

Reviewed: January 2019
Next review: January 2020

PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STUDHAM
**SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND
VULNERABLE ADULTS**

General Statement of Policy

1. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) adopts the Church of England's policy on safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults – see Annex A.

2. The Rector maintains a register of leaders and helpers of children's groups/activities and the PCC have appointed the Churchwarden, as Safeguarding Co-ordinator. Contact details are:

Meg Bender - telephone: 01582 872967 and e-mail:
meg.bender4@btinternet.com

3. The PCC acknowledge their responsibility for all work with vulnerable people done in the name of the Church and require all those engaged in such work to be properly appointed and supported. A note on responsibilities and guidance is at Annex B.

4. Everyone has different levels of vulnerability; each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives, and everyone should be offered respect and given inclusion and empowerment within the Church.

5. The PCC recognise that all forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and can occur in all communities including the homes of church members. It may be a single incident but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency. The PCC strive to ensure those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help. See Annex B for a note about responsibilities and guidance.

6. It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the emotional, financial, physical, sexual and spiritual abuse and neglect of vulnerable people and to report to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or the Rector any such abuse that we discover or suspect.

7. The policy will be reviewed annually by the Parochial Church Council.

Annex B

PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STUDHAM SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDANCE

1. The following procedures will be followed at all times:

a) the Rector and Safeguarding Co-ordinator have responsibility for dealing with any allegations;

b) the PCC adhere to the diocesan guidelines on safer recruitment and domestic abuse;

c) the Rector has responsibility for the recruitment of volunteers and retains confidential records of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;

d) everyone who works as leader or helper with children, young people and vulnerable adults, will obtain an enhanced disclosure from the DBS;

e) all leaders/organisers of groups/activities are responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedures;

e) the PCC will advise any outside groups using the church premises of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Guidance on Dealing with Incidents or Allegations of Abuse

2. Leaders and helpers may receive an allegation of abuse or may become aware of a possible abusive situation:

- a) DO believe the person making the allegation. An allegation may not be substantiated but the overriding priority must be to safeguard the individual making the allegation;
- b) DO be supportive, listen carefully and do not show disbelief or disapproval;
- c) DO NOT promise to keep an allegation confidential – suspected abuse must be reported;
- d) DO NOT conduct an investigation – this is the job of professionals;
- e) DO make a factual written record and sign and date it;
- f) DO immediately inform the Rector or Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

3. The Rector must immediately contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer/Adviser (DSO), Jeremy Hirst: telephone 01727 818107 or 07867 350886; e-mail safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org or Martyn Hedley, Assistant DSO: telephone 01727 818106 and 07391 010033. The DSO, in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary, will decide whether a safeguarding incident is sufficiently serious to be reported to the Charity Commission.

Minimising Risk

- a) a minimum of two leaders/helpers, preferably one of each sex, must be available during meetings of groups/activities;
- b) groups must never be left unattended;
- c) groups shall maintain a register of attendance and where appropriate, the contact details of parents/guardians;
- d) written consent must be obtained from parents/guardians for activities outside normal group meetings.

PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, STUDHAM

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 anyone, please contact Rev Nicola Lenthall