diocesan training workshops - Safeguarding Children in Church and Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults—the dates of which can be found on the Diocesan website, or by contacting the Diocesan Safeguarding Office.

Concerns about People in Positions of Trust

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a church officer has:

- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or vulnerable adult.
- Behaved towards a child or vulnerable adult in a way which indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with them.

The allegations may relate to a person's behaviour in the church, at home or in another setting. The person may be acting in a paid capacity or be a lay person or volunteer.

The concerns may be about current events or something that has happened in the past. The response should be the same – as any events in the past may have relevance for the safety of other children or vulnerable adults in the present. There may be doubts and concerns that someone is acting in a way which is creating an environment that is not safe for children or vulnerable adults.

Whatever the concerns are, the matter must be discussed immediately with the Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Representative (unless they are the subject of the allegations or concern or implicated in any way), who will consult the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser as soon as possible but always within 24 hours of the information being given.

Where concerns arise in the context of the adult's own family setting, e.g. where someone has accessed child abuse images at home or in some way maltreated their own children, which subsequently comes to the attention of the Police or Social Care Services, this will have a bearing on how the adult can carry out their role within the Church, and in these instances the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will work closely with Children/Adult Services and the Police.

If allegations are made against any person living in the household of or closely associated with clergy or a church officer, these procedures should be used in relation to the safeguarding implications for the church officer.

In the consideration of an allegation, the following may arise:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence
- Enquiries and assessment by Social Care Services about whether a child or vulnerable adult is in need of protection
- Consideration by the parish of disciplinary action in respect of the individual

At no time should the person about whom the concerns have been raised be informed, or alerted to the concerns, until the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser decides in co-operation with the Incumbent and Parish Safeguarding Representative as to what action should be taken, including liaison with the statutory authorities.

Suspension

There are some occasions when an individual may have to be suspended immediately while an investigation is carried out. In this event, it is recommended that vetting and reference checks are undertaken before a decision is made to re-engage the individual.

Referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

PCC's have a duty to refer to the ISA any information about individuals who may pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults. Further information in respect of this is available from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Whistle-blowing

Whistle blowing is an early warning system. It is about revealing and raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice, and parishes should have appropriate procedures in place to enable individuals to voice their concerns. Whistle-blowing should be encouraged, in order that issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults are addressed.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives workers legal protection against being dismissed or penalised as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. Whilst the Act does not provide the same protection for volunteers, churches should adopt the same approach in their safeguarding arrangements.

Members of a congregation should be encouraged to acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of unacceptable practice, performance or behaviour to the attention of the incumbent, churchwarden, Parish Safeguarding Representative or a member of the PCC.

It is often the case that a co-worker or co-volunteer may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express concerns, feeling that this would be disloyal, or invite harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or vulnerable adult continuing to be unnecessarily at risk.

In all cases of whistle-blowing, if the concern about practice, performance or behaviour relates to safeguarding children or vulnerable adults, it should be investigated immediately.

False Allegations

False allegations can sometimes be made against a paid or voluntary worker, perhaps because of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding. A false allegation may also be made for reasons of malice, jealousy or revenge, or it may even be a cry for help from a child.

Any allegations must be carefully investigated, normally by the Parish Safeguarding Representative in liaison with the Incumbent and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, to ascertain the truth. False allegations are usually recognised as false once sufficient enquiries have been made.

In these cases, the Bishop with advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will find appropriate means to make clear that the person has been exonerated. It is important to note that anyone working with children or vulnerable adults does not put themselves in vulnerable situations and follows the diocese Good Practice personal code of behaviour.

Disclosures of Historical Abuse

In the course of their work many ministers and those offering pastoral support in the Church may find themselves hearing disclosures from adults regarding abuse that happened to them when they were children.

The wishes of an adult disclosing abuse are very important. For some adults, just being able to talk to a trusted person about their experiences can be in itself healing. The pastoral care of the person who has been abused should be a priority.

A referral to the police will not always be necessary unless the individual wishes to report the offence; however they should be encouraged and supported to do so.

Adults disclosing historic abuse need to be made aware, however, that if the alleged abuser is still potentially working with or caring for children, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be informed and a referral to Children Services will be made.

Referrals

All allegations or suspicions of abuse should be reported as soon as possible to the Parish Safeguarding Representative or the Incumbent who, in turn should share the information immediately with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will assess whether the matter merits a referral to the Police or Adult or Children Services. If the allegation concerns a member of the clergy, or someone holding the Bishops Licence, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will also inform the Bishop.

All referrals to Social Care Services must be made by the person who received the disclosure or who raised the concern, and the details confirmed in writing within 48 hours. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will help to facilitate this, and will be available to support the individual through each stage of the process.

Once the Local Authority Adult or Child Protection team receives a referral, it must decide within 24 hours what action to take. They may decide that the child or vulnerable adult is not at risk and no further action is necessary, although the case could be referred to other agencies if appropriate.

If it is decided that the child or vulnerable adult may be at risk, an initial assessment is undertaken to gather more information. The initial assessment must be completed within 7 working days of the referral to Social Care Services, and the social worker leading the initial assessment is responsible for gathering as much information about the child or vulnerable adult in order to determine what action is necessary.

Following a referral, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will continue to liaise with the Social Care Services and/or the Police until such time that they have concluded their enquiries and investigations.

All those involved in the referral should ensure that they co-operate with the statutory agencies where required, and attend any meetings if invited. They will be accompanied and supported by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Risk Assessment

Afterwards, the Safeguarding Representative with the Incumbent and Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser should carry out a review of the situation, in order to determine whether any improvements or changes could have been made in the way that the matter was handled. In serious cases involving clergy or other leaders, a review will be conducted at Diocesan level.

A risk assessment should be carried out as to how the parish runs its activities and whether the appropriate safeguards are in place to minimise risks in the future or prevent a similar situation arising again.

Support for the Parish

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, in conjunction with the Parish Safeguarding Representative and Incumbent, will ensure that the necessary steps are put into place in respect of support and communication.

Situations can be complex, as sometimes the victim and alleged perpetrator may both be part of the church community, and extended family and friends may also be affected and have views.

The following people may all need support:

- The victim
- The family and friends of the victim
- The alleged perpetrator
- The family and friends of the alleged perpetrator
- Other members of the congregation who have been affected
- The person to whom the disclosure was made, or who raised the initial concern

- The Incumbent
- The Parish Safeguarding Representative

It helps to be clear about who is supporting whom – separate out the roles. One person cannot support everyone, and some may require referral to specialist support.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will also manage and decide:

- The handling of the repercussions for the parish and the Diocese
- Boundaries of confidentiality, and who needs to be informed, including the insurance company
- Statements to the Diocesan Communications Adviser, who will be responsible for dealing with press enquiries.

Press Enquiries

At all times every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered. All media enquiries should be directed to the Diocesan Communications Team. This is in order to protect all parties and ensure that any investigation is not compromised and impartiality maintained.

The Diocesan Communications Adviser will be kept informed of key stages of an investigation by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, including dates of court appearances, and will prepare a statement for use if asked.

All press enquires relating to an investigation must be directed, without comment, to the Diocesan Communications Adviser.

Recording concerns, disclosures or allegations

It is important to keep accurate records of any concern, disclosure or allegation. Matters that are observed or disclosed should be accurately recorded, signed and dated and where possible and practical the following steps should be observed:

- Take notes during any conversation, however where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time, a written record should be made as soon as possible afterwards and always before the end of the day.
- Record the time, date, location, format of information (e.g. letter, telephone call, direct contact) and the persons present when the information was given.

- Include as much information as possible, but be clear about which information is fact, hearsay, opinion and do not make assumptions or speculate.
- Include the context and background leading to the disclosure, allegation or concern.
- Make a note of who is aware of the information, for example, the subject of the record, a parent/carer, etc.
- Actions taken and decisions made must also be noted.
- The record must always be signed and dated by the person making it.

All records must be kept in a confidential and secure place and must only be shared with those who need to know.

Allegations

There is a requirement to keep a clear and comprehensive summary of allegations, how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached. This should be confidentially stored and retained at least until the individual has reached normal retirement age or for a period of ten years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Organisations have a duty to make referrals to the ISA where there is a concern involving vulnerable adults or children, and therefore any allegation of this nature must be discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers as soon as possible.

Research has indicated that a higher proportion of convicted offenders against children may be found in church congregations than in the population generally. It is therefore probable that many congregations will have people who have abused children amongst their worshippers, some of whom will be known. Not all will have committed sexual offences; some will have been guilty of neglect, physical or emotional abuse.

As well as people with convictions against children there are others whose position in a congregation may need to be carefully and sensitively considered to decide whether they pose a risk. This would include people convicted of violent or sexual offences against adults, including domestic violence, and people involved in drug or alcohol misuse.

Any help or pastoral support provided by the church to offenders of abuse against children or vulnerable adults needs to run alongside the monitoring of the individual by police and probation. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) exist in all areas of England and Wales, and place a duty on the police, the probation service and the prison authorities to assess and manage risks posed by offenders in every community, including churches.

In all circumstances where a known offender wishes to join the church, or is already a member of the church, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will work with church representatives (usually the incumbent, churchwardens, and the Parish Safeguarding Representative) and any statutory agency who has been involved in the investigation, to undertake an assessment of the risks posed by the offender in the particular environment of the worship and church activities.

Offenders against Children and Vulnerable Adults

The Church is a place for all who fall short and sin, for the vulnerable and for those in need. We will offer help and support to an ex-offender but the protection of the children in the Church will come first.

The new Vetting Scheme has a list of all those who are barred from working with children and another, related list of those barred from working with vulnerable adults. These are called the Barred Lists and replace the Protection of Children Act List (PoCA), List 99 and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults List (PoVA), as well as the system of Disqualification Orders which was operated by the Criminal Justice System. When it is known that a member of the congregation or someone wishing to join the congregation has previous convictions against a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or are banned from working with vulnerable groups, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be consulted so that a safe course of action can be agreed in conjunction with the relevant statutory agencies, as the protection of children and vulnerable adults in the church must come first.

Alleged Perpetrators who are not Convicted

Many people who offend against children or adults are not convicted, and cannot therefore be classed as 'offenders'. Where there are reasonable grounds for concern that a person poses a risk to children or adults, his/her involvement with a church will still need to be assessed and managed with appropriate boundaries applied. Support for the person may also need to be offered in this context.

Written Agreements

A written agreement is made primarily to reduce and minimise the risk to children and adults. The agreement also aims to create a safe environment for the person posing the risk, through protecting them from false allegations and the risk of re-offending, supporting them and enabling them to receive appropriate ministry within explicit bounds of confidentiality.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser is responsible for preparing a written agreement in conjunction with representatives of the church, the person who poses the risk and the police or probation service, if they are involved. The agreement will make it clear how the person who poses a risk can receive ministry and support.

The agreement will set clear boundaries on the person's involvement in the church community, in order to minimise risk. Depending on the seriousness of the risk, limits may include:

- Which services the person may attend
- Whether s/he should be accompanied, and if so, by whom
- Where s/he may sit
- What activities s/he may participate in
- What activities s/he is barred from; this is likely to include all direct and unsupervised work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, any official role or office in the church which gives him/her the status or authority deemed to be trustworthy
- Other limits on his/her behaviour, and agreements about how his/her behaviour will be managed

In circumstances where, for instance the victim is also part of the church community, or the church is one with a large number of children, the person posing the risk may be introduced to a congregation in another parish. It will be the responsibility of the parish representatives in liaison with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser to enforce and monitor the agreement, as well as provide support to the person posing a risk. The agreement must remain in place for as long as the person is a part of the congregation. The arrangement will also be transferred if the ex-offender moves to another parish or Diocese.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser maintains a database of offenders for whom agreements are in place in the Diocese and will ensure that such agreements are reviewed annually. In the event of the agreement being broken, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be consulted. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will inform the statutory agencies and decide what further safeguards need to be put in place, and whether the person should continue as part of that congregation.

Care of Perpetrators of Abuse

The church's role must be to reinforce whatever is done by others to help the perpetrator address his/her abusive behaviour, and it should encourage the perpetrator to adopt a realistic approach to recognise personal need and seek appropriate help. Offenders or

alleged perpetrators wanting to change need people around who will love and accept them, and offer them care and protection. When an abuser, and particularly a sex offender, is known, befriended and helped by a group of voluntary workers to lead a fulfilled life without direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, the chances of re-offending are diminished, and the church has thus an important role contributing to the prevention of further abusive behaviour. Members of a local congregation may be able to help by combining rejection of the abusive behaviour with acceptance of the perpetrator as a person.

There are organisations which can support churches to help the offender re-integrate into the community, and details of these can be obtained from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Families of Perpetrators

Partners of perpetrators of abuse may be unaware of the offending behaviour right up until an arrest is made; this is particularly common for offences of downloading abusive images of children. Partners and children of abusers may also find themselves victimised and blamed for the abusive behaviour.

Where families of perpetrators are part of church congregations, or seek to become so, they will need acceptance, love and care. They may need support whilst they come to terms with the abusive behaviour and in some situations make decisions about the future. Members of the church may also be able to assist them in the following ways:

- To accompany and include them in parish activities
- Offer practical support, e.g. transport, help with shopping or childcare
- Commit long-term—whether or not a case goes to court, the process can take years.
- Offer, or signpost to, specialist help.

The Hire of St Mary's Centre

The following safeguarding guidelines apply to all activities and events that take place in St Mary's Centre or grounds, which are not run directly by the Parochial Church Council, and where the PCC has a formal or informal hiring agreement with the organiser.

Both regular and one-off books are included, as are all kinds of lease, and arrangements for payment, i.e. commercial rents, subsidised rents, or those who pay no rent at all.

It applies to all events and activities which may include children and/or vulnerable adults, as well as those that are specifically set up for children and/or vulnerable adults.

In all bookings the hiring body (organisation or person) is required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, by taking reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss, or damage occurring, and carries full liability insurance for this.

Safeguarding Conditions of Hire Form for hirers of St Mary's Centre

The protection of the young and vulnerable in our community is one of our highest priorities as a church.

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary's Church and St Mary's Centre have adopted the Church of England Safeguarding Policy, Protocols and Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Adults who may be vulnerable. This can be viewed on St Mary's Church website 'www.stmaryschessington.org' or the Diocese of Guildford website 'www.cofeguildford.org.uk' Your booking agreement is conditional upon you complying with it.

You are required to ensure that children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring; and that you carry full liability insurance for this.

In particular this means that:

- *You will comply with St Mary's Church/Church of England Policy and Procedures for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults.*
- *If your organisation has its own Safeguarding policy (i.e. Scouts or Guides) based on Government guidance you must follow it and provide the church with a copy of your organisation's Safeguarding Children/Vulnerable Adults policy.*
- *You will recruit safely all current paid and voluntary workers who work with children and/or vulnerable adults and where required by law to do so obtain satisfactory disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).*
- *You will keep a list of the names of all paid and voluntary workers with regular and direct contact with children/adults who may be vulnerable, and update it annually.*

- You will always have at least two leaders over the age of 18 years in any group of children and young people, no matter how small the group. The standard ratios required are as follows:
 - 0 – 2 years = 1 member of staff to 3 children.
 - 2 – 3 years = 1 member of staff to 4 children.
 - 3 – 8 years = 1 member of staff to 8 children.
 - Over 8 years = 1 member of staff to 10 children.
 On no account should a worker be by themselves with this age-group.
The minimum number of adults should always be two.
 It is recommended that there be one male and one female leader where possible.
- No person under the age of 18 years will be left in charge of children of any age.
- No child or group of children or young people should be left unattended at any time.
- A register of children or adults who may be vulnerable attending the activity will be kept. This will include details of their name, address, date of birth and next of kin.
- You will complete details of any accident or incident occurring during your occupation of St Mary's Centre which did or could give rise to an injury as soon as possible after the accident or incident, but in any case before the premises are vacated in the accident book located in the Centre Kitchen. The Centre Administrator or Church Vicar should be notified as soon as possible after the incident, but in any event within 24 hours.
- You will immediately (within 24 hours) inform the Parish Safeguarding Representative or Church Vicar of a) the occurrence of any incidents or allegations of abuse or causes of concern relating to members or leaders of your organisation, and contact details for the person in your organisation who is dealing with it b) any known offenders against children or vulnerable adults seeking to join your membership, and manage such allegations or agreements with offenders in co-operation with statutory agencies, and with the church.
- The hirer shall be responsible for ensuring that no person aged under 18 is permitted to consume alcohol and will employ appropriate safeguards in this respect.

The Parish Safeguarding Representative for St Mary's Church is Jane Gates.
 Telephone: 020 8391 4281

The Vicar of St Mary's Church is Revd Scott Edwards.
 Telephone: 020 8391 3016

Declaration

I agree to abide by St Mary's Church/the Church of England Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, Procedures and Practices, and I will show evidence of this to the Vicar, Church Wardens, St Mary's Centre Administrator or Parish Safeguarding Representative if required. I understand that my booking agreement may be terminated in the event of my failing to comply with these procedures.

Signed Designation

Organisation Date