

For consideration at St Michael's PCC.

As a Church we are expected to do the following in respect of Domestic Violence:

- PCC to agree a parish domestic abuse statement including who to contact if there are concerns (see Appendix 1);
- Appoint a named individual who is a point of contact for any advice and support. This may be the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO);
- Follow the process on how to respond to concerns about domestic abuse (see page 2 of the abuse statement). If parishes are in any doubt as to what action to take they should refer to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA).
- Support those in leadership positions, pastoral and safeguarding roles to engage in Diocesan domestic abuse training.
- Consider the best place to display the domestic abuse statement including information about helplines and local services.
- Discuss domestic abuse in appropriate contexts such as marriage preparation (see Birmingham Diocese website for good practice guidance).
- Challenge inappropriate comments and behaviour by church members.

It is also recommended that the following best practice is followed:

- Encourage leaders and those who preach to speak against domestic abuse in teaching, sermons, prayers and parish magazines – remember that many of the congregation may have a personal experience.
- Offer some awareness raising activities e.g. invite speakers from local domestic abuse agencies, organise an activity around 25 November (the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women).
- Consider including activities around healthy relationships within activities for children and young people.
- Develop links with any local domestic abuse organisations.
- Organise courses in parenting and confidence-building.

Recommendations:

The PCC is recommended to agree:

- To adopt Appendix 1 (pages 2 & 3 of this document) and display it on the Church noticeboard
- To agree the Frances Lumley as the point of contact on this issue
- Agree that appropriate training is provided
- Agree that the matter is referred to the Marriage Prep course leaders to consider how to include in those sessions.

PCC – 11th Feb 2019

Parish Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

Parish of St Michael's, Boldmere

agreed by the Parish Church Council on 11th February 2019

**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, pregnancy or marital status) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- domestic abuse can occur in all communities and to any person;
- domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency;
- domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour;
- working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by:

In all our activities – valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

In our publicity – raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public and gender specific 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 and 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 identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**If you have any concerns or need to talk to anyone
please contact:**

Frances Lumley _____

Other Useful Contacts:

Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser	07342 993 844
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 2000 247
Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid	0808 800 0028
West Mercia Women's Aid	0800 980 3331
Staffordshire Women's Aid	0870 2700 123
Black Country Women's Aid	0121 552 6448
Men's Advice Line	0808 801 0327
Galop (LGBT)	0800 999 5428
Action on Elder Abuse	0808 808 8141