

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STUDHAM

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parochial Church Council:

- Recognise their responsibility for all church activities with children and vulnerable people and complete the required safeguarding training.
- Create a safe and caring place for all. Everyone has different levels of vulnerability; each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives. Everyone is offered respect and given inclusion and empowerment within the church.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the Rector and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse. The Rector maintains a list of leaders and helpers of all children's activities.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse. See Annex B for guidance.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Rector, Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately. See Annex B.
- Offer support, informed help and safety to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

**Reviewed January 2026
Next Review January 2027**

Each person who works within this church community must agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

The PCC appoint Meg Bender as the Parish Safeguarding Officer

Signed:

Date:

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STUDHAM

Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. The PCC are committed to attending the appropriate training course(s) and to promoting and supporting environments which:

- ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse;
- protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse from actual or potential harm;
- recognise equality amongst people and within relationships;
- enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to appropriately and consistently.

We recognise that:

- all forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship;
- all survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- domestic abuse can occur in all communities;
- domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency;
- domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour;
- working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by:

In all our activities –

- valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

In our publicity –

- raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public and women-only areas of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

When concerns are raised –

- ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help;
- working with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

In our care –

- ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;

- identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

More detail about our procedures when responding to disclosures of domestic abuse is to be found in our Safeguarding Policy Annex B and in our paper 'Information about how a victim/survivor can report abuse'.

If you have any concerns or need to talk to anyone, please contact Revd. Canon Nicola Lenthall on 01582 872223 or revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com or Meg Bender, Parish Safeguarding Officer on 01582 872967 or meg.bender4@btinternet.com

Other Sources of Help:

National Domestic Abuse Helpline	0800 2000 247
Samaritans	116 123
Restored Relationships	0203 9003 930
Mankind (supporting men)	01823 334244

Signed:

Date: