

ST MARY MAGDALENE, WHIPSNAD - SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Mary Magdalene, Whippsnade is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and to supporting those who have been victims of abuse, as well as those who may present a risk to others. The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). The PCC have adopted all the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policies and Practice Guidance, as well as "Promoting a Safer Church". The PCC currently has adopted the following safeguarding policies:

Promoting a Safer Church
Responding to Domestic Abuse;
Safeguarding Adults;
Safeguarding Children;
Safer Recruitment (including ex-offenders);
Safe Use of Images;
Safe Use of Social Media;
Responding to a Safeguarding Allegation or Concern.

These policies are reviewed annually by the PCC and were last reviewed and approved at their meeting on 10th June 2026.

The documents are displayed in a folder in the Church on the table by the Font at the back of the Church and here on the Parish Link website - please scroll down.

Although safeguarding is the responsibility of all those who worship at Whippsnade we have a Parish Safeguarding Officer who you can contact about any safeguarding matter:

Mike Bailey on (01582) 872318 or email on mjbailey1@btinternet.com

You can also speak to the Rector, the Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall on (01582) 872223 or email on revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com

The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor is Jeremy Hirst who can be contacted on (01727) 818107 or 07867 350886 or at safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org

Information about Safeguarding in the Diocese of St. Albans can be found here: www.stalbansdiocese.org/safeguarding

.... and information on the Church of England's national safeguarding can be found here: www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNADDE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING POLICY – PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

This policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on 5th June 2025.

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 affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent 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.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the Parish.
- Display in Church 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.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops' Guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.

- Offer support 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.

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

This Church appoints Mike Bailey as the Parish Safeguarding Officer

Incumbent: Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall

Churchwardens: Martin Rees and Mike Bailey

This policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNADDE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. The Parochial Church Council 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 anyone please contact the Rector, the Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall, The Vicarage, Clayhall Road, Kensworth on 01582 872223 or revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com

This policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNADE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

Set out below is the Parochial Church Council's Policy on safeguarding adults at St Mary Magdalene, Whipsnade, and how we will deal with any issues that may arise.

- We recognise that everyone has different levels of vulnerability, that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives, and that all adults should be offered respect and given inclusion and empowerment within the Church.
- Our safeguarding policy is to support adults when they are vulnerable, ensuring their well being in the life of our church. We aim to ensure that all members of the church are aware of and follow this policy.
- It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of vulnerable people and to report to the safeguarding co-ordinator any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice on the part of those in positions of trust.
- We will offer respectful pastoral care to all adults to whom we minister, including any who have suffered abuse.
- We will care for and supervise any member of our church community known to have offended in a manner that could affect adults who are vulnerable.
- We will deal without delay with every complaint made that a vulnerable adult for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.
- We will co-operate fully with the statutory agencies in every situation and will not conduct our own investigations.
- The PCC acknowledge their responsibility for all work with vulnerable people done in the name of the Church and requires all those engaged in such work to be properly appointed and supported in accordance with the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy Statement – "Promoting a Safer Church (2017)" which forms part of the House of Bishops' "Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance (2016)" and Diocesan procedures and guidelines.
- We will have regard to the House of Bishops' Policy on "Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (2018)", bearing in mind the particular needs of our own Parish, and will follow the Diocesan procedures and guidelines.
- **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.**

We have appointed Mike Bailey (Tel: 01582 872318) as our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is: The Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall (01582 872223) revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com.

This Policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council Meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNAD PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) are committed to implementing a safeguarding children policy and procedures and have complied with the House of Bishops' "Protecting All God's Children", 4th Edition 2010. In addition the PCC will follow the Diocesan procedures and guidelines, bearing in mind the particular needs of our own Parish.

All serious safeguarding 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.

We will review and endorse all safeguarding policies annually, so that all members are aware of their responsibilities.

The highest standards will be maintained in all of the Church's contacts with children and young people. Adult volunteers will be given appropriate support and will be required to have been trained in safeguarding.

We will respond without delay to every complaint made that a child or young person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.

This PCC will co-operate fully with the statutory agencies in every situation and will not conduct its own investigations.

We will seek to obtain informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse.

We will care for and supervise any member of our Church community who is known to have offended against a child.

The PCC acknowledge their responsibility for all work with vulnerable people done in the name of the Church and requires all those engaged in such work to be properly appointed and supported in accordance with the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy Statement – "Promoting a Safer Church (2017)" which forms part of the House of Bishops' "Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance (2016)" and Diocesan procedures and guidelines.

We have appointed Mike Bailey (Tel: 01582 872318) as our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is: The Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall (01582 872223) revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com.

This Policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council Meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNADDE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

SAFER RECRUITMENT POLICY

The Parochial Church Council acknowledge and are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults.

We will carefully select, train and support all those with any responsibility for Church in activities which involve substantial contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, in line with safer recruitment principles and in accordance with the House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy Statement – "Promoting a Safer Church (2017)" which forms part of the House of Bishops' "Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance (2016)". This includes the requirement for the Policy to include the recruitment of ex-offenders in line with Diocesan procedures and guidelines (see Annex).

We have appointed Mike Bailey (Tel: 01582 872318) as our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

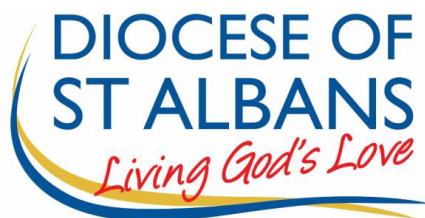
The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is: The Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall (01582 872223)
revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com.

This Policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council Meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....



Diocese of St Albans

Recruitment Policy (Ex-offenders)

- The Diocese of St Albans uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess an applicant's suitability for positions of trust. The Diocese of St Albans complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat fairly all applicants for such positions. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

We are interested in creating an 'inclusive' society and are committed to equal opportunity. Therefore, where people have committed an offence, the nature and circumstances of that offence will be taken into consideration. In line with the DBS Code of Practice, diocesan policy states that the following should be considered:

- whether the conviction or other matter revealed is relevant to the position in question
- the seriousness of any offence or other matter revealed
- the length of time since the offence or other matter occurred
- whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offending behaviour or the other relevant matters
- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation(s) offered by the convicted person.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us.

- The Diocese of St Albans is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- We actively promote equality of opportunity for all and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualification, experience and potential.
- An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after it has been determined that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For such positions, all job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, all applicants called for interview must complete a Confidential Declaration Form. This allows applicants to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the process. The Declaration will be retained by the employer or the parish.
- We ensure that all those in the Diocese of St Albans who are involved in the recruitment process receive appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, eg the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or a voluntary post.
- The Diocese of St Albans holds the DBS Code of Practice and this is available at Abbey Gate House.
- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment or a voluntary post.

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNADDE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

SAFE USE OF IMAGES POLICY – Data Protection

The Data Protection Act places certain duties on the Parochial Church Council to ensure that we have relevant consent to take and publish images and that we keep all data secure.

We will always ensure that we have checked whether there are reasons that a particular person cannot be photographed or identified, especially if it is a child.

We will obtain the permission of all the people who will appear in a photograph, video or webcam image before we record the footage. That means children as well as adults.

Images taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as the fete, may be regarded as a public area so we do not need to get the permission of everyone in a crowd shot.

It is a requirement of the Data Protection Act that we safeguard images (both digital and hard copies) by storing them securely and only allow use by those authorised to do so. When we are finished with images, we will destroy or delete them.

Copies of images on file will not be released without up-to-date consent forms. **We will take care with archived images.** We recognise that an image taken at a specific time and in specific circumstances cannot necessarily be used again at a later date or in a different context. Doing this can result in legal action.

When publishing images of children and young people, we will follow these guidelines:

- if we publish their picture, do not publish a name;
- if we publish their name, do not publish a picture;
- we will not publish full names, addresses or e-mail addresses;
- we will not publish individual close-up portraits;
- when publishing children's work we will simply label it as by 'John';
- adult leaders and parents will be given the opportunity to request that their contact information is not included in any published material.

If parents are permitted to take images during or after an event or service, we will make it clear from the start that they must be for private use only and ask for them not to put the images on the internet (particularly if a parent posts a picture on the web that shows children other than just their own child). If the picture is being used for public use then consent must be obtained.

We may want to provide written guidance to parents beforehand and/or make an announcement at the start of the event/service.

Consent

When taking images, we will ensure we have written permission to **take** and **publish** the images before we start. This permission should cover:

- How the image will be used.
(i.e. for a one-off article or as a general resource that could appear in a number of contexts.)
- How it will NOT be used.
(i.e. alongside articles or text that are of potentially sensitive or offensive subjects.)
- Where it will be used / who will it be available to.
(i.e. in internal/public-facing printed newsletters, on the web, in a DVD, in local and/or national media, in exhibitions etc.)
- How long it will be used for.
(i.e. once only, for 2 years, 3 years, indefinitely etc.)

For children under 18 years old, a parent or guardian should complete the form.

Consent forms should also be obtained for adults, particularly if they are considered 'vulnerable', for example those with learning disabilities. The parent/guardian or social worker may give written consent in these circumstances.

If required we will provide help to understand and complete a consent form, translated into a different language or have it supplied in a different format.

Completed consent paperwork should be kept on file for the duration of the time the image is being used. Once this time is up, the image should be destroyed.

Do not use an image unless you know that you have permission to do so. If you are unsure, use an alternative.

Copyright

Copyright law applies to almost everything, and can be complex and ambiguous. A few basic points are listed below:

- copyright automatically belongs to the person who created the work. In the UK it does not need to be registered. Take care with any images you release to the media, it is your responsibility to check with the owner of the copyright that it is OK to use them;
- if you are using someone else's image you must get their written permission, and always credit the artist;
- images are protected for the lifetime of the creator and for 70 years after his/her death;
- downloading images from the internet and using them on your church website without the copyright owner's consent may breach copyright laws, and could be considered a criminal offence, leading to heavy fines. Be aware that picture agencies and photographers are increasingly using software to track their images;
- if you put something on the web, you must obtain electronic global broadcasting rights from the owner of the copyright.

Context

We will be mindful of the context in which we use an image, especially if it is of children.

- if you're using it for publicity specifically related to an event;
- for information that covers sensitive areas we will always use a library picture;
- we will not use a photo in a context that is different to that stated on the consent form;
- we must ensure that images cannot be construed as being provocative;
- when taking/using images, we will be representative of diversity by reflecting gender, race and disability.

New Media

New media describes anything that relies on digital technology or computerised methods of communication, for example the internet, email, electronic kiosks, multimedia CD-ROMs, mobile phones, podcasts, webcams etc.

New media is becoming more widely used; along with this increased use comes an increased responsibility to consider how we use images safely within the new technology.

The information shared by new media is more accessible than in non-digital formats; it is easy for people to amend, manipulate or copy images, which makes them more open to abuse. As such we must be more vigilant than ever about obtaining the relevant consent to publish images, how we publish them and monitoring their use.

If we plan to use an image in any form of new media, we will obtain electronic global broadcasting rights from the owner of the copyright and ensure that the consent form states that the image will be used in digital formats, including the web.

The web-publisher will not use an image that has been uploaded onto the system by someone else.

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

When using images in new media, we will comply with the DDA. The DDA applies to everyone who provides a service to the public. Service providers must ensure that they do not discriminate against disabled persons when using new media images.

Releasing images to the media

The legislation governing whether or not the media can publish an image is complicated and ambiguous. If we are in any doubt about having an image published, we will not release it to the media.

If we do release an image to the media, we will check that all the relevant written consents have been obtained for the people in it and the owner of the copyright agrees to the image being published.

The laws surrounding this issue are becoming stricter, especially for pictures of children. We will be extremely cautious not to release any pictures of children who are in care, under wardship or involved in family law cases.

We have appointed Mike Bailey (Tel: 01582 872318) as our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is: The Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall (01582 872223)
revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com.

This Policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council Meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNADDE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

SAFE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) have agreed to use the Benefice Facebook Group 'Kensworth, Studham and Whipnade Churches' to disseminate information about Services and activities at St Mary Magdalene, Whipnade.

The Facebook Group Administrators are:

The Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall (Rector)
Glenda Cox (Rector's Secretary)

The PCC's policy in respect of the use of social media is set out in Section 4 of 'Safer Environment and Activities (2019)', a copy of which is attached.

We have appointed Mike Bailey (Tel: 01582 872318) as our Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is: The Reverend Canon Nicola Lenthall (01582 872223)
revnicolalenthall@btinternet.com.

This Policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council Meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Churchwarden.....

Churchwarden.....

Safer Environment and Activities - Section 4

4. Social Media and Mobile Communications.

4.1. Basic Principles. Social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, are online platforms that allow users to create, rather than just consume, online content. Typically they allow users to upload photographs, daily updates, comments, and so on. Social media usage is widespread, particularly amongst younger adults and children: for many young people the distinction between the 'online' and 'offline' worlds is an artificial one. As some have pointed out, if the church does not engage with young people on social media, then the church will not engage with a major aspect of their lives.

4.2. Other Resources. The world of social media changes rapidly; by the time guidance is in-print it can be out-of-date! This section provides some general pointers, but it is highly recommended that readers familiarise themselves with the following online resources which provide more detailed advice which is regularly updated:

- [Thinkuknow](#)
- [Parentzone](#)
- [Parents Protect – Internet Safety](#)
- [ChildNet International](#)

4.3. Don't be too restrictive! The evidence suggests that taking a highly restrictive approach to social media usage with young people is unhelpful, as they will usually find a way to use it anyway and may end up taking more risks because their usage is already 'illicit'. The evidence also indicates that the majority of young people are capable of identifying risks in the online world and avoiding them. It is important to avoid treating the world of social media as 'scary' and of seeing dangers everywhere; for many young people, their social media use is a positive and enjoyable aspect of their social lives.

4.4. Best Practice. However, sensible precautions should be taken in the use of social media within a Church context. In many ways, these precautions are simply online versions of safe practice in the offline world:

- Avoid 'lone working' in the online world: Practically, this means avoiding one-to-one online chat (e.g. direct messaging) between adults and young people.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in the online world: Just as in the offline world, it is important to keep a distinction between our private lives and our work within church, and to pay particular attention to the dynamics of power and influence as discussed in [Section 1](#).

- Do not use personal social media accounts to contact children. The simplest way to observe the above two precautions is to avoid having leaders and young people as 'friends' on social media (e.g. Facebook). It is far preferable to have an official account for the group in question (such as 'St Andrew's Anywhere Youth Group'), and to ask young people to 'like' that page. Any news about group events or anything else can be posted on that page. More than one leader should have access to this page, providing for accountability and transparency.
Conversations between leaders and young people should happen in the public section of these pages (such as the 'wall' or in comments under posts) where everyone can see them, rather than via direct messages.
- Behave in the online world as you would offline: Simply put, if you would not say it offline, do not say it online! This includes posting links to offensive or otherwise inappropriate content, making comments about someone's appearance that could be interpreted as either sexual or offensive, or 'liking' inappropriate content on social media.
- Treat online 'consent' the same as offline 'consent': You will need the consent of the individual and/or their parents to use and store photographs, to retain any information relating to them online, and so on. (See [Section 5](#) for further guidance regarding the use of images). It is a good idea to make their parents aware of the social media that your church uses and ensure that you have their consent to their child's usage (depending on the age of the child – older children can consent in their own right).

4.5. Mobile Devices. If a church employee is required to use a mobile telephone in the course of their work, then as far as is practicable they should be supplied with a phone dedicated for work purposes. This may also be the case for certain volunteers, such as youth group leaders. This allows for the phone to be switched off outside 'working hours', and for usage to be accountable. This means that the church officer's personal number can remain private. Texts or conversations that raise concerns should be saved and passed on to the local nominated safeguarding officer. If a church employee is provided with a 'work mobile', they should be required to sign to say that they will use it only in accordance with the guidance in this document.

ST MARY MAGDALENE WHIPSNADE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN OR ALLEGATION

Introduction

There are many situations whereby a member of the church may have concerns, or be made aware of concerns, regarding a child, young person and adult. For example:

- a child, young person or adult discloses abuse;
- someone discloses concern for a child, young person or adult;
- someone notices signs of potential abuse of a child, young person or adult;
- a child, young person or adult makes a disclosure about their own behaviour towards another child, young person or adult;
- someone witnesses concerning behaviour during a church activity or during a home visit.

The concern or allegation might relate to someone at church or to someone elsewhere (e.g. at home, work or school). It might be a current situation, or something that happened in the past. This procedure must be followed by all PCC members, and it is strongly recommended for all other church members.

This procedure is distributed to all PCC members and when a new member joins the PCC, they should receive this from the PCC Secretary alongside other documentation (eg HMRC declaration), and as part of their safeguarding training.

If a concern arises during a church activity it should be raised with the Parish Safeguarding Officer, or if not available, the Rector.

Listen carefully...

Whenever anyone reports that they are suffering or have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect, or have caused or are causing harm to others, the initial response should be limited to listening carefully. If someone makes a disclosure this might be the only time they will tell someone about what is happening.

Please...

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Explain that information will need to be shared with the appropriate people.
- Try not to question. If necessary, only use simple open questions. These begin with: who, what, when, where, and usually cannot be answered with a yes, or no
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to report what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- At the end, check that you have understood everything correctly.
- Check out what the person hopes to result from the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

However...

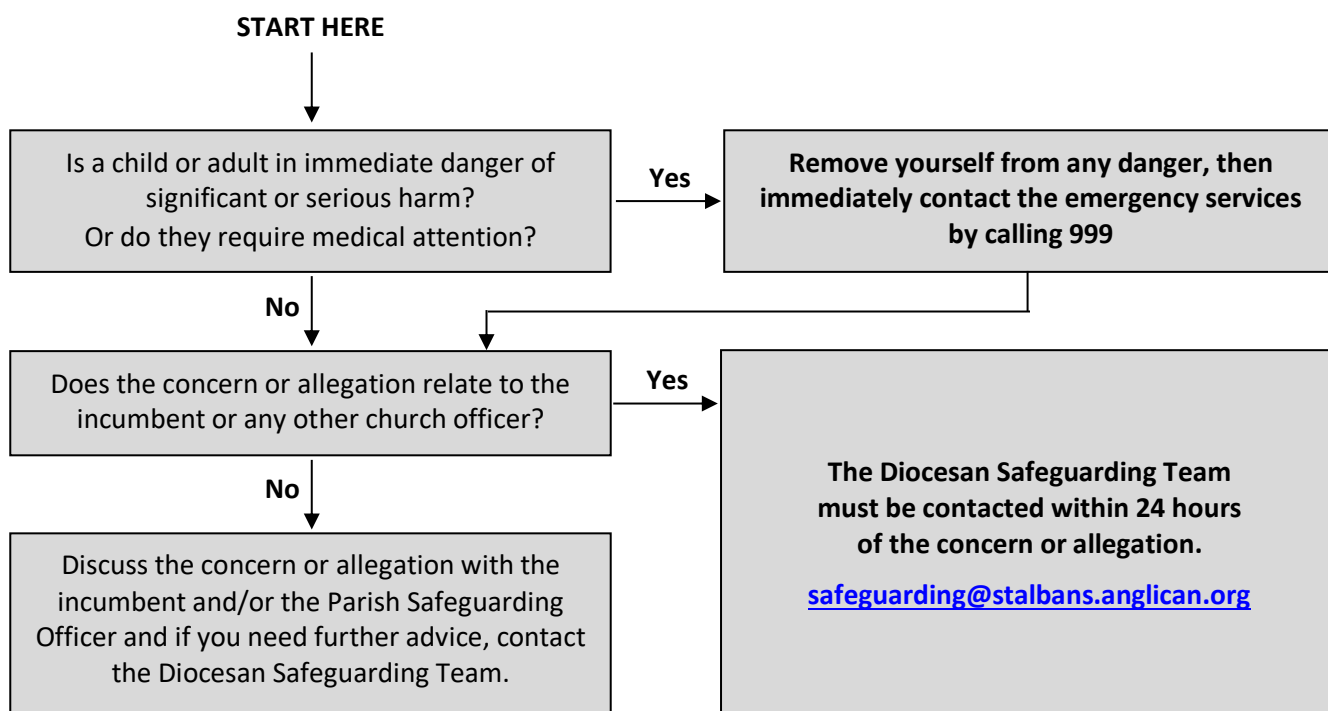
- Do NOT make promises that cannot be kept (eg that you will not share the information).
- Do NOT make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Do NOT investigate.
- Do NOT contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do NOT carry out a physical or medical examination.
- Do NOT share with anyone other than those persons mentioned on the previous page.

Make a record...

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place and how the person appeared to you. If possible, try to record the actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

Report promptly...

Never do nothing. Always follow the procedure below.



This procedure was agreed at the Parochial Church Council meeting held on 10th June 2026 and will be reviewed each year to monitor its implementation.

Signed: Rector.....

Parish Safeguarding Officer.....