

Holy Nativity Parish Safeguarding Policy

Context

In developing this policy the parish of Holy Nativity commits to following the safeguarding policies of the Church of England, safeguarding policy and guidance as issued by the Diocese of Bristol and commits to working within legislation and statutory guidance as related to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults. For further details of such statutory guidance see the diocesan website.

Statement of purpose

We at Holy Nativity recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults with care and support needs. We realise that the welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount. We aim to create a safe and caring community and to provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.

We are determined to take all possible steps to protect children adults and young people from harm. We acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which state that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child."

We have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance.

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Section 1. | Place of worship / organisation details
Safe and Secure – Standard 1 |
| Section 2. | Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse
Safe and Secure – Standards 2 and 7 |
| Section 3. | Prevention
Safe and Secure – Standards 3 and 4 |
| Section 4. | Pastoral care,
Safe and Secure – Standards 8 and 9 |
| Section 5. | Roles and responsibilities and other matters
Safe and Secure – Standards 5, 6 and 10 |

Section 1

Holy Nativity is an Anglican inner city church which offers family worship at 10 am on a Sunday and weekday mass on a Friday. At Easter and Christmas there are children's services sometime with an activity attached for example helping with the Easter Garden. The choir, involving children, meets at 9.45 on Sunday. If there is a special service such as a carol service, there will be a practice sometimes on a Friday or Sunday afternoon. These meet in the choir room or the main church and children have not attended these. There is a brownie and rainbow pack which are not the safeguarding responsibility of the church. The church does acknowledge responsibility for checking that these bodies are carrying out safeguarding procedures. They will be expected to have their own safeguarding policy and to show this to the church if requested.

Commitment

Further to our statement of purpose the PCC (Parochial Church Council) undertakes to

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above. For details of these see Diocesan Website.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding officer in her work and in any action she may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.

Section 2. Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Understanding abuse and neglect

A child is defined by recent legislation as a person under 18 and a vulnerable adult as a person needing care and attention. Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult. Details of types of abuse and signs of abuse are contained in appendix 1 of this document.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse...Article 19 which states:

Parties shall take all appropriate measures to protect a child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article *No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Safeguarding awareness

The PCC is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all its members any voluntary workers and members of the congregation. This will be achieved by completing online training courses and if necessary face to face training provided by the diocese. The PCC will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Responding to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Where someone has a concern or suspicion of abuse or a disclosure has been made, he/she will follow the procedure set out in appendix 2. He will react calmly, report such concerns to the PSO (parish safeguarding officer) not promising any confidentiality where a child is concerned.. He/she should make a written record. The PSO will decide what further action should be taken or if a referral is necessary. If the suspicions in any way involve the PSO, then the report should be made to the parish priest, church wardens or Diocesan Safeguarding team.

The Safeguarding officer may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern. Where the concern is about a child, the PSO may contact Children's Social Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection, she may contact Adult Social Services or take advice from the Diocese Safeguarding team. For details of these see appendix 2.

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the PSO, the absence of the PSO should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Diocesan Safeguarding team.

The PCC will support the PSO in her role, and accept that any information she may have in her possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

The role of the PSO is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the Diocesan Safeguarding team or statutory agencies with a legal duty.

Record Keeping

Records of all safeguarding concerns will be kept by the Parish Safeguarding Officer. He/she will keep a record of the initial concern and all actions taken. The records will be securely held in the parish safe. All those involved with any safeguarding concern must ensure that they provide to the Safeguarding Officer any records related to that case for secure storage. Records to be kept in accordance with Church of England guidance.

Confidentiality and consent

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

Children: Where there is a concern that a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect they may ask those that know not to tell anyone. The PCC accepts that we cannot do this; these concerns must be reported to the appropriate authorities to enable the child or young person to receive appropriate help.

Adults : Adults have the right to make their own decisions about their lives. Consent should be sought from an adult before information is shared about them. However, where an adult withholds consent for a safeguarding concern to be shared with statutory authorities (police and local authority), this should be accepted except where others might be at risk as in a care home.

Section 3 Prevention

Safer recruitment

All recruitment of staff and volunteers will be undertaken in line with Church of England policy 'Safer Recruitment, 2016'. The PCC will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate

A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)

- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a PCC we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

SECTION 4

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The PCC is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship.

This support would be offered by the parish ministering team.

Working with offenders

If a person is identified who has a caution or conviction for abuse of children and or adults who may pose a risk to others The PSO will work with the Diocesan Safeguarding team on a way to manage the risk, supervise the individual concerned, offer pastoral care and set boundaries for that person that they will be expected to keep. For further details, see the Diocesan guidance on 'Managing those who may pose a risk'.

SECTION 5

Roles and Responsibilities and other matters

Name	Responsibilities
Parochial Church Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree, implement, monitor and review annually this safeguarding policy and all associated policies • Ensure all staff and volunteers are recruited safely • Agree and implement supporting good practice guidance and processes • Ensure adequate insurance for all activities • Recruit and support adequate Parish Safeguarding Officers • Ensure all staff and volunteers are adequately trained and supervised
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to all safeguarding allegations and concerns according to policy and guidance • Monitor and report to PCC regarding adherence to policy and practice • Arrange safeguarding training and maintain records • Process DBS disclosures for the church and maintain records
Incumbent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a point of contact should there be any safeguarding allegation or concern regarding a PSO
Church Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in the allegations management procedure when required i.e. if the PSO is absent • Take part in an 'agreement' as per 'ministering to those that may present a risk'
Activity Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the Safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance • Ensure that activities are run according to good practice guidance • Report any safeguarding concerns as per policy • Ensure all volunteers are safely recruited • Ensure all volunteers have in date training and DBS check as required • Ensure all new volunteers receive agreed induction • Supervise agreed volunteers
Staff and Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance • Report any safeguarding concern as per policy
Church members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the safeguarding and associated policies • Report any concerns as per policy

Other policies

Photographs and videos

It is the policy of The parish of Holy Nativity that no one should take photographs of children or young people without the written consent of that child's parent or carer and the consent of that child where they are old enough to give consent.

Where photographs are to be taken consent will be gained from parents and carers in advance, using the agreed form. This will stipulate: who will take photos, for what purpose they may be used, how they will be stored and after what period they will be destroyed.

All photos and videos taken should be stored securely on devices belonging to PCC. No photo or video should be left stored on personal photography or videography equipment.

No photo will be taken, shared or used for any purpose which shows a child in any state of undress.

Children will not be named in publicity related to photographs or video.

Where an event may be photographed and is open to the public; signs will be displayed noting that photographs and or video may be taken and inviting anyone not wishing to be in any photos or video used to make this known to one of the Church Wardens.

Communications and Social Media

It is the policy of The PCC that no one employed on a paid or voluntary basis, serving as a PCC member or as a licenced minister will contact children or young people directly via social media, email, phone or text without the knowledge and consent of that child or young person's parent or carer.

Where such contact needs to be made (for example a text to advise of a change of time for an activity) the child's parent or carer will be asked for consent in advance and the parent or carer will be copied into that communication.

Very rarely contact may be made with a child or young person without the knowledge of the child's parents or carers (for example where there are serious safeguarding concerns for a child and it would increase the risk to the child to contact the parent). In this case the person making contact with the child must agree in advance with the Parish Safeguarding Officer that this is appropriate, a second adult should be copied into all communications e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer or Incumbent and must keep a record of all communications and provide these to the Parish Safeguarding Officer for the case record.

Where a group wishes to have a social media account to publicise or communicate regarding their group or activity the following will apply: The account shall not be a personal account belonging to any group member or leader; it will be a separate group account.

More than one adult will be administrator for the account so that all content and messages can be seen by more than one adult.

All users will be made aware that bullying, harassment or other anti social behaviour will not be tolerated. Information will be available to all users about how to raise a concern about the conduct of others and who with.

Steps must be taken to prevent people outside the group having access to the names or personal details of anyone who is part of the group e.g. if a group Facebook page is used, the account settings should prevent group members being identified and any message sent to anyone other than the administrator.

All those in a leadership role will ensure that their language is professional.

Hire of Church Halls

The PCC recognises its responsibility to check that independent bodies hiring the hall that work with children or vulnerable adults have a safeguarding policy and that leaders are DBS checked.

Good Practice Guidelines

As a place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. These are in the process of being developed.

Signed by: _____

Dated: _____

Appendix I: Categories of Abuse and additional information

Categories, Definitions and Indicators of Harm

Type Of Harm	Definition	Indicators
Physical Adults and Children	Non-accidental harm to the body. From careless rough handling to direct physical violence e.g. hitting, slapping, pinching, locking in a car	History of unexplained falls or minor injuries
Sexual Adults and Children	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without capacity and/or consent. Note: A child under 16 years old can never consent to any sexual act	Pregnancy in a woman unable to give consent, difficulty in walking or sitting with no apparent explanation, torn, stained or bloody underclothes or bedding,
Emotional Adults and Children	Behaviour which has a harmful effect on an individual's emotional well-being or development, causing mental distress e.g. shouting, coercion, bullying	Loss of interest, withdrawn, anxious or depressed, frightened, avoiding eye contact,
Neglect Adults and Children	Failure of any person who has responsibility for the charge, care or custody of an adult at risk or child to provide the amount and type of care or treatment person to be expected	Unwashed/ dirty appearance, clothes too small/big, untreated sores or infections, isolation.
Financial Adults	The unauthorised taking (theft), deprivation or misuse of any money, income, assets, funds, personal belongings or property or any resources of an	Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, , unexplained withdrawal of money with no benefits, person lacking goods or services that they can afford,

Type Of Harm	Definition	Indicators
	adult at risk without their informed consent or authorisation.	
Organisational Adults	Involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide safe, appropriate and acceptable standards care, inappropriate confinement or restriction	Whistle blowing policy not in place and accessible, insufficient employees training and development. Organisational standards not meeting those laid down by regulatory bodies,
Discriminatory Adults	Verbal abuse, harassment	Repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment and criminal justice
Modern Slavery	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Adult or Child forced to work as domestic servant.	Individual may not have their passport or Identity documents. They may not have access to or contact with friends and family.
Self neglect	A wide range of behaviour involving neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, May not react to or appropriately fulfil needs for health care, food, warmth.	Environment which is poorly maintained, dirty, animal infested, cramped to the degree that it places the individuals wellbeing at risk. May have untreated or inadequately treated physical health issues.
Domestic violence	Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse	Appears to be afraid of partner / of making own choices, behaves as though she/he deserves to be hurt or mistreated, low self-esteem or appear to be withdrawn, appears unable or unwilling to leave perpetrator, makes excuses for or condones the behaviour of the person alleged to have caused harm, blames abuse on themselves
Spiritual abuse	Inappropriate use of religious belief or psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline	

Appendix 2

What to do if you are concerned that abuse or neglect may be happening

You may see or hear something of concern or someone may tell you something of concern (a disclosure). If a child, young person or adult tells you that they have experienced abuse

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

Where the situation is urgent:

If you have an emergency, call the **Police on 999**.

If it isn't an emergency but you need help fast, **call the Police on 101**.

If you aren't sure what to do, contact the [Diocesan Safeguarding Team](#) (0117 9060100). If you need to obtain advice out of hours and it is not a matter that you need to discuss with the police the [Churches Child Protection Advice Service](#) provide a **Helpline 0303 003 11 11** (please ensure that you tell them that you are calling from the Diocese of Bristol).

Your Local Authority name: Children's Safeguarding Team

Telephone number - Monday to Friday **0117 903 6444**.

Telephone number - Out of hours/Weekends 01454 615 165.

Your Local Authority name: Adult Safeguarding Team

Telephone Number - Monday to Friday 0117 922 2700, 8.30am to 5pm

Telephone number - answerphone service only

Once you have sought advice from police or the Local Authority and the situation is made safe, inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible of the concern and actions taken; provide a written record of this. If the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the PSO will

- Contact Children's Social Services or Diocesan Safeguarding team for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the PSO will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by the diocesan safeguarding team.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicions or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, PSO will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, PSO will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support.
- Contact Diocesan Safeguarding team and consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the PSO , in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).