

Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Kensworth

PCC Policy for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

The Parochial Church Council of St Mary the Virgin, Kensworth fully supports the Church of England Safeguarding Policy 'Promoting a Safer Church'.

We believe that every child and young person is a valued member of our church community and that they should be taught the Word of God and nurtured in a safe, secure and caring community.

Aims

- To provide a safe and welcoming environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults who take part in the life of the church, and for the protection of the adults who work with them
- To ensure that high standards will be maintained in all contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- To ensure that proper care takes place in the selection and appointment of those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, whether paid or voluntary, and to support such workers at all times.
- To ensure that all applicants understand their role and that the necessary introduction and training procedures have taken place
- To minimise opportunities for abuse to take place
- To minimise all dangerous situations and ensure that all Risk Assessments are reviewed regularly and displayed where necessary
- To ensure that all those who have regular supervision of children under the age of 18 obtain a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) 'Enhanced Certificate', and that it is up-dated when necessary
- To ensure that PCC members and those working with children have completed the relevant safeguarding courses
- To listen (without leading) to any concern
- To respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- To care pastorally for victims or survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- To care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and safety of all parties.
- To co-operate fully with the statutory agencies
- To review the Safeguarding Policy annually, and request that PCC members and those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults should read the Policy, and also the St. Albans 'Best Practice Guidelines'.
- To adhere to appropriate use of social media guidelines (see appendix A)

Responsibilities

The PCC has elected a Safeguarding Officer who is conversant with current policy and practice. The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for the maintenance of a register of leaders, helpers and young people and vulnerable adults and children, and ensures that any leaders are DBS checked. The Rector, the Safeguarding Officer and the PCC are responsible for dealing with any allegations or concerns that may arise.

Parish Safeguarding Officer – Mrs Katherine Huggins
June 2025

Rector – Rev. Nicola Lenthall

A copy of the Procedures Document can be found in the Vestry and in the Safeguarding file in Church.

Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Young people and vulnerable adults

All safeguarding serious incidents must be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer/Adviser DSA with all the information required. The DSA, in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary, will decide whether the safeguarding incident is sufficiently serious to be reported to the Charity Commission.

- Every child, young person and vulnerable adult should be treated with respect, in an environment in which they feel comfortable
- Every effort is to be made to ensure that each child group is led by a minimum of one DBS checked leader and one helper. If only one adult is present, they must be within hearing or sight of other adults.
- Encourage every child or young person to respect other children or young people and vulnerable adults and to discourage unkind behaviour
- Groups of children should never be left unattended
- In planning activities, be aware of risks in the environment
- Parents of young children and disabled children should be advised if toilet visits are needed
- Consent from parents should be sought before photographs of children are taken. **All photographs should be erased from the camera/mobile phone immediately after use.**
- Provide on-going training opportunities for the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Rector where necessary
- The Group leader should maintain a register of attendance. Contact details of parents/carers should also be kept
- Maintain an up-to-date register of all authorized leaders and occasional helpers who have access to children and young people and vulnerable adults
- Listen appropriately to any concerns, but do not question. Do not promise to maintain confidentiality
- The Rector or Parish Safeguarding Officer to be contacted immediately in the case of any possible abusive situation or expression of concern
- Any concerns should be recorded accurately and this information passed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
- Severe concerns should be passed to the Police
- Ensure everyone concerned with children and young people and vulnerable adults has a copy of this policy
- Display a copy of the current policy in a prominent place in the church building, so that all are aware of its existence

Emergency Telephone Numbers:

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: Jeremy Hirst

Telephone: 01727 818107

Mobile: 07867 350886

Email: safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org

Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: Dave Adams

Telephone: 01727 818104

Mobile: 07469 351357

Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: Warren Lucas – Part time – Monday to Wednesday

Telephone: 01727 818106

Mobile: 07311 310545

Police: telephone 999

Central Bedfordshire: Children - 0300 300 8585 (Office hours), 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)
Or 0300 300 8142

Adults - 0300 300 8122 (Office hours), 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)

Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Kensworth
PCC Policy for Safeguarding Children and Adults when they are Vulnerable

Appendix A – use of social media guidelines

Alongside the Parish Link website (under the editorship of Les Randall) we also use social media: Facebook and YouTube. The benefice Facebook account is curated by Glenda Cox, the benefice administrator, in conjunction with the rector. Requests to post church-related information on Facebook can be made to Nicola Lenthall or Glenda Cox. The YouTube channel is used for worship services, which are currently only posted by Nicola Lenthall.

The PCC adhere to the national Church of England social media guidelines. In the use of social media accounts, we agree to the following and ask all those who engage with our accounts also to agree to them.

Be safe: the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults and vulnerable adults must be maintained. Any concerns must be raised with the Rector, the Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Be respectful: content that is sexually explicit, inflammatory, hateful, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful must not be posted or shared.

Be kind: everyone must be treated with kindness, assuming the best in people. If there is a criticism or critique to be made, consideration must be given as to whether it should be said and to the tone.

Be honest: people must not be misled about who is posting material and who is engaging with an account.

Take responsibility: everyone is fully accountable for the things they do, say and write. Shared text and images can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place. If there is uncertainty, it should not be posted.

Be a good ambassador: personal and professional life can easily become blurred online, so caution must be exercised before making a post.

Disagree well: some conversations can include robust disagreement. In expressing a disagreement the church's values must be applied.

Credit others: the work of others must be acknowledged and copyright respected. Sensitive or confidential information must only be released with care.

Follow the rules: the terms and conditions of the various social media platforms must be adhered to. Any comment that breaches their policies should be reported to the respective company.

Revised June 2025

To be reviewed September 2026

Rev. Canon Nicola Lenthall

Katherine Huggins - PSO

Parish of St. Mary the Virgin, Kensworth

Parish Statement on Domestic Abuse

Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. We are committed 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 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.

If you have any concerns or need to talk to any one please contact

Parish Safeguarding Officer – Mrs Katherine Huggins. Telephone: 01582 607841

Rector – Rev. Nicola Lenthall. Telephone: 01582 872223; Email revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: Jeremy Hirst Telephone: 01727 818107; Mobile: 07867 350886;

Email: safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org

Severe concerns should be passed to the Police: Telephone 999

National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247

June 2025