

# Policy and Procedures for the Safeguarding of Children and Young People



The Parish of St. Mary and St. John,  
Rothley

November 2023

(To be reviewed: November 2024)

## **The Parish of St. Mary and St. John, Rothley**

“The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults lies at the heart of all that we are and all that we seek to be in the church” Bishop Martyn 2018

As a church we follow the House of Bishops Safeguarding policy and guidance issued in 2017.

Key messages taken from this guidance are that:

- The welfare of the child, young person is at all times paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be consulted where a safeguarding concern of any kind arises in the parish.
- Safeguarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life in parish churches.

The PCC adopts the Safeguarding policy statement for children and young people ‘Promoting a Safer Church’ and commits to the implementation of this policy. This being the case, the PCC will:

- Appoint a Child Safeguarding Coordinator (Rothley also has an Adult Safeguarding Coordinator and policy) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures. The coordinator will ensure that any concerns about a child or the behaviour of an adult are appropriately reported both to the statutory agencies and to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. The coordinator, if not a member of the PCC, will have the right to attend its meetings and will report to it at least annually on the implementation of this policy.
- Ensure that a person is nominated to act as somebody to whom children may talk to about any problems (to be known as the Independent Person), if this cannot be done by the coordinator or through other arrangements.
- Display in church premises where children’s activities take place the contact details of the coordinator and independent person, along with the Childline and Parentline telephone numbers and web addresses. A copy of this statement of policy will be displayed in the church and OSR.
- Ensure that all those authorised to work with children or who are in a position of authority are appropriately recruited according to safer recruitment practice in line with Church of England national policy, and are trained, resourced, and supported. This will include ensuring they have access to all relevant policies and practice guidance produced by the Church of England or the Dioceses of Leicester.
- Ensure that only authorised people work with children and that all work with children is carried out within appropriate accountability structures.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Review the implementation of the child safeguarding policy, procedures, and practices at least annually.
- Work to create a culture of informed vigilance which takes children 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.
- Ensure that a health and safety policy and the appropriate procedures and risk assessments in respect of premises and activities are in place and that these are reviewed periodically.

- Act without delay on allegations or suspicions of abuse using the procedure laid down by the Diocese of Leicester.
- Respond without delay to any complaints received regarding children's work or the safeguarding of children.
- Ensure that all new PCC members have access to this policy and the Diocese of Leicester Safeguarding Handbook so that they are aware of their responsibilities.
- Cooperate fully with investigations by statutory agencies and not conduct its own investigations except with the prior approval of statutory agencies.
- Seek to offer informed pastoral care to any child, or young person who has suffered abuse.
- Care for and supervise any member of the church community known to have offended against a child while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.
- Ensure that those hiring PCC premises for activities involving children or young people agree to commit to good safeguarding practice.

## Procedures for Implementing the Child Safeguarding Policy of St. Mary & St. John, Rothley

A copy of these procedures will be made available to all clergy, staff (whether employed directly by the PCC or another body), volunteers and lay workers who have the responsibility for children or young people. They should sign a declaration afterwards saying that they have read and understood them.

### Contacts

Our child safeguarding coordinator is: Wendy Ferguson, 2 Barley Way, Rothley, Leicestershire LE7 7RL

Mobile: 07801866837

weferguson2014@gmail.com

Our independent person/children's advocate to whom children or adults can talk to about worries and concerns with regard to possible child abuse is Wendy Ferguson (see above).

Wendy is usually at a morning service or can be contacted as above.

Church email address for contact: [welcome@rothleychurch.org.uk](mailto:welcome@rothleychurch.org.uk)

### Our church groups

Name of Group	Name of Leader
Little Fishes Baby and Toddler Group Mondays from 8.45 to 11.00am in the Old School Rooms.	Susie Clark
Creche for children under 3 yrs. Available weekly during the Sunday morning services in the church tower area.	Parents/Carers supervise their own children.
Children's Teaching Groups 2-11 yrs. Twice a month during Sunday mid-morning services in the Old School Rooms.	Liz Sleath Johanna Beals
Grid 11-14 yr olds. Twice a month during Sunday mid-morning service twice a month at 9 Church Street.	Mark Baird Simon Beals Rashen Cummings
Breakthrough 15-18 yr olds Thursday 7.30-9.00pm twice a month. Various home locations.	Fred Sleath
Junior Choir Friday evenings. Included in adult choir 7.30-8.30pm. Also involved in Sunday services.	Simon Murphy
Orchestra/Band Play on Sundays for certain services. No formal rehearsal sessions. Sometimes includes children and young people.	David Hodgson
Bell Ringers	Charles Poole (Tower Captain)

Ring on Sunday mornings. Thursday evening practice. 7.30-9.30pm in the Church Tower.	
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### Minimum staffing levels

The recommended minimum staffing levels set out in 'Protecting all God's Children' will be maintained. These are:

Age	Number of Leaders
0-2 years	1 leader to every 3 children
2-3 years	1 leader to every 4 children
3-8 years	1 leader to every 8 children
8+	1 leader for the first 8 children followed by a ratio of 1-12.

Notwithstanding these minimum levels, each group is to have at least 2 adult workers present and a gender balance should be maintained wherever possible, particularly in a mixed gender group. More help may be required if children are being taken off-site, are undertaking physical activities or if necessitated by other circumstances. This will be assessed by the leaders of these activities.

Adults who assist very occasionally or as a one-off must be responsible to an appointed leader. The same applies to young people under the age of 18. Adults who assist more regularly will be appointed formally using the safer recruitment procedures.

Uniformed organisations who meet in the OSR follow their own policies and procedures. These organisations are: Rothley Brownies and Guides.

### Safer Recruitment

When appointing/recruiting leaders and helpers for work with children and young people, the PCC will follow the guidelines set out in the safer recruitment practice guidance (July 2016 or subsequent update).

Templates for role descriptions, application forms and reference requests can be found in the appendices of the safer recruitment practice guidance.

The safer recruitment practice guidance can be downloaded from:

<https://www.leicester.anglican.org/about/safeguarding/>

### Code of Behaviour

The PCC commits to the following Code of Behaviour which those who work with children and young people are expected to follow.

You should:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Provide a Christian example you wish others to follow.
- Provide an example of good conduct that you wish others to follow.
- Ensure there are at least two adults present during activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.

- Respect personal privacy.
- Ensure that another adult is informed if a worker needs to take a child to the toilet.
- Be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour in a responsible way.
- Report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.
- Recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- Operate within the organisation's principles and guidance.
- Only use social media and email in accordance with paragraph 14 below (or Rothley Church social media/communications policy).

You should not:

- Ever hit a child or young person.
- Play rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Touch inappropriately.
- Show favouritism to any one child, young person or group.
- Give lifts to children on their own or on your own. If it is unavoidable ask the child to sit in the back of the vehicle and inform another adult where possible.
- Invite a child or young person to the youth leader/worker's home alone unless responding to an emergency, in which case the relevant people should be contacted.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. A known person should always accompany visitors.

### **Allegations or Disclosure of Abuse**

If there is an allegation or disclosure of abuse by a child, young person or by an adult who is disclosing or alleging historic child abuse:

- Listen, and keep listening.
- Do not question or investigate – this is the job of the authorities. In particular, do not speak to the subject of the allegation.
- Do not promise confidentiality. Tell them that the information they disclose needs to be shared.
- Assure them they are not to blame.
- Tell them what you are going to do. Reassure them that the matter will be reported to the investigating authorities. If the person needs reassurance that the alleged perpetrator will be punished, do not make any promises. There can be no guarantee as to what happens as that will be dependent upon the outcome of the investigation.
- As soon as possible after the conversation, make careful notes of what was said, record dates, times, events and when you were told.
- If there is immediate danger to a child or young person, contact the Social Services or the Police.
- Report the incident to your priest or child safeguarding coordinator immediately.
- Do not contact the priest or coordinator if the allegation concerns them or anybody related to them. Contact the Diocesan safeguarding adviser. (DSA) if necessary.
- Do not discuss the incident with anybody else.
- The priest or child safeguarding coordinator must then report the allegation or disclosure to the DSA by the end of the next working day. The DSA will advise on what needs to be done in line with practice guidance.
- In the absence of the DSA, the appropriate Archdeacon should be contacted.

Do not contact anybody who is implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure.

Do not talk to the media under any circumstances. The Diocesan communications director will handle any media statements.

If a child or young person makes a disclosure by email or other electronic means the same procedure should be followed with the person receiving the disclosure making careful and confidential use of email or other electronic means to continue to listen and then passing on the disclosure via the appropriate channels.

The procedure is the same for abuse which happened in the past, possibly many years ago.

### **Concerns re Committing Abuse**

If you are concerned, or it comes to your notice that someone may be committing abuse:

- Make notes of your concerns and discuss them with your priest or child safeguarding coordinator.
- The priest or child safeguarding coordinator must then report the concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser by the end of the next working day.
- Do not contact the priest or coordinator if the allegation concerns them or anybody related to them. Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- Dates and times should be recorded of any observations which have been made and of the referral to the DSA.
- The DSA will act in line with practice guidance and will decide whether to:
  - Report the concerns to social services and/or the police, who will then investigate while the DSA liaises with the parish. Or
  - Continue to observe closely – the process will be repeated in the event of any more concerns.
- There should be close communication between the priest/coordinator, the DSA and the appropriate Archdeacon until the situation is resolved.
- In the absence of the DSA, the appropriate Archdeacon should be contacted.

### **Procedures for people with convictions for offences against children.**

Where someone attending the church has been convicted of offences against children (or they have received formal police caution) an agreement will need to be drawn up to minimise any risk to the safety of children within the church. An agreement may also be necessary where a person who has not been convicted is reasonably regarded as posing a risk (e.g. he/she is subject to investigation for alleged child abuse).

- The priest or, in the absence of the priest, the child safeguarding coordinator, must inform the DSA of the situation.
- The DSA will act in line with practice guidance and will decide whether an agreement needs to be in place. A risk assessment may be necessary.
- The DSA will be responsible for producing any risk assessment and/or agreement.
- If the person is a convicted offender, there will need to be liaison with the person's supervising officer (police or probation) who should be consulted about the agreement and, ideally, be a signatory to it.
- The offender or person under investigation will be asked to sign the agreement, which will then be reviewed annually.

Any blemished DBS check must be referred to the DSA who will follow up in line with practice guidance. The extent of the DSA's involvement will vary according to the nature of the information on the DBS check.

### **Allegations or concerns about clergy**

- If an allegation involves a priest, it should be reported to the DSA.
- If an allegation involves an archdeacon or dean, it should be reported to the Bishop of Leicester.
- If an allegation involves a bishop, it should be reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

### **Registration**

A registration form will be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities. This does not include such as church services, which would take place regardless of whether or not children are present. Neither does it include activities which are family focused but which children attend with their parents (e.g. Messy Church). The form will 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 or young person is unable to take part in.
- Consent for emergency medical treatment.
- Consent for photographs and videos if relevant.

All personal details and registration forms will be stored securely, not used for any other purpose and shredded or disposed of securely when out of date or no longer in use.

### **Activities away from church premises**

Adequate arrangements will be made for children's and young people's activities which take place away from church premises as follows:

- No child can be taken off-site for activities without the consent of their parent/guardian/carer.
- Details of the event must be given in advance and consent forms received in advance of the event taking place.
- Details of the arrangements will be given to the child safeguarding coordinator.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the event is covered by PCC\* insurance.
- A detailed programme and list of contacts should be left with someone in the parish.
- A leader will be designated to take responsibility for first aid.

\*See section D of the child protection handbook for a model form.

### **Support, supervision and training**

All those involved in working with children and young people will ensure that there is always more than one responsible adult available so that there is mutual supervision. Should one of the adults become ill or get called away, the other adult will call for additional help. In emergency situations where an individual cannot avoid working with children on his/her own



because an unforeseen situation has arisen, he/she will inform another leader (or the child safeguarding coordinator or priest), if at all possible, at the time it arises, and a note will be kept by the child safeguarding coordinator.

Those who work with children and young people will be given the opportunity to review their work with the leader of their group/child safeguarding coordinator/priest/member of the PCC. This will enable them to comment on the work they are doing, give suggestions, review and further develop their work, if they so wish, and to discuss training opportunities.

From time to time the church may hold training events on Safeguarding. There will also be other training events organised by the Diocese of Leicester which church staff, youth workers, volunteers and safeguarding coordinators may attend. All PCC members should complete basic and foundation level training as required by the Charity Commission of Trustees.

Every person who works with children will be given a copy of the pocket guide to safeguarding children and this policy. They will also be given information about how to access the Diocese of Leicester Child Protection Handbook and other national Church of England documents including Protecting All God's Children. Paper copies of these documents will be provided to those workers who request them.

### **Health and Safety and First Aid**

Health and safety will be managed as part of all activities. All buildings where activities with children and young people take place will be inspected by an appropriate person at least annually and the results will be noted and reported in writing to the PCC or other appropriate church organisation. Health and safety issues observed by those working with children and young people should be reported to the Child safeguarding coordinator or the person with responsibility for health and safety within the church.

A first aid kit will be available on site and will be checked monthly and updated as necessary. An accident book is maintained at all places where activities with children and young people take place.

If there is an emergency involving injury to a child or young person:

- Stay calm.
- Provide immediate first aid when needed.
- Alert others to the need for help.
- Ensure that somebody is supervising the other children or young people.
- Call an ambulance if needed.
- Contact the parents/guardians of the child or young person.
- Provide an appropriate handover and information about the situation to the parents/guardians.
- Complete the accident book.
- Consider whether there are implications for the health and safety policy and/or practices and report these to the Child safeguarding coordinator.

### **Use of social media, email and texts**

All those involved in working with children and young people will exercise care in the use of social media and respect the principles set out below. Communication by electronic means or by texting will not be used with children under the age of 11yrs. All communication in these forms will be via their parents. The rest of the principles relate to communication with children and young people aged 11 and over. The key point is that communication should be in a context of transparency and accountability.

- Electronic communication and texting should only be used for reasons relating to work and not for general socialising.
- Other leaders should be aware of the situation in which these means of communication are being used.
- Leaders, workers and volunteers should not invite children or young people from church activities to their social media personal platforms, but may respond to requests where appropriate, as long as the child or young person is 13 or over.
- Where possible, group pages should be used on social media for communication.
- Care should be exercised in posting to Facebook, twitter etc as comments made on the spur of the moment may not always come out as intended and can be passed on extremely quickly to a larger audience.
- Communication by electronic means with children or young people should never take place during school hours and should be kept within the hours of 9am-9pm.
- Where possible, email and messaging should take place to and within groups rather than individuals.
- Leaders, workers, and volunteers should give very careful consideration as to whether it is necessary to give personal mobile phone numbers to children and young people.
- Webcams will not be used where internet chat or skype is used for one-to-one conversations.
- Records of communications will be kept just as they would be for written communication. If a worker's mobile phone does not allow text messages to be saved, then written records should be kept.
- The principles for the use of social media will be communicated to children and young people.

The church does not have a dedicated mobile phone number for children's/youth work but it does have a dedicated email address: [children@rothleychurch.org.uk](mailto:children@rothleychurch.org.uk)

### **Identity checking for DBS (criminal record) checks**

The role of identity checker is an important one because the identity check verifies the identity of the person applying for the DBS check. The identity checker will always be a person who has undergone a DBS check. Identity checking will be carried out in accordance with DBS and Diocese of Leicester guidelines.

### **Implementation of the Policy**

The child safeguarding coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the policy to see that it is being put into practice. He/she will be supported by the PCC, who have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding.

### **Procedure for regular reporting to PCC**

The child safeguarding coordinator will report annually to the PCC on child protection matters or after any incident with child protection implications (taking care to preserve confidentiality as necessary). The PCC will be kept informed of all regular and one-off children's activities as this is necessary for them to fulfil their duties as charity trustees and insurance purposes.

These procedures and guidelines were reviewed and agreed by the PCC on

21<sup>st</sup> November 2022

Signed by the Incumbent/Priest in Charge/Area Dean:.....

Signed by the Churchwarden: .....

Date for policy review November 2023

Please keep a copy for your parish records, give a copy to everybody involved in work with children and young people and send one to:

Safeguarding Administrator  
St. Martins House  
7 Peacock Lane,  
Leicester  
LE1 5PZ

[Julie.safeguarding@leccofe.org](mailto:Julie.safeguarding@leccofe.org)