

POLICY DOCUMENT

Easthampstead Parish

Title:	Safeguarding
Approved by:	PCC and Rector

The Rector and 'The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Michael And St Mary Magdalene, Easthampstead' in Bracknell, herein after referred to as 'Easthampstead Parish', sets out the following policy.

INTRODUCTION

The Church of England is called to share the good news of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. The good news speaks of welcome for all, with a particular regard for those who are most vulnerable, into a community where the value and dignity of every human being is affirmed and those in positions of responsibility and authority are truly trustworthy. Being faithful to our call to share the gospel therefore compels us to take with the utmost seriousness the challenge of preventing abuse from happening and responding well where it has.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the steps that Easthampstead Parish are taking to comply with safeguarding legislation, to ensure that our compliance with the relevant legislation is clear and demonstrable.

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding policy and guidelines our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, trustees, and volunteers in Easthampstead Parish. We expect all those working on behalf of Easthampstead Parish to act in accordance with this policy when engaged in the business of Easthampstead Parish.

DEFINITIONS

Child(ren) – Any person(s) under the age of 18

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 him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation

Abuse – Abuse is a violation of a person's human and civil rights by any other person. It is where someone does something to another person, or to themselves, which puts them at risk of harm and impacts on their health and wellbeing. Abuse comes in many forms and can often have a damaging effect on the health and wellbeing of an individual, the effects may be short term, or may last a long time. The signs of abuse aren't always obvious, and the victim may not tell anyone what is happening to them - sometimes they may not even be aware they are being abused. There are various types of abuse which can include: Sexual, Physical, Psychological, Emotional, Domestic, Discriminatory, Financial, Spiritual, Modern Slavery and Neglect

POLICY STATEMENT

The Parish will create a safe and caring place by ensuring that we:

- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train, and support all those with any responsibility for children and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

SAFEGUARDING CONCERN PROCEDURE

1. Recognise

All church leaders, staff, volunteers, and congregation members should remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns, including:

- Signs of abuse, neglect, or harm affecting children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Patterns of concerning behaviour from individuals in positions of trust.
- Emotional distress, unexplained injuries, or coercive control.
- Financial exploitation or undue influence.
- Situations where individuals appear isolated or vulnerable.

Regular safeguarding training ensures church members can identify concerns early and respond appropriately.

2. Respond

When a safeguarding concern arises:

- *Take it seriously* – Never dismiss or downplay a report of abuse or concern.
- *Listen carefully and reassure* – Allow the individual to speak without interruption or judgment, offering compassion and support.
- *Do not investigate* – Avoid leading questions or making assumptions; gather only necessary details.
- *Ensure immediate safety* – If someone is at risk, contact emergency services.
- *Provide support* – Victims and survivors must receive pastoral care and external safeguarding referrals where needed.

All concerns must be handled sensitively, maintaining confidentiality where appropriate.

3. Record

Maintaining clear, accurate records ensures accountability and effective safeguarding actions.

- Every safeguarding concern is logged on iKnow Church Safeguarding System (iKnow Safeguarding).
- Records must include:
 - Date, time, and nature of the concern.
 - Actions taken and individuals informed.
 - Any supporting evidence (where applicable).
 - Recommendations from the independent case worker.
- All safeguarding records are securely stored, accessible only to authorised personnel.

4. Report

Once a safeguarding concern is logged:

- An initial assessment determines the appropriate course of action.
- Referrals are made where necessary:
 - Urgent risks are escalated to emergency services.
 - Serious concerns are referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) for guidance.
- The independent safeguarding case worker reviews all concerns and advises if further action is needed.

Statutory safeguarding services, such as social care or law enforcement, may be engaged when appropriate.

5. Review

To ensure continued safeguarding effectiveness:

- Monthly case reviews are conducted by the case worker, ensuring concerns progress appropriately.
- Dip checks are carried out by the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to maintain compliance and accountability.
- Quarterly governance meetings between the Rector and PSO provide oversight of wider safeguarding trends, policy effectiveness, and strategic improvements.
- Reflective learning ensures lessons from past cases inform policy refinements and safeguarding practice.
- Safeguarding training is provided regularly to reinforce best practices among clergy, staff, and volunteers.
- Safer recruitment processes ensure individuals working with vulnerable groups undergo proper vetting.
- Data analysis identifies trends and emerging safeguarding risks, enabling proactive intervention.

All safeguarding policies and procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure they remain effective and compliant with Church of England guidance.

How Safeguarding Concerns are managed

