

Safeguarding in The Church of England – Update May 2017

Quality Assurance

- The Church of England – Birmingham was independently audited in April 2016. A copy of the audit report and our action plan is available on our website
- It is expected that monitoring of quality assurance at parish level will increase in the future
- The Church of England has long term plans to create an online Safeguarding Hub for policies, training, recruitment and monitoring tools

Safeguarding Clergy Discipline Measure 2016

- This legislation came fully into force on 1st March 2017
- It concerns the action the Church must take to risk assess, suspend and discipline church officers and what disqualifies an individual from holding office.
- It imposes a duty on clergy, Readers, licensed lay ministers, commissioned pastoral visitors, church wardens and PCCs to have due regard (i.e. it cannot be ignored without cogent reasons) to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating the safeguarding of children and adults.
- It requires PCCs to have a safeguarding statement at their APCM. Assuming that the PCC has duly complied, appropriate wording for the report would be:

The council has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding Policy

Promoting a Safer Church

- In March 2017 The Church of England issued six policy commitments that must be implemented by dioceses and parishes. Promoting a Safer Church can be found here. Good Safeguarding Practice on page 3 provides a 'checklist' of what you should be working towards in a parish and the final section on page 6 outlines what you need to do to put the policy into action.
- More guidance to support these policy commitments and how to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in the church is expected to be issued by the National Safeguarding Team at the end of 2017 or early 2018.

Responding Well to Domestic Abuse

- This practice guidance came into effect in March 2017 and must be followed at diocesan and parish level. The guidance is available here.
- The Church of England – Birmingham is developing a shorter version of the guidance and a pocket guide for volunteers and workers to help PCCs put it into practice. These are expected to be available by summer 2017. Training will be delivered from September 2018.

Safeguarding Training

- Following a revision by the National Safeguarding Team of the Learning & Development guidance safeguarding training will change from September 2017:

- C0, Safeguarding Awareness, and C1, Safeguarding Foundation for Lay People will become e-learning courses.
 - C2, Safeguarding Foundation and Leadership for Lay People will continue to be delivered face-to-face – leaders are expected to cascade learning to the volunteers and workers they have responsibility for.
 - PCC members are no longer required to attend safeguarding training but it is recommended that they complete the online course C0.
 - In order to ensure PCCs understand the safeguarding arrangements that they must put in place in the parish at least one member of PCC – the PCC Safeguarding Lead – must attend C2 training
- Details of our autumn 2017- summer 2018 courses will be available on our website from June 2017. The delivery of six specialist safeguarding modules will begin in September 2018.

Safeguarding Concerns & Allegations

- The Church of England – Birmingham Safeguarding Team is here to help you with *any* concerns or allegations you may have. However, you **MUST** tell us about the following situations:
 - The abuse or concern happens at an activity which the PCC is responsible for
 - A church officer has or is alleged to have committed abuse or you're worried that their behaviour may lead to abuse either in church or in another context
 - Someone convicted of a sexual offence or a serious violent offence is attending or wants to attend an activity which the PCC is responsible for
 - There is the potential for reputational damage for the church – wherever the abuse has or is alleged to have happened