

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, WOBURN SANDS



SAFEGUARDING - CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY DOCUMENT

Review 10

We have appointed as our Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators:

Mrs Valerie Symon Tel: 01908 583779 / 07425 132156
Email: valeriesymon779@btinternet.com

Ms Sue Brown Tel: 07984 064496
Email: sue78@sky.com

Lead Recruiter (LR) (responsible for DBS matters): Dr Andrew Powell
Tel: 01908 587194

Signed: Incumbent

Churchwarden

Date: 20/1/2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Parish of St Michael's, Woburn Sands in the Church of England Diocese of St Albans

This Policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council Meeting held on

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 who may pose a present risk to others.

St Michael's will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have two named Parish Safeguarding Officers (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 St Michael's.
- Display in church premises and on St Michael's 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 St Michael's.

2. CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

The minimum staffing levels for groups should be as follows:

Each group should have at least two workers, even for smaller groups. Staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and especially higher risk activities.

- 0 – 2 years: 1 adult to 3 children
- 2 – 3 years: 1 adult to 4 children
- 4 – 8 years: 1 adult to 6 children
- 9 – 12 years: 1 adult to 8 children
- 13 – 18 years: 1 adult to 10 children

For all groups and activities:

- We will undertake a health and safety risk assessment.
- A registration form will be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities which will include up-to-date information on parents' contact numbers, medical information (e.g. allergies) and any special needs.
- An attendance register will be kept and be available at all group meetings.
- A First Aid kit will be available on any premises used by children.
- An accident and incident logbook will be available, and all accidents recorded. The logbook will be stored in a secure place. Any significant incidents must be recorded (e.g. a fight between children).
- There should be access to a telephone, if possible.
- In premises where children's groups meet, the Childline (0800 1111) and Family Lives (0808 800 222) telephone numbers will be displayed.
- Parents must sign a consent form before children are transported in a private car, and before any photography or images are taken.

In addition, when taking children offsite:

- The church leadership will be informed and agree to the activity. Details of the activity and any itinerary will be given in advance to parent/s and consent forms received in advance of the activity taking place.
- Details of the activity and a list of contacts will be left with someone in the church.
- Details of the activity and arrangements will be given to the incumbent.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the activity is covered by PCC insurance.
- A leader must be designated to take responsibility for First Aid.

3. VISITING ADULTS IN THEIR HOMES

- If possible, we will undertake a risk assessment before an initial visit, especially if we do not know the person. If there are any concerns or risks known before a visit is made, consider whether the visit is

necessary, or whether you should be accompanied by another church officer. In addition, visiting in pairs may be advisable, especially if the adult is perceived to be vulnerable.

- Do not call unannounced; call by appointment and, if appropriate, telephone just before visiting.
- Be clear about what support you can offer and the purpose and limitations of any pastoral care/support that is available.
- Do not make referrals to any agency that could provide help without the adult's permission, and ideally encourage them to set up the contact, unless there are safeguarding concerns.
- Never offer 'over-the-counter' remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so.
- Do not accept any gifts from adults other than token items, to avoid misunderstandings or subsequent accusations from the person or their family. If someone wants to make a donation to the church, put it in an envelope, mark it on the outside as a donation and obtain a receipt from the Treasurer.
- Make a note of the date when you visit people, report back about the visit to the agreed named person and say what is concerning or going well. Report safeguarding concerns to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and/or incumbent.

4. WHAT YOU SHOULD DO.....if you suspect a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or if a person tells you something which suggests they have been abused:

RESPOND

Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader/ Parish Safeguarding Officer/ DSA and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g., that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.

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 DSA or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place and 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

- If there is immediate danger to a child or adult contact the police.
- Otherwise report to your activity leader/Parish Safeguarding Officer/incumbent immediately.
- Within 24 hours the PSO/incumbent reports the concerns to the DSA.
- The DSA will advise regarding reporting to statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt seek advice from Children's/Adult's Social Care or the police.

Contact Numbers:

Parish Safeguarding Officer: 01908 583779 (Valerie Symon) or 07984 064496 (Sue Brown)
Vicar: 07887 296588

Children's Services:

Central Bedfordshire: 0300 300 8585 or 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)
Bucks First Response Team: 01296 383962 or 0800 999 7677 (out of hours)
Milton Keynes: 01908 253169 / 253170

Police: Non-emergency 101 Emergency 999

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: Jeremy Hirst 01727 818107 / 07867 350886

safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org

5. VOLUNTEER SELECTION AND TRAINING

Recruitment procedure for leaders and volunteers

- It is important that the whole selection process and DBS disclosure is completed BEFORE any leaders or volunteers take up their duties.
- DBS clearance is required for any regulated activity. These activities include: regular instructional roles with children, day to day supervision of such activities, any duties which may include intimate personal care, feeding adults, conveying adults to medical appointments, handling money belonging to adults. Those who should obtain a DBS certificate are: Parish Safeguarding Officers, Churchwardens, Reader, Lay Leaders of Worship, Leader of Toddler Group, Sunday School Leader, All Sunday School, Crèche and Toddler helpers, Genesis helpers and PCC members.
- DBS clearance is not needed for the occasional instruction of children when under the supervision of a person engaged in a regulated activity.

- All volunteers shall be agreed to by two members of the PCC and/or the child safeguarding team, they shall keep a record to that effect. They shall advise the Lead Recruiter as to the duties of the volunteer to determine whether DBS referral is necessary.
- The Lead Recruiter shall receive signed disclosure forms. If the volunteer already has a clearance, then that must be shown to the LR.
- If it is deemed necessary, the LR will provide the necessary form for the volunteer's completion. The LR must check originals of all appropriate documents and then submit the form to the clearance processing agency.
- The Church will assume that any check that is more than 4 years old is deemed to have lapsed.
- The volunteer must show the returned DBS Certificate to the LR who will note any caveats and refer them to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for a decision.
- The LR will keep a list comprising solely of Names, DBS Certificate Number and Issue Date.
- The LR will advise the Safeguarding Team when all is in order.
- Once satisfactory DBS clearance is obtained the person can start their duties. As an integral part of their induction, they will be given a copy of the Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy and the code of conduct and asked to sign for them.
- A member of the PCC and/or Safeguarding team will meet with the person to explain their duties and any key points from the code of conduct specific to their role.

6. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states that the Church 'will train and equip church officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care for and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse.'

The Basic Awareness (BA) and Foundation (F) courses can be completed by any member of the congregation, to support awareness raising and a culture of support and vigilance in the Church. However, it is recommended that those in the following roles are encouraged to complete the following:

Senior Leadership (SL), Domestic Abuse (DA), Safer Recruitment & People Management (SR)

- Parish Safeguarding Officers – BA F SL DA SR
- Churchwardens – BA F [DA](#)
- Reader – BA F SL DA SR
- Lay Leaders of Worship – BA F SL DA SR
- Leader of Toddler Group – BA F SL
- Sunday School Leaders – BA F SL
- Leader of Choir – BA F
- All Sunday School/ crèche/Toddler helpers – BA F
- Genesis Helpers – BA F
- PCC members – BA F DA

Safeguarding Training courses BA and F are done online and can be accessed from the link <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/> You just need to register with them and then choose the relevant course. SL courses are taken in the Deanery and can be booked via the following link <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/deanerysafeguarding/>

APPENDIX 1

Code of Safer Working Practice with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

This code of behaviour should provide the base line for anyone working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. As with all safeguarding guidance it is for the protection of both leaders and helpers as well as children, young people and vulnerable adults. Actions can often be misread by observers.

Clergy, paid employees and volunteers should:

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with the respect and dignity befitting their age.
- Watch your own language, tone of voice and body language.
- Learn to control and discipline children, young people and vulnerable adults without physical punishment. This is illegal for children's workers.
- Ensure that another adult is informed if a worker needs to take a child to the toilet.
- Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- If known in advance, seek a parent's permission if a child, young person or vulnerable adult is to be seen on his or her own; another adult must be nearby and the child, young person or vulnerable adult must know this.
- Ensure that each group includes a female helper.
- Ensure that children and young people know that they can speak to an independent person (the Safeguarding Representative) in the parish, or contact Childline if they need to talk to someone. Display the Childline telephone number (0800 1111) in a prominent place where children can see it.

Clergy, paid employees and volunteers should not:

- Invade a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting.
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- Touch a child, young person or vulnerable adult inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Show favouritism to any one child, young person, vulnerable adult or group.
- Allow a child, young person or vulnerable adult to involve the worker in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.
- Give lifts to children, young people or vulnerable adults on their own. If this is unavoidable ask the child, young person or vulnerable adult to sit in the back of the vehicle.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Invite a young person or vulnerable adult to the worker's home alone.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g., initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.

- Allow unknown adults access to children, young people or vulnerable adults. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.
- Allow strangers to give children, young people and vulnerable adults lifts.

Using Video-conferencing with Youth Groups

- Consent to participate in the video chat means that young people will be sharing their personal data online. If the young person is under 13, consent should be obtained from their parents. If they are over 13, they can be asked for consent in their own right but it is advisable to let parents know that their children are engaging in video calling within church.
- You should be aware of the personal data that is gathered by the platform you use. When seeking consent, you should be clear with parents and/or young people that they are consenting not only to being part of a video call, but to this data being gathered. It is recommended that you don't record these calls. You should read the privacy policy/notice of the platform yourself and make parents/carers or young people aware of them – in particular, ensure that you review what cookies are active and change these settings to necessary cookies only.
- Many video conferencing platforms require the email address of participants. Best practice is to use parents' email addresses to invite a young person to a video call during church youth work.
- Zoom can be downloaded from the company's website, <https://zoom.us/download>. Other versions of Zoom may not be safe.
- At least two adult leaders should be involved in any video call, just as with all other work with children and young people in church. Additionally, leaders should use a church-only email address or profile when engaging in video calls, avoiding their personal contact details.
- Each Zoom Meeting has a unique ID number and password. Give these to meeting participants directly (e.g. via email or telephone), don't advertise them somewhere where anyone can see them.
- Use the Waiting Room option so that anyone who joins the meeting will be shown a message stating "Please wait, the meeting host will let you in soon". The meeting host will then be alerted when anyone joins the meeting and can see those waiting by clicking on the 'Manage Participants' button on the meeting toolbar.
- If everyone has joined your meeting and you are not inviting anyone else, you should lock the meeting so that nobody else can join.
- The Host should disable participant screen sharing. If the meeting requires others to share documents, send these to the host for display.
- Only those who can turn their camera on can be involved in video sessions with young people so that all can see who is present. If this potentially excludes a vulnerable young person who would benefit from involvement in the group, then a clear method of verifying the identity of the young person is essential.
- Reserve video calling for group chats rather than making one-to-one video calls.

Useful Resources for Young People:

- **Thinkuknow** has advice for children, parents and workers about keeping safe in the online world;

- **Parents Protect** provides resources for families who want to go online safely
- **Childnet International** has a toolkit for parents and carers

APPENDIX 2

CHILD ABUSE

A. Background

Child abuse is a difficult issue and is not easily recognisable and individuals often fear reading too much into a situation. Many children experience minor accidents causing injuries, but there may be occasions where you are concerned over the nature and frequency of injury.

This page contains information on some of the signs that may give cause for concern. It is based on the principle that:

“It is not your responsibility as members of St Michael’s Church to decide whether or not child abuse is occurring, but it is your responsibility to act on those concerns and do something about it.”

B. What Is Child Abuse?

The abuse of children and young people can take many forms. They have the same right to protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities (physical, sensory and/or learning difficulties) are especially vulnerable and need special care and protection.

C. Types of Abuse

- **Physical abuse** including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.
- **Emotional abuse** including conveying to a child that they are inadequate, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, verbal abuse, isolation, seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying).
- **Sexual abuse** including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.
- **Neglect** including failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, to provide adequate supervision and/or access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- **Domestic abuse** Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.
- **Sexual exploitation** Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed and exploited online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation.
- **Bullying and cyberbullying** Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there is no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

- **Online abuse** With the ever-growing use of the internet, mobile telephones and online gaming (e.g. Xbox/ PlayStation), there has been a corresponding rise in the use of the internet and other electronic communication to target, groom and abuse children. Adults may target chat rooms, social networking sites, messaging services, mobile phones, online gaming sites and the internet generally. Children are particularly vulnerable to abuse by adults who pretend to be children of similar ages when online and who try to obtain images or engineer meetings.
- **Electronic images** The downloading, keeping or distributing of indecent images of children are all classified as sexual offences. Such offences are sometimes referred to as non-contact sexual offences. However, it must be remembered that children will have been abused in the making of the images. The texting of sexual messages and photographs (sometimes referred to as 'sexting') can be particularly problematic and abusive amongst children and young people.

D. EFFECTS AND INDICATIONS OF ABUSE

Indications that a child may be being abused include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or emotions such as becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour, sexually explicit talk inappropriate to the child's age
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts
- The child may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed and have low self-esteem and lack of confidence, often leading to self-harm

E. ADULT ABUSE

All adults, including vulnerable adults, have a fundamental human right to choose how and with whom they live, even if this appears to involve a degree of risk. They should be supported to make those choices, to live as independently as possible and treated with respect and dignity.

Abuse will sometimes be deliberate, but it may also be an unintended consequence of ignorance or lack of awareness. Alternatively, it may arise from frustration or lack of support.

The list of abusers can include:

- Relatives of the vulnerable person including husband, wife, partner, son or daughter. It will sometimes include a relative who is a main carer.
- Neighbours.
- Paid carers.
- Workers in places of worship.
- People who are themselves vulnerable and/or are users of a care service.
- Confidence tricksters who prey on people in their own homes or elsewhere.

Types of adult abuse

- **Physical abuse** including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse** including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressurised into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect or acts of omission** including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse** including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- **Domestic abuse** that is usually a systematic, repeated and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.
- **Organisational abuse** including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one-off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Modern slavery** including human trafficking; forced labour and domestic servitude; and traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Appendix 3

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 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 and to alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse. **Any concerns must be passed on to our Safe Guarding officers or the Vicar.**



Parish of St Michael, Woburn Sands
Activity risk assessment

Activity: _____ **Date of first risk assessment:** _____
Location: _____ **Time/frequency:** _____
Name of leader with responsibility: _____ **Date to be reviewed:** _____

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done

St Michael's Church, Woburn Sands
Medical and Information form for Under-19s

Parents, please complete and return this form in order to comply with our Safeguarding Policy.

Full name of childDate of Birth.....

Address

Post codeTelephone number(s)

Contact person in case of emergency: NameRelationship to child

Address

Telephone numberEmail Address.....

Should the above not be available, please contact:

NameRelationship to child

Address

Telephone number

Child's registered GPAddress.....

..... Telephone NumberNational Health No

I give my consent for any photos to be taken and used on the church website

www.stmichaelws.org.uk and in *Christian News* magazine Yes / No

Please state date of last anti-tetanus injection, if known

Does the child suffer from any allergies or intolerances e.g. food, insects Yes / No

Does the child have any medical condition of which we should be aware? Yes / No

Does the child have any disability? Yes / No

Is the child taking any regular medication? Yes / No

If the answer to any of the above is Yes, please give details below:

.....

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.....

.....Please turn over

Declaration

I give permission for to take part in any activities provided by St Michael's Church, Woburn Sands. I consider my child to be medically fit to participate in such activities. I undertake to inform the leader if any of the above information should change.

I give my permission for my child to be transported as necessary for any of the activities organised by St Michael's Church.

In an emergency, if no-one can be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive hospital or dental treatment, including anaesthetic. Yes / No

Signed:(Parent / Guardian) Date

Please return to the Youth Worker, Valerie Symon, 41 Cranfield Road, Woburn Sands, MK 17 8UR. Contact details: (01908) 583779 or email: valeriesymon@btinternet.com