



## Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Holy Trinity Church along with the whole Christian community, believes each person has a value and dignity which comes directly from God's creation of people in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things, this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

Holy Trinity Church is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and affirms that the needs of children or of people when they are vulnerable are paramount.

Holy Trinity Church recognises that none of us is invulnerable but that there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. It is recognised that this increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible, but that it does not diminish our humanity and seeks to affirm the gifts and graces of all God's people.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is intended to be a dynamic policy. It is intended to support the Church in being a safe supportive and caring community for children, young people, vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for communities and for those affected by abuse.

The Church recognises the serious issue of the abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development, including spiritual and religious development. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. It accepts its responsibility to support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities and those who care about them. It takes seriously the issues of promotion of welfare so that each of us can reach our full potential in God's grace.

Holy Trinity Church commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, whether in the church or in another context. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

Holy Trinity Church commits itself to ensuring the implementation of Diocesan Safeguarding Policy; government legislation and guidance and safe practice in the diocese and in the churches

Holy Trinity Church commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for lay and ordained people that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable.

Holy Trinity Church affirms and gives thanks for the work of those who are workers with children, young people and vulnerable adults and acknowledges the shared responsibility of all of us for safeguarding vulnerable adults who are on our premises.

## 1) Purpose

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to ensure procedures are in place and people are clear about roles and responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care and using our premises. It is to be read in conjunction with the national Church of England safeguarding advice outlined in 'Promoting a Safer Church' and the 'Parish Safeguarding handbook'.

## 2) Good Practice

We believe good practice means that:

1. All people are treated with respect and dignity.
2. Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept which must note the date, time and place of visit.
3. The church premises will be assessed for safety for children, young people and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the PCC. This will include fire safety procedures. The PCC will consider the extent to which the premises and equipment are suitable or should be made more suitable.
4. Any church-organised transport of children, young people or vulnerable adults will be checked to ensure the vehicle is suitable and insured and that the driver and escort are appropriate.
5. Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential. The PCC will actively consider the extent to which it is succeeding in this area.

Good practice safeguards those working with children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable.

## 3) Roles and Responsibilities

### a) Parish Safeguarding Group

The Parish Safeguarding Group (**PSG**) is the key link between the diocese, PCC and the parish concerning safeguarding matters. It is appointed by the PCC annually. The PSG holds an overview of all church activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults and seeks to ensure the implementation of safeguarding policy. Responsibility for safeguarding remains within the remit of the PCC but this group is delegated the following key tasks:

1. Have an overview of all church activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults and keep a record of these activities.
2. Be familiar with national and diocesan safeguarding guidance and ensure that leaders of activities are fully aware of, and are implementing, this guidance.
3. Liaise with the vicar over safeguarding issues.
4. Undertake an annual parish safeguarding self-assessment in the format offered by the diocese and produce an annual Safeguarding Plan.
5. Ensure good communication with the PCC so that safeguarding issues are discussed at least annually and updated policies and plans are adopted. The PSG supports and advises staff and PCC in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.

6. Ensure that the Church Safeguarding Policy and relevant contact details are displayed in all church premises.
7. Promote safeguarding best practice within the local church with the support of diocesan staff and ensure appropriate safeguarding training opportunities are well publicised. Assist with safeguarding training in the parish as appropriate.
8. Keep good records of any safeguarding concerns that may arise, and ensure that others do the same.
9. Promote inclusiveness in places of worship and within church activities.
10. Assist the Church Wardens where appropriate in matters pertaining to risk assessments, emergency plans and more general health and safety matters.
11. Ensure effective and appropriate data handling within church systems, and online.
12. Monitor the administration of the DBS system.
13. Assist and support the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and Assistant PSO in their work.

The PCC appoints the chair, the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) administrator and the members of the Parish Safeguarding Group (PSG). The membership of the group includes both churchwardens, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) administrator and the PSO.

The Parish Safeguarding Group will meet at least three times a year, and will need at least four members of the PSG to be present in order to be quorate..

## **b) Parish Safeguarding Officer**

The PSO works as part of the wider Parish Safeguarding Group, but holds a specific remit to:

1. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding issues, especially where disclosures are made or bad practice is observed.
2. Liaise, as necessary with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers (DSA) and report all concerns or allegations against church officers to the DSA
3. Attend diocesan safeguarding training offered for PSOs.

### **The current membership of the PSG is:**

Rev Tim Sanderson (Chair and DBS Administrator)	Mr John Clarke (churchwarden)
Mrs Liz Cook (PSO)	Mr David Scott (churchwarden)
Mr Douglas Lovelock	Mrs Margaret Nicholson
Mrs Emily Emmerson-Finch	Mrs Steph Sanderson

## **4) Appointment and training of workers**

Workers will be appointed after a satisfactory DBS disclosure. Each worker will be expected to undergo basic safeguarding training within the first year of appointment. Other training needs of each worker will be considered (e.g. food hygiene, first aid, lifting and handling, etc.).

## 5) Pastoral visitors

In terms of safeguarding, Authorised Pastoral Visitors will be supported in their role with the provision of basic safeguarding training upon appointment by the PCC. The vicar will meet with Pastoral Visitors regularly to ensure good communication and appropriate boundaries are observed.

## 6) Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

The national guidelines 'promoting a safer church' will be given to each person working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults signposting good practice and systems. Copies of the 'parish safeguarding handbook' will be available for those with responsibility for co-ordinating CYPECS, Messy Church, Trinity Tots, HT Walks, Vintage and Welcoming at Sunday Services. All volunteers involved in these groups will be given the 'safeguarding pocket guide' for reference.

## 7) Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The PSG must approve the use of social media and mobile phones associated with church. Where there are Facebook or similar online groups set up on the church's behalf, the PSG must ensure there is a named person to whom all workers are accountable. The named person should be aware of the account name and password and proactive in monitoring the communications.

**Tim Sanderson** is the named person for the facebook accounts 'Holy Trinity Church Jesmond', 'Messy Church, Holy Trinity Jesmond' and 'The Alternative Christmas Market' and Instagram account 'holy\_trinity\_jesmond'.

Church staff at Holy Trinity will not have members of the church who are under 18 on their personal social media profiles such as Facebook and Instagram. Volunteers of youth and children's groups will be asked to consider carefully the 'Use of Social Media' guidelines laid down in pages 48-50 of the Parish Safeguarding handbook.

Wherever appropriate, Church officers should be supplied with a phone dedicated for work purposes. This allows for the phone to be switched off outside working hours, and for usage to be accountable. This means that the work phone number is the only number that young people or adults are given, and the church officer's personal number can remain private. Texts and conversations that raise concerns should be saved and passed onto the named person or the PSO/incumbent (or if unavailable the DSA).

## 8) Domestic Abuse

We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by following the guidelines laid down in the Church of England national policy 'responding well to domestic abuse' summarised below:

- In all our activities; by valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- In our publicity; by raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- When concerns are raised; by ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.
- In our care; by ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to those who have suffered abuse.

## 9) Ecumenical events

Holy Trinity PCC hold responsibility for safeguarding where ecumenical events occur on church premises.

## 10) Events with church groups off the premises

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event must be given to the vicar.

## 11) Other groups on church premises

Where the building is hired for outside use, the person signing the letting agreement (which includes safeguarding guidelines) will be given a copy of this policy and the 'promoting a safer church' document. The Operations Manager exercises discretion in considering each letting application.

## 12) Complaints procedure

It is hoped that complaints can generally be dealt with internally by the organisation. However, a complaint may be made to a person appointed by the PCC, this person is the Parish Safeguarding Officer. If a complaint is made to another person, it should be passed to the PSO who will arrange to meet with the complainant and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the matter will be referred to the vicar who will give due consideration to invoking the complaints system of Newcastle Diocese.

## 13) Review

This policy will be reviewed annually in November by the PCC.

## 14) Key concepts and definitions

**Vulnerable Adults:** any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of herself or himself, or to protect herself or himself from significant harm or exploitation.

**Safeguarding and protecting children, young people or vulnerable adults** will include safeguarding from maltreatment; preventing impairment of their health and ensuring safe and effective care.

**Adult/child protection** is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children/specific adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, including neglect.

**Abuse and neglect** may occur in a family, in a community and in an institution. It may be perpetrated by a person or persons known to the child, young person or vulnerable adult or by strangers; by an adult or by a child. It may be an infliction of harm or a failure to prevent harm.

This policy was first agreed by the PCC on 28/09/15

This revised version was received and agreed by the PCC on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019