

St. Botolph's Church, Quarrington, Parish Safeguarding Policy Statement

1. Promoting a safer environment and culture

We will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our Church Officers will respect all children, young people and vulnerable adults and promote their well-being.

2. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church

We will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church, in accordance with the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance. We will train and equip Church Officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse.

3. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or noncurrent abuse to the notice of the Church will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child and adult safeguarding procedures and the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

4. Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons

We will endeavour to offer care and support to all those who have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred. Those who have suffered abuse within the Church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously.

5. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons

The Church in exercising its responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law of an accused person. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. The Church will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect others when any Church Officer is considered a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

6. Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

The Church, based on message of the gospel, opens its doors to all. We will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of the church community whom may present a known risk. The Church will ensure that any risk has been assessed and is being managed in a safeguarding agreement in accordance with House of Bishops' policy and practice guidance.

7. Parish Safeguarding Responsibilities Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Incumbent

The PCC is the main decision maker of a parish and is the responsible body in the parish for all safeguarding matters. Its members are clergy, churchwardens and others elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) of the parish. Its powers and duties are defined by legislation and can principally be found in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

It has the responsibility, along with the incumbent, to promote the mission of God in its parish. The incumbent's role is to provide leadership concerning safeguarding, and to encourage everyone to promote a safer church.

8. Safeguarding Responsibilities and the Duty of Care. The PCC and the Incumbent have a duty of care to ensure the protection of the vulnerable in their church community. In terms of safeguarding, this means it is the responsibility of the Incumbent and PCC to:

- **Promote a safer church** for all in the church community working to create an environment, which is welcoming and respectful and enables safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently;
- Ensure all safeguarding concerns or allegations against **any person** are **immediately reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser**;
- In consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, effectively manage and monitor known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults;

- In consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, ensure wherever possible arrangements are in place for the support of alleged victims and their families and for those subject to allegations and their families;
- Adopt, promote, publicise, communicate and display the House of Bishops' "Promoting a Safer Church" safeguarding policy statement, and all House of Bishops' and Diocesan safeguarding policies and practice guidance. The "Promoting a Safer Church Policy Statement" will be signed on behalf of the PCC. "Promoting a Safer Church" can be found in the Church of England's E-manual;
- Establish a Promoting a Safer Church Action Plan to raise awareness of, promote training and ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously by all those in the church community;
- Establish a procedure to deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse in accordance with the relevant policy and practice guidance and in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser;
- Appoint at least one appropriately experienced designated Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and PCC. The PSO should regularly report, **taking confidentiality into account, any relevant information** to the PCC on safeguarding in the parish whether or not a member of the PCC;
- The PSO will usually also be responsible for preparing an Annual Report;
- **The PSO is** responsible for ensuring the welfare of any children and/or young people in **church** activities arranged by the church;
- Ensure that all church officers who work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults are safely recruited following the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment practice guidance work to House of Bishops' safeguarding guidance and attend diocesan safeguarding training at least every three years;
- Ensure safeguarding is a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting and that an Annual Report is provided at the APCM. The annual report should contain a statement reporting on progress and a statement as to whether or not the PCC has complied with the duty to have "due regard" to the House of Bishops' guidance in relation to safeguarding (See Safeguarding and Clergy Disciplinary Measure 2016 Section 5);
- Provide appropriate insurance to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the PCC which involve children and vulnerable adults;
- Display information about how to contact the PSO, churchwarden and any other local leaders and where to get help outside the church with child and adult safeguarding issues e.g. local authority contact details, domestic abuse and key helplines e.g. ChildLine;
- Ensure full compliance with all data protection legislation especially in regard to storing information about any paid and unpaid workers and any safeguarding records;
- Ensure an "**activity risk assessment**" (**we need to do this asap for Sunday School**) is completed and reviewed regularly for each activity, which is associated with either children or vulnerable adults, and run in the name of the Church;
- During a clergy vacancy, working with the churchwardens, ensure that all information about safeguarding matters is securely stored before passing the information on to the new incumbent. The departing incumbent must give the safeguarding information to the parish safeguarding officer who **will** pass the information on to the new incumbent when he/she takes up their new role;
- Ensure a hire agreement is always used with any person/body wishing to hire church premises (i.e. a church building or a church hall);
- Ensure that if working within Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs), it is agreed which denomination or organisation's safeguarding policy will be **used**. This decision should be ratified both by the bishop and other appropriate church leaders in the partnership and shared with the DSA; in the event of a specific safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are notified. See LEP practice guidance 2015.
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