

# ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, CHAGFORD

## Policy Statement for the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

*including: Promoting a Safer Church,  
Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy and  
Policy Statement on the Secure Storage,  
Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of  
Disclosures and Disclosure Information*

Last reviewed: June 2024

### CONTENTS

Page

1. Parish Safeguarding Policy Statement	2
2. Promoting a Safer Church	2
3. The Role of the Parish Safeguarding Representative	3

4. Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers 4 5. Arrangements for Reporting Concerns 4 6. Pastoral Care Provision 5 7. Policy and Practice 6 8. Parish Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy 7 9. Parish Policy on the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, 9 Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information

### *Appendices*

A) Important Diocesan and Parish Contacts 11 B) Diocesan Flow Chart for Reporting A Concern 12 C) A Model of Safer Working with Children 13 D) Good Practice Principles for Working with Adults 21 E) Dos and Don'ts - safeguarding summary 23 F) Annual Checklist for Group Leaders 24 G) Registration forms for Group Attendees 25

I

## Policy Statement for the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

*The following policy statement was agreed at the PCC meeting held on **June 2024***

*As members of the PCC we commit our church community to the support, nurture, protection and safeguarding of all, especially the young and vulnerable. We recognise that our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the whole church community. We are fully committed to acting within current legislation, guidance, national frameworks and the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and procedures. We will also act in an open, transparent and accountable way in working in partnership with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Children and Adult Social Care Services, the Police, Probation Services and other agencies to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. We welcome staff and volunteers who are recruited in accordance with House of Bishops' Interim Guidelines on Safer Recruitment 2013. This means we will ensure that those who are employed or who volunteer to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are suitable for the role, that they know what the role entails and that they are supported in carrying it out.*

- Persons within the PCC and this Parish who hold formal responsibilities and the prime duty of care for safeguarding are:

The Rt Revd Nick McKinnel - Priest in Charge  
Mrs Rosemary Bleakman Churchwarden

Mrs Ann Searson, Safeguarding Representative

**Please note** that the terms 'children', 'young people' and 'vulnerable adults' are used interchangeably throughout this document, reflecting the breadth of our safeguarding responsibilities.

## **Promoting a Safer Church**

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.

2

Our Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Representative (PSR) 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 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.
- 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.**

*'The church is a place where all sorts of people, including perpetrators of abuse, seek acceptance, redemption and forgiveness. Some perpetrators will be genuine in the repentance but others may not be. This is why forgiveness and vigilance need to go hand in hand. Compassion and naiveté are not the same thing.'* (Introduction by the Bishop of Exeter in the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Guidance for Parishes')

### **The Role of the Parish Safeguarding Representative ('PSR')**

- **The Safeguarding Representative is the first person to contact in the event that you have concerns for the safeguarding of a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Their details are found on page 11 of this document.**
- It is advisable for the Representative to be someone without other pastoral responsibility for children in the parish.
- The PCC may consider whether to appoint a person (other than the PSR) to be a children's advocate. This should be someone whom the children know they could talk to about any problems if they so wish.
- The PSR will convey pertinent information to PCC meetings and relevant staff and volunteers e.g. legislative updates, guidance from the Diocese, training schedules, etc.

- The PSR is the registered Identity Checker for the purpose of all Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

- The PSR will report at least **annually** on the implementation of the policy within the Parish.

### **Safe Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

- We will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
  - Any person who may pose a threat to children, young people or vulnerable adults will be effectively managed and monitored (see *Parish Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy* below).
- All those in a position of authority - ie. PCC, Ministry Team and Group Leaders - will be provided with a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy, procedures and good practice guidelines. All volunteers will be given a copy of a summary of the Safeguarding policy and good practice guidelines (called the '**Safeguarding Pack**'), as well as a link to the unabridged Policy, procedures and good practice guidelines on the church website.
- The Parish Safeguarding Representative will advise clergy, church officers, those with pastoral responsibility and volunteers of suitable training opportunities to ensure awareness of safeguarding and to enhance good practice.

### **Arrangements for Reporting Concerns**

A safeguarding concern is raised when:

- a child/vulnerable adult may disclose something that has upset or harmed them
- someone else might report something that a child/vulnerable adult has told them, or that they believe that a child/vulnerable adult has been or is being harmed
- a child/vulnerable adult might show signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no explanation
- a child/vulnerable adult's behaviour may suggest he or she is being abused
- the behaviour or attitude of someone towards a child/vulnerable adult may cause concern
- a child demonstrates worrying behaviour towards other children.

Any individual who suspects or is worried that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or may be at risk of abuse, should make that concern known in a clear and concise manner without delay.

- **In the first instance, where safeguarding concerns relate to a member of the laity, contact should be made within 24 hours with the Parish Safeguarding Representative.**
- A written record must be made, signed and dated detailing the concern, allegation or disclosure. This must be passed to the PSR and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (or Assistant) to assist in the decision-making process.

- The PSR will consult with the Incumbent and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor to determine what action may need to be taken.
- It should be noted that if making contact with any of the above becomes problematic and risks delay causing the potential for greater or further harm, the concern should be escalated to the next step (police and/or children's or adults' services) to achieve a timely response to safeguarding matters.
- **If the safeguarding concern relates to a member of the clergy (or other person in a position of trust and responsibility), contact should be made within 24 hours directly with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (or Assistant) and inform the Parish Safeguarding Representative.**
- A written record must be made in the same manner. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor will then consult with necessary parties to facilitate a prompt and effective response.
- The PCC is committed to co-operating fully with the Diocese and appropriate statutory agencies during any investigation into abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

### **Pastoral Care Provision**

We will strive to:

- be a safe, caring community which provides a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse and which takes children and adults who are vulnerable seriously
  - pay particular attention to children with special needs and those from ethnic minorities to ensure their full integration and protection within the church community
  - offer appropriate pastoral care and support to adults who have disclosed that they were abused as children
  - support, as appropriate, all parents and families in the congregation, being aware particularly of parents whose children have suffered abuse
  - provide guidance and support to children and vulnerable adults and their families and to any member of the church community against whom an allegation is made
  - seek protection for survivors of sexual abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse •
- challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust
- to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult
  - commit, in partnership with the Diocese and other agencies, to provide (where it is possible and safe to do so) care and supervision for any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or vulnerable adult, or to pose a risk to them.

## Policy and Practice

- The PCC and Parish Safeguarding Representative will review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, procedures and good practice at least **annually (each February/March)** and update information as appropriate.
- The Churchwardens will contact all group leaders with an annual checklist to update information on group helpers and ensure that new volunteers receive a copy of the Safeguarding Pack. (Ref: Appendix F below).
- The PSR will maintain the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard.
- Safeguarding will be on the agenda at every PCC meeting.
- All personnel will undertake Safeguarding training at the level appropriate to their role every 3 years (ensuring this is the responsibility of the Incumbent and the Churchwarden). The PSR will keep an up-to-date record of training.
- It is the responsibility of the Parish Priest and the Churchwardens to ensure that all personnel (in roles that require it) apply for a DBS every 5 years. The PSR will keep an up-to-date record of all relevant DBS applications.
- All new recruits will apply for a DBS before beginning in post and the PSR will check this.

**ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, CHAGFORD****Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy**

*The PCC agreed to adopt this Policy of the Diocese of Exeter at its meeting held in June 2024*

The Diocese of Exeter uses the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess the suitability of both volunteers and applicants for employment in positions of trust. We comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertake to treat all volunteers/applicants fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a volunteer/applicant from working within the diocese. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

Where appropriate and justified under the current regulations, volunteers and applicants who are offered employment will be asked to apply for a check of their criminal record from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed. Enhanced Disclosures will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings, as well as convictions, and also information relating to police enquiries and pending prosecutions. An Enhanced Plus check will also involve a check against the barred list(s) for regulated activity with children and/or adults. It is illegal for a person who is on the appropriate barred list to apply to undertake regulated activity, just as it is illegal for an organization knowingly to enable such a person to undertake regulated activity on its behalf.



## **Applicants for Employment**

- Our written Policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders will be made available to all Disclosure applicants on request at the outset of the recruitment process.
- For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms 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 will be encouraged to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process through a Confidential Declaration form. Such information should be sent, under separate and confidential cover, to a designated person within the Diocese of Exeter. We guarantee that this information will be seen only by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- For posts not involving regulated activity or otherwise including contact with children and young people, we will only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as part of the application process. For those posts that do involve regulated or other related activity, applicants will be asked whether they have any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings which would not be filtered in line with current guidance.
- The Parish Safeguarding Representative is designated to assess the implications of any convictions with respect to the post, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

## **7**

- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- Every subject of a DBS check will have access to the DBS Code of Practice, and copies will be available on request or can be viewed on the [Diocesan website](#).
- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

## **Volunteers**

- Those involved in the recruitment of volunteers will make it clear to a candidate whenever a Disclosure is required.
- Every subject of a DBS check will have access to the DBS Code of Practice, and copies will be available on request.
- Our written Policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders will be made available to all

Disclosure applicants on request at the outset of the recruitment process.

- All Disclosure applicants will be invited to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage through a Confidential Declaration form.
- We guarantee that Disclosure information will be seen only by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- The Parish Safeguarding Representative is designated to assess the implications of any convictions with respect to the post, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

We undertake to discuss with a volunteer any matters revealed in a Disclosure which relate directly to the position for which they have offered themselves. The welfare of children and vulnerable adults will always be our first concern.

8

**ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL, CHAGFORD**  
**Parish Policy on the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of**  
**Disclosures and Disclosure Information**

*The PCC agreed to adopt this Policy of the Diocese of Exeter at its meeting held in **June 2024***

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service ('DBS') to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the Parochial Church Council ('PCC') of St Michael the Archangel, Chagford complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information. This written policy is available on request to all those who wish to see it.

**Storage and Access**

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personal file and is always kept in a lockable, storage container in the home of the Parish Safeguarding Representative ('PSR') with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

## Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it within the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and we recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

If a party other than the Diocese requests the passing on of Disclosure information, advice will be sought from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the DBS before doing so.

## Usage

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

## Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six-months after the decision has been taken, we will consult the DBS about this. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail. The DBS will be informed immediately if a Disclosure document, or additional information provided by the police, is mislaid or lost.

## Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, or sooner, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is destroyed by shredding. Prior to shredding the Disclosure documents will always be kept in secure places as described above. We will not retain any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure.

Notwithstanding the above, a record will be kept of: the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested (including the designated workforce; child, adult or both), the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure, and the details of the recruitment decision taken

## Appendix A: Important Diocesan and Parish contacts

Role	Name	Phone
Parish priest (the Rector)	Revd Nick McKinnel	01647 432880
Parish Safeguarding representative (PSR)	Mrs Ann Searson	01647 432353
Diocesan Safeguarding	Costa Nassaris	T: 01392 294969

Advisor		M: 07809 339501
Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	James May	01392 345910
Diocesan DBS Coordinator	Rebecca Lane	01392 294975

## Local Agencies

Police (all non-emergency enquiries)	101
Police Central Referral Unit	0845 605116
MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)	0345 1551071
MASH Consultation Line	01392 388361/2
DSCB (Devon Safeguarding Children's Board) DSCB Office: Christina Ashforth	01392 386091 01392 386067
Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS Social Care for Exeter and East Devon)	01392 384444
Out of Hours for CYPS Emergency Social Work Team (5pm-9am, weekends and public holidays)	0845 600388
NHS 111 service - Non Urgent Health Care	111
Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital Exmouth Hospital	01392 411611 01395 282000
CHILDLINE	0800 1111
PARENTLINE PLUS	0808 800 222
NSPCC helpline (for those affected by abuse)	0800 3895344
SILVERLINE (caring for the elderly)	0800 4708090

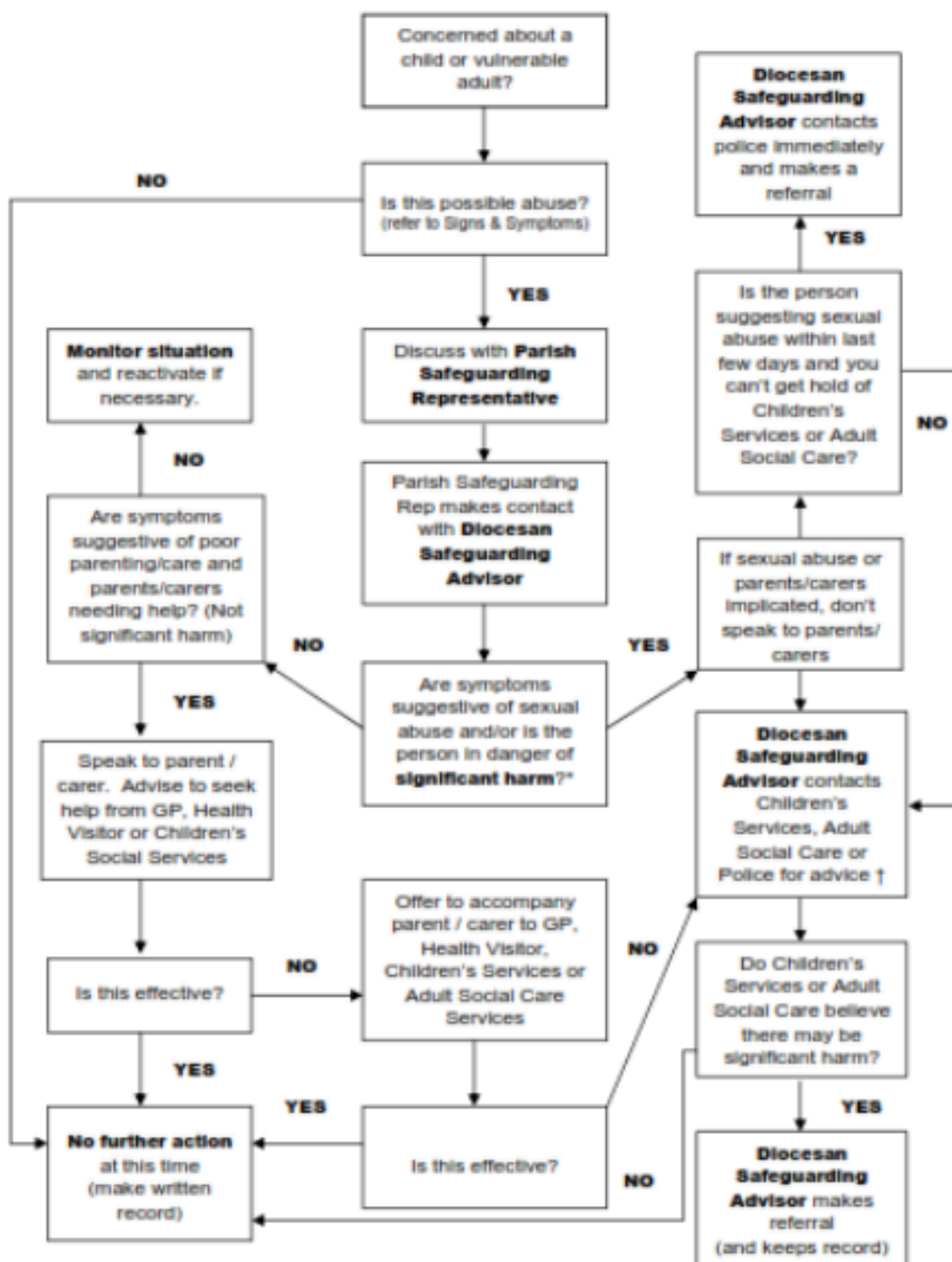
The following is a link to the Safeguarding Contacts page on the Diocesan website which contains a further contact information. It is regularly updated in the event of personnel changes:

<https://exeter.anglican.org/resources/safeguarding/safeguarding-team/>

||

**Appendix B:**

## FLOWCHART FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD OR ADULT AT RISK



\* Refer to safeguarding policy for guidance on 'significant harm'

† Where concerns are about an adult, due attention must be given to any wishes expressed about reporting following an assessment of their ability to make informed decisions and give informed consent.

### Appendix C: Working with Children and Young People

These guidelines have been taken from 'Protecting All God's children'<sup>1</sup>2010, updated 2014.

<b>Contents and terminology</b>	
1.	Guidelines for individual workers.
2.	Additional guidelines for group leaders
3.	Further considerations for residential events and activities
4.	Responding to child protection concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imminent risk</li> <li>• What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused.</li> </ul>
5.	Guidelines for good practice for church-sponsored activities for children and young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special needs</li> <li>• Consent</li> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• Recommended staffing levels</li> <li>• Safe environment</li> <li>• E-safety</li> <li>• Transporting children on behalf of the church.</li> </ul>
6.	Terminology used in this code: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word 'child' refers to any child or young person under the age of 18.</li> <li>• The term 'group leader' is used to refer to the person with overall responsibility for a group or activity, who is answerable to the Parochial Church Council.</li> </ul>

## **I. Guidelines for individual workers**

### **I.1. You should:**

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity;
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful; • Always aim to work within sight of another adult;
- **Only parents or carers should take a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet;** • Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern;
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around.

### **I.2. if any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand;**

- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around;
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed; • Record any concerning incidents and give the information to your group Leader. Sign and date the record;
- Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the safeguarding co-ordinator.

### **I.3. You should not:**

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. for comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child;
- Invade a child's privacy while washing or toileting;
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games;
- Use any form of physical punishment;
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun;
- Touch a child inappropriately or in a way that could be misconstrued;
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult;
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying;
- Show favouritism to any one child or group;
- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature;
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own;
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children;
- Drink alcohol when responsible for young people;
- Share sleeping accommodation with children;
- Invite a child to your home alone;
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organized group occasions;
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person;
- Allow strangers to give children lifts

#### 1.4. Touch

- Church-sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people, while avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.
- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the church safeguarding co-ordinator.
- All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

## 2. Additional guidelines for group leaders

### 2.1. In addition to the above the group leader should:

- Ensure any health and safety requirements are adhered to;
- Undertake risk assessments with appropriate action taken and record kept;
- Keep register and consent forms up to date;
- Have an awareness, at all times, of what is taking place and who is present;
- Create space for children to talk – either formally or informally;



- Liaise with safeguarding co-ordinator over good practice for safeguarding;
- Always inform the safeguarding co-ordinator of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The Safeguarding co-ordinator will liaise with the diocesan safeguarding adviser;
- Liaise with the PCC.

### 3. Further considerations for residential events and activities

As well as the general guidance, owing to the necessity for 24/7 care, the increased level of responsibility, and greater liability concerns, extra consideration should be given at residential camps and activities (when held).

#### 3.1. Alcohol

- There should be no alcohol consumed by you or any member of your team while the residential event is running. Even in minimal amounts alcohol can lower your response time, invalidate your liability insurance, and most importantly diminish the level of care you can provide to the children or young people you have responsibility for.

#### 3.2. Supervision

- With reference to the recommendations in section 6.1, consideration must also be given to unforeseen injury or sickness to leaders and supervision on secure sites and public places.

3.2..1. Injury and sickness in leaders is a real possibility, as such the *minimum* requirement should not be considered appropriate unless there is a clear and effective contingency should one of your leaders fall ill or become unable to support the residential activity.

3.2..2. Any leaders staying 'off-site' at a residential *cannot* be considered as part of your staffing ratios.

3.2..3. On a secure site (see 3.3) all children and young people must know where they can find a leader and how they contact their leaders at all times (all leaders that are a part of the ratio must be available).

3.2..4. In public places, no young person should ever be alone, and in circumstances where the leaders deem it as safe to be out-of-sight (see section 2.1 – risk assessments) young people should know where their leaders are at all times and never be more than 5 minutes away.

#### 3.3. Externally run events

There are many events and activities that are run outside of The Church of England that respect and build on the central tenets of our faith; these can be excellent opportunities for young people's faith to be fed and nourished. As we value the needs and wellbeing of young people, we only recommend youth events that have:

- a clear dry-site policy;
- a published safeguarding policy that is in keeping with the guidelines laid out in *All God's Children*;
- a clear structure for reporting safeguarding issues and concerns at the event (this should include oversight from at least one person outside of event management);
- camp sites and retreat centres should be secure sites with clear boundaries and procedures for checking the right of any person to be on site (whether this be through security and event tags at an open-air events or simply locked and secured doors at retreat centres); and

- an appropriate capacity for first aid.

All such events should have details of these requirements on their websites and or event publicity. If in doubt please contact the event directly or get in touch with your Diocesan youth officer.

15

#### 4. Responding to child protection concerns

4.1. **Do not try to deal with any child protection concern on your own. Always tell your group leader and safeguarding co-ordinator.** Agree between you who will take what action and when.

4.2. If you are not sure if child abuse is involved, or if you have concerns about a child and you need someone to talk things over with, then again you should contact your group leader or safeguarding co-ordinator. The Local Authority Children's Social Care Duty Officer can also be a source of advice.

4.3. **Always make notes about a possible child protection incident or disclosure as accurately as possible, as soon as possible.** These should cover what has happened, in what context, and anything that seemed particularly significant. Quote the child's words exactly where possible. Try if possible to note from the register the child's full name, age, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP. Remember to sign the record and add your name, role, date of incident and date of the recording.

4.4. The following are all important points which will help anyone faced with this difficult situation:

- Ensure all notes are kept in a safe place;
- If a child asks to talk in confidence do not promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer a child/young person who is at risk to the statutory agencies;
- Always explain that you may have to get other people to help;
- Stay calm;
- Listen to the child attentively;
- Maintain eye contact;
- Allow the child to talk, but do not press for information or ask leading questions; • Tell the child that they are not to blame for anything that has happened; • Reassure the child that they were right to tell;
- Let the child know that other people will have to be told and why;
- Try to explain what will happen next in a way the child can understand; • Reassure the child that he or she will continue to receive support during the difficult time to come.

#### 4.5. Imminent risk

- If you encounter a child in a situation where the child is in imminent danger, you should act immediately to secure the safety of the child. Seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care.
- If a child needs emergency medical attention, this should be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents, if available, should be kept fully informed.

#### 4.6. What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused

- Agree with your group leader/Parish Representative who will make the referral • If the child seems at imminent risk of harm make an immediate telephone referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care. Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child protection referral.

- Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family, for example the child's name, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP if known.

## 16

- Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form (available from the Parish Safeguarding Representative or sometimes available on the Local Authority web site) or letter. If there is no acknowledgement within 48 hours, chase it.
- Remember that the child & family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this would put the welfare of the child or another person at further risk. If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The Duty Social Worker will give you advice over this if necessary.
- Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team.
- Say if you do not want your details disclosed to the family.
- For out of hours referrals, call the Emergency Social Work Team or, where urgent, the police.

## 5. Guidelines for good practice for church sponsored activities for children and young people

### 5.1. Special needs

Welcome children and young people with special needs to the group. Try to make the premises, toilets and access suitable for people with disabilities. Ask the parent about how best to meet the child's special needs, and do not see this as the responsibility only of the child's parent. If premises are being designed or refurbished, take the opportunity to anticipate the possible special needs of future children and adults; advice is available. Disability legislation requires organizations to take reasonable steps to meet the needs of disabled people and this includes children.

### 5.2. Consent

Consent needs to be from a parent or person with parental responsibility. It can be from the child or young person if he or she has sufficient age and understanding in relation to the specific issue. So, for example, while parental consent is always required for a group residential holiday, a teenager would usually be able to consent to the photos from the holiday being displayed in church. You should record who has given consent for any specific activity.

### 5.3. Registration

A registration form should be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities. The form should be updated annually and include the following: • Name and address

- Date of birth
- Emergency contact details
- Medical information
- Any special needs including activities that the child is unable to take part in • Consent for emergency medical treatment

- Consent for photographs and videos if relevant
- Separate consent should be obtained for one-off events and activities, for example swimming, outings, weekends away, etc.
- All personal details and consent forms must be stored securely
- Any group that includes children who are under 8 years old and that meets regularly for more than two hours in any one day may need to register with OFSTED. Please contact OFSTED for advice.

## 6. Recommended staffing levels<sup>2</sup> and supervision

6.1. The recommended minimum staffing levels for children's groups are given below. More help may be required if children are being taken out, are undertaking physical activities or if circumstances require it.

0-2 yrs. 1 adult for every 3 children 1: 3

2-3 yrs. 1 adult for every 4 children 1: 4

4-8 yrs. 1 adult for every 6 children 1: 6

9-12 yrs. 1 adult for every 8 children 1: 8

13-18 yrs. 1 adult for every 10 children 1: 10

- Each group should have at least two adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.
- If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them then it is possible to have only one adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity.
- Young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding.
- Adults who assist on one or two occasions must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.
- Display both the NSPCC Childline telephone number 0800 111 in a prominent place where children and young people can see it and the Family Lives Parentline Plus 0808 800 222 number for parents.
- Undertake a risk assessment for each activity and in greater detail for an unusual activity or when away from the usual location.
- Insurance, First Aid kit and fire precautions should be checked and a Health and Safety Check should be completed regularly with reference to the following minimum standards:

### 6.2. Venue

- Meeting places should be warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Toilets and hand basins should be easily available with hygienic drying facilities •
- Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activity. •
- If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be

checked by the Environmental Health Officer and a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate acquired.

- Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.
- Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary. • Adults should be aware of the fire procedures. Fire extinguishers should be regularly checked and smoke detectors fitted throughout the premises. A fire drill should be carried out regularly.
- Unaccompanied children and young people should be encouraged not to walk to or from your premises along dark or badly lit paths.

<sup>2</sup> [Recommended adult to child ratios when supervising children](#). NSPCC factsheet

18

- A **First Aid kit** and accident book should be available on the premises. The contents of the First Aid kit should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals.
- All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge and the parish should encourage access to First Aid training. A list of first aiders in the parish should be compiled and kept available. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book

### 6.3. E Safety

- Ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- Do not make any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site.
- Maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.

## 7. Transporting children on behalf of the church

### 7.1. Drivers

- All those who drive children on church-organized activities should have held a full and clean driving licence for over two years.
- Drivers who are not children's workers should be recruited for the task through the normal recruitment process.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the church/parish safeguarding co-ordinator/church/circuit safeguarding representative.
- Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children for the church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state ie. not over-tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of medicine which may induce drowsiness.

### 7.2. Private car

- Children and young people should not be transported in a private car without the prior

consent of their parents or carers. This also applies to formally arranged lifts to and from a church activity.

- All cars that carry children should be comprehensively insured for both private and business use. The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities.
- All cars that carry children should be in a roadworthy condition.
- All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts, additional children should not be carried.
- At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number. • **There should be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver.** If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.

### *7.3. Minibus or coach*

- Workers and helpers should sit among the group and not together. • If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored.
- Before using a minibus, ensure you know the up-to-date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive.

**Appendix D: Good Practice Principles for Working with Adults**  
*(from the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy)*

All church activities which support an individual deemed vulnerable / at risk should follow these five principles:

- presume capacity – that people are capable of making decisions, unless there is evidence otherwise
- support individuals to make their own decisions – giving all practicable help before considering making any decisions on their behalf
- distinguish unwise decisions – recognize that the person retains the right to make seemingly eccentric or unwise decisions
- act in their best interests – in all decisions or activities on their behalf
- take the least restrictive option – in any action that might affect their basic rights and freedoms

### **Creating Safer Environments**

Christian communities should be places where all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse. The Church is particularly called by God to support those at the margins, those less powerful and those without a voice in our society. The Church can work towards creating a safe and non discriminatory environment by being aware of some of the particular situations that create vulnerability. Issues which need to be considered include both the physical environment and the attitudes of workers. A person who might be considered vulnerable has the right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity
- have their privacy respected
- be able to lead as independent a life as possible
- be able to choose how to lead their life
- have the protection of the law
- have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background
- be able to use their chosen language or method of communication
- be heard.

### **When might intervention be necessary?**

In determining how serious or extensive abuse must be to justify intervention a useful starting point can be found in ‘Who Decides?’<sup>3</sup> Building on the concept of ‘significant harm’ introduced in the Children Act, the Law Commission suggested that:

*“harm’ should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development’.”*

The seriousness or extent of abuse is often not clear when anxiety is first expressed. It is important, therefore, when considering the appropriateness of intervention, to approach reports of incidents or allegations with an open mind. In making any assessment of seriousness the following factors need to be considered:

- the vulnerability of the individual;
- the nature and extent of the abuse;

<sup>3</sup> ‘Who Decides: Making decisions on behalf of mentally incapacitated adults’, The Lord Chancellors Office, 1997

- the length of time it has been occurring;
- the impact on the individual; and



- the risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts involving this or other vulnerable adults.

What this means in practice is working through a process of assessment to evaluate:

- Is the person suffering harm or exploitation?
- Does the person suffering or causing harm/exploitation meet the NHS and Community Care Act (1990) eligibility criteria?
- Is the intervention in the best interests of the vulnerable adult fitting the criteria and/or in the public interest?
- Does the assessment account for the depth and conviction of the feelings of the person alleging the abuse?

## *Safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults*

### **DOS & DON'TS**

- ✓ Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity
- ✓ Always aim to work within sight of another adult - do your best not to be alone with a child or vulnerable adult
- ✓ Only parents or carers should take a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet
- ✓ Respond warmly to a child or vulnerable adult who needs comforting, but make sure that there are other adults around
- ✓ Always obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed
- ✓ Always complete a parental consent form for under-18s, containing details of any special dietary requirements and contact details for any church-related activity, including bell-ringing (forms are available from the Parishes Co-ordinator)
- ✓ Always keep a First Aid kit and accident book readily available on the premises ✓

Do make sure that all adults are aware of your fire procedure

- ✓ Always ensure that your venue is warm, clean, well lit and clear of clutter
- ✓ Always share concerns about a child or vulnerable adult or the behaviour of another worker with our Parish Safeguarding Representative

\* \* \*

- ❑ Do not initiate physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult. Any necessary contact (eg. for comfort) should be initiated by them
- ❑ Avoid misunderstanding and refrain from any physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult
- ❑ Do not use inappropriate humour or show favouritism
- ❑ Never make a relationship with a child or vulnerable adult on social media
- ❑ Never give lifts to anyone under the age of eighteen years old, or a vulnerable adult, on your own
- ❑ In the case of an emergency, you must be accompanied by another adult to provide a lift to a young person or vulnerable adult on their own

***If in any doubt, please contact our Parish Safeguarding Representative Mrs Ann Searson on [annsearson28@gmail.com](mailto:annsearson28@gmail.com) or 01647 432353***

## APPENDIX F: Annual Checklist for Group Leaders

In accordance with our undertaking in 'Policy and Practice' above, the Churchwardens (or other nominated persons appointed by them) will contact all group leaders with an annual checklist to update information on group helpers and ensure that all new volunteers receive a Safeguarding Pack.

The following checklist must be sent by email or hard copy to each leader of a group related to the activities of our parish church on an annual basis, **usually in February/March**. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Bell-ringers;
- St Michael's Church Choir & musicians (including organists);
- Community and Memory Cafe
- The Pantry
- Little Angels

### QUESTION 1

Do you maintain an up-to-date register of your group helpers?

### QUESTION 2

Do you have any new volunteers since the previous safeguarding review? If so, have you provided them with a copy of the Safeguarding Pack? *Copies are available from the Parishes Co-ordinator on whiddonparishes@hotmail.com*

### QUESTION 3

Have registration forms been completed and maintained for all attendees since the last safeguarding review?

THANK YOU

*Completed checklists should be signed and dated and sent to the  
Parish Safeguarding Representative  
(usually every February/March)*

## APPENDIX G: REGISTRATION FORMS FOR GROUP ATTENDEES

### *St Michael the Archangel Chagford*

This form should be completed by a parent or legal guardian. Any information you share will be held securely and confidentially. We will not share your data with anyone else.

<b>Registration form for a child taking part in:</b>	
<b>Full name of child</b>	
<b>Address of child</b> <i>including postcode</i>	
<b>Date of birth</b>	<b>Name of person completing this form and relationship to child</b>
<b>First emergency contact</b>	Name: Relationship to child: Telephone:
<b>Second emergency contact</b>	Name: Relationship to child: Telephone:
<b>Medical information</b>	<p><b>Does your child have any health issues that the group leader should be aware of?</b> If yes, please give details:</p> <p><b>Does your child have any allergies?</b> If yes, please give details:</p> <p><b>Does your child take any regular medication?</b> If yes, please give details:</p> <p><b>Does your child have any special dietary requirements?</b> If yes, please give details:</p>

<b>Consent</b>	I give consent for any treatment required in the event of an emergency  Signed Date
	I give consent for photographs to be taken of my child which may be used for publicity  Signed Date

25

## Chagford Community & Memory Café Registration Form

Welcome to our café. In order to provide a safe environment and to meet your needs, we need you to give us some information about yourself. Any information you share will be held securely and confidentially. We will not share your data with anyone else.

**Name**

**Date of Registration**

**Address**

**email address**

**Telephone**

**Please tell us of any specific health problems we need to be aware of.**

(e.g. mobility problems or sensory impairment)

**Do you have any dietary restrictions?**

(e.g. diabetes or allergy/intolerance to food such as nuts, dairy products or gluten)

**Emergency contact name and relationship to you**

**Emergency contact number**

**Do you consent to photographs being taken to use on our website or for publicity?**

Yes / No Please circle

26

