

ST MARY'S

BILLINGSHURST

**SAFEGUARDING
POLICY
HANDBOOK**

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About this Document

This Policy is aimed to help keep all paid and unpaid staff, and service users safe at all times when attending / leading group and activities in and for St Mary's Church, Billingshurst.

In this document the phrase "paid and unpaid staff" will be used to refer to anyone who has a role within the church's work, those who give their time for free (i.e. volunteer) will be referred to as "unpaid staff".

If you have any questions about this policy please contact St Mary's Church Office. Contact details below.

Contact Details

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St Mary's Church Safeguarding Officer: Christina Arnold

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St Mary's Church Office:

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New Groups

If you are starting a new group, and therefore require your own policies rather than using any of those stated further on in this document, please contact the church office with your new policies. If you require templates for these they can be provided on asking.

If in an Emergency

If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others please seek advice from a Safeguarding Adviser or if necessary report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Services or the Police without delay.

Integrated Front Door (IFD): 01403 229900

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 0330 222 6664

If EDT is unavailable and it's an EMERGENCY use: 07711769657

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/raise-a-concern-about-a-child/>

E-mail: wschildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk

Promoting a Safer Church

The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults

Introduction

The care and protection of children, young people¹ and vulnerable adults² involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all.

This document sets out the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adult's policy of the Church of England. It has been informed by the Joint Safeguarding Statement between the Church of England and the Methodist Church, with whom we work jointly on many aspects of safeguarding policy on a covenant basis.

The Church of England safeguarding policy statement is based on **5 foundations** and offers **6 overarching policy commitments**:

- 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.

This policy applies to all Church Bodies³ and Church Officers⁴. Full understanding of, and adherence to, this policy should lead to a deepening in the understanding of, and respect for, the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults as people of faith in the life of the Church.

¹ The phrase "young people/person" means any individual(s) aged 14 to 17 years old

² Section 6 Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 defines a 'vulnerable adult' as "...a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired..." The full text of the 2016 Measure can be found here:- <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201516/jtselect/jtecc/79.pdf>

³ Church Bodies includes PCCs, diocesan bodies, cathedrals, religious communities, theological training institutions and the National Church Institutions. This policy will apply to the whole of the provinces of Canterbury and York (including the Diocese in Europe subject to local variations/modifications). There is also an expectation that the policy will apply to the Channel Islands and Sodor and Man unless there is specific local legislation in a jurisdiction that would prevent adoption.

⁴ A "Church Officer" is anyone appointed/elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid.

Under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016⁵, all authorised clergy, bishops, archdeacons, licensed readers and lay workers, churchwardens and PCCs must have ‘due regard’ to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops (this will include both policy and practice guidance). A duty to have ‘due regard’ to guidance means that the person under the duty is not free to disregard it but is required to follow it unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so. (‘Cogent’ for this purpose means clear, logical and convincing.) Failure by clergy to comply with the duty imposed by the 2016 Measure may result in disciplinary action.

This Policy Statement is supported by more detailed Practice Guidance and Reference documents which can be downloaded from: <https://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/safeguarding-children-vulnerable-adults.aspx>

Building on this, Church bodies may provide additional local procedures and guidance in line with the House of Bishops policy and practice guidance.

Safeguarding Policy Statement of the Church of England

The Church of England, its Archbishops, Bishops, clergy and leaders are committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church.

Safeguarding means the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, work to prevent abuse from occurring, seek to protect those that are at risk of being abused and respond well to those that have been abused. We will take care to identify where a person may present a risk to others, and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks.

The Church of England affirms the ‘Whole Church’ approach to safeguarding. This approach encompasses a commitment to consistent policy and practice across all Church bodies, Church Officers and that everyone associated with the Church, who comes into contact with children, young people and adults, has a role to play.

The Church will take appropriate steps to maintain a safer environment for all and to practice fully and positively Christ's Ministry towards children, young people and adults; to respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm.

Foundations

In developing and implementing the Safeguarding Policy, the Church of England, is guided by the following foundations.

1. *Gospel*

The Church is called to share the good news of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. The life of our communities and institutions is integral to how we address this task. 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.

2. *Human Rights And The Law*

The Church recognises the personal dignity and rights of all children, young people and adults, as

⁵ The Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 applies to the whole of the provinces of Canterbury and York (including the Diocese in Europe subject to local variations/modifications), with the exception of the Channel Islands and Sodor and Man. In order to extend the 2016 Measure to the Channel Islands or Sodor and Man legislation will need to be passed by the relevant island jurisdictions in accordance with section 12 of that Measure.

enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Safeguarding work is undertaken within a legislative framework supported by government guidance which sets out a range of safeguarding duties, responsibilities and best practice

3. *Core Principles*

The following key principles underpin the Church's approach to safeguarding practice:

- The welfare of the child, young person and vulnerable adult is paramount⁶;
- Integrity, respect and listening to all;
- Transparency and openness;
- Accountability;
- Collaboration with key statutory authorities and other partners;
- Use of professional safeguarding advice and support both inside and outside the Church;
- A commitment to the prevention of abuse;
- The active management of risk;
- Promoting a culture of informed vigilance;
- Regular evaluation to ensure best practice.

⁶ In the event of any perceived or potential conflict of interest the welfare of any children and young people involved will always take precedence over all adults

4. *Good Safeguarding Practice*

The following key features⁷ will help Church bodies⁸ promote and maintain a safer culture that protects and promotes the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. These features are:

- A leadership commitment, at all levels, to the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- A safeguarding policy available to Church Officers;
- A clear line of accountability within the Church for work on safeguarding;
- Clear reporting procedures to deal with safeguarding concerns and allegations;
- Clear roles for Church Officers;
- Practice and services informed by on- going learning, review and by the views of children, young people, families and vulnerable adults;
- Safer recruitment procedures in place;
- Clear arrangements for support and/or supervision;
- Safeguarding training for all Church Officers working with or in contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults ;
- Effective working with statutory and voluntary sector partners;
- Publicly advertised arrangements for children, young people and vulnerable adults to be able to speak to an independent person, as required;
- Complaints and whistleblowing procedures that are well publicised;
- Effective information sharing;
- Good record keeping.

⁷ These are based on Safe from Harm Home Office, 1993, and the statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

⁸ It is acknowledged that the level and depth of arrangements that meet these key features will be dependent on the size and resources available to an individual church body.

Learning from the past

In the July Synod 2013 Archbishop Justin Welby stated:

“The reality is that there will always be people who are dangerous and are part of the life of the Church. They may be members of the congregation; we hope and pray that they will not be in positions of responsibility, but the odds are from time to time people will somehow conceal sufficiently well. And many here, have been deeply affected, as well as the survivors who have so rightly brought us to this place. Many other people here have been deeply affected and badly treated. So we face a continual challenge and reality. ... There has to be a complete change of culture and behaviour.

And in addition, there is a profound theological point. We are not doing all this, we are not seeking to say how devastatingly, appallingly, atrociously sorry we are for the great failures there have been, for our own sakes, for our own flourishing, for the protection of the Church. But we are doing it because we are called to live in the justice of God, and that we will each answer to Him for our failures in this area. And that accountability is one that we must take with the utmost seriousness.”

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York wrote in their joint forward to 'Safeguarding: Follow-up to the Chichester Commissaries' Reports', June 2013:

“We cannot overestimate the importance of responding appropriately today. Sadly for many this comes far too late. History cannot be rewritten, but those who still suffer now as a result of abuse in the past deserve this at least, that we hear their voices and take action to ensure that today’s safeguarding policies and systems are as robust as they can be. This work is an essential and prior Gospel imperative, for any attempts we make to grow the Church, to seek the common good, and to reimagine the Church’s ministry.”

The statutory reports and independent reviews into abuse that have involved the Church of England and other faith organisations highlight past errors and significant lessons to be learnt to improve safeguarding.

As a Church we continue to commit to a journey of truth, healing, learning and abuse prevention.

Policy Commitments

Based on the foundations outlined above the Church of England commits to:

1. Promoting a Safer Environment and Culture

All Church Officers will respect all children, young people and vulnerable adults and promote their well-being. The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults. It will work to continue to strengthen and review these environments. This will be done by training, support, communication, learning, governance and quality assurance processes.

The Church will strive to support all Church Officers to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge the abuse of power. It will ensure that processes are in place that listen to and advocate on behalf of children, young people and vulnerable adults within the knowledge that they will be cared for.

2. Safer recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church

The Church will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church, in accordance with the House of Bishops safeguarding policy and practice guidance

It will train and equip Church Officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse. This will be done by supporting the roll-out of consistent and accessible safeguarding training in accordance with House of Bishops safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

3. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or non-current abuse to the notice of the Church will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child and adult safeguarding procedures and the House of Bishops safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

All safeguarding work will be recorded in line with the House of Bishops safeguarding practice guidance.

All suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations, that reach the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities, will be reported via the diocesan safeguarding adviser or designated safeguarding adviser/officer in another church body to the appropriate statutory authorities. This will be done irrespective of the status of the person.

All Church Officers will cooperate with the statutory authorities in all cases.

In responding to concerns or allegations of abuse relating to Church Officers, the Church will act in accordance with the requirements of criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law, and so will respect the rights and uphold the safeguards afforded in these, both to the victim/survivor and the subject of concerns or allegations.

4. Caring pastorally for victims / survivors of abuse and other affected persons

The Church will endeavour to offer care and support to all those that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.

The Church is committed to continuing to learn how to respond in a supportive and healing way to the needs of those who have suffered abuse.

Those who have suffered abuse within the Church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously. The Church will respond to any disclosure of abuse in accordance with House of Bishops policy and practice guidance. This will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law. They will be offered appropriate pastoral care, counselling and support - according to the agreed need.

An appropriate pastoral response to the family, parish, congregation or order will be considered, with due regard to the right of privacy of those directly involved, and to the administration of justice.

5. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons

The Church in exercising its responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law of an accused Church Officer including the clergy. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. As the process progresses additional assessment, therapy and support services may be offered.

The Church will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect others when any Church Officer is considered a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults. This will be done by working to mitigate any identified risks according to a safeguarding agreement. Church Officers who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse belong to families, congregations and church communities. The Church will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families, parishes and congregations affected by the Church Officers in such situations.

6. Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

The Church, based on the message of the gospel, opens its doors to all. It will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of the church community whom may present a known risk.

The Church will ensure that any risk has been assessed and is being managed in a safeguarding agreement in accordance with House of Bishops policy and practice guidance. This will be done in collaboration with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law.

Putting the policy into action

All parts of the Church of England must adopt or take account of this Policy Statement within their own safeguarding policy⁹. The Policy Statement must actively underpin all safeguarding work within the Church and the drive to improve safeguarding practice. All Church bodies should ensure that:

- All Church Officers have access to this Policy Statement;¹⁰
- The Policy Statement is promoted and publicised;
- The Church's safeguarding message is communicated as reflected in the policy;
- They have a "Promoting a Safer Church" action plan in place that sets out, in line with national and local priorities, how the policy is being put into action and is reviewed regularly.

⁹ A shortened 'at a glance' version of this Policy Statement will be prepared for Parish, Dioceses, Cathedrals and other church bodies and be available on the national website

¹⁰ This may be access to a Parish or Diocesan website and/or a hard copy A4 Policy statement

Latest versions of the Church of England's Safeguarding documents can be found here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/safeguarding-children-vulnerable-adults/national-policy-practice-guidance.aspx>

If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others please seek advice from a Safeguarding Adviser or if necessary report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Services or the Police without delay.

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E-mail: wschildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk

Practice Guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers

For this policy please see separate document. If you would like a copy of this, please speak to St Marys Church Safeguarding Officer.

Behaviour Code for Adults Working with Children



This Code outlines the expectations of the Parish of Billingshurst for all those who work or volunteer with children & young people. It reflects our desire to follow Jesus in all we do, reflecting his love to those we minister to. It follows from our determination to ensure that St Mary's Church is a place where children can not only be safe, but also feel safe. It reflects our commitment to the highest possible standards of safeguarding practice.

Following this code will help to protect children & young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will help them learn how "safe adults" behave around them - therefore equipping them to better recognise if an adult is behaving unsafely around them, and to know that this behaviour is wrong. It will also help staff and volunteers maintain the standards of behaviour expected of them, and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

Upholding the Code

All members of paid and unpaid staff are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Safeguarding Officer under the parish safeguarding policy.

Paid and unpaid staff who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to disciplinary procedures or asked to step down from their role. Serious breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the Police or the Local Authority's appropriate department.

Responsibility of Staff and Volunteers

When working with children and young people for St Mary's Church, Billingshurst, all paid and unpaid staff are acting in a position of trust. It is important that all paid and unpaid staff are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and young people, and by their parents. They therefore must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

When working with children and young people, it is important to:

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
- Value the contribution of children and young people, and take their views seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Always aim to work within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet; toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.
- Respond appropriately to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around.
- If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and it's nature beforehand.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, and the purpose for which they will be used.
- Record any concerning incidents and give the information to your group leader. Sign and date the record. Use the "Reporting Concerns about a child" form.
- Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another paid and unpaid staff member within your group to the leader and/or the parish safeguarding coordinator.

When working with children and young people, you should not:

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. For comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child.
- Play rough physical games with children, or allow games with a potentially physical element (such as 'British Bulldog') to be played between children without careful thought, planning, and prior notification to parents and children.
- Act, speak, or conduct yourself in a sexually provocative or suggestive way, either directly towards children, or with other adults when you are with children, or engage in any sexual behaviour at all with children or young people. It is your responsibility to do everything you can do to avoid any hint of sexually inappropriate behaviour, language, or styles of relating with children or young people.
- Encourage children to behave in sexually provocative or suggestive ways with each other.
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Invade a child's privacy while washing or going to the toilet.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult.
- Permit abuse peer activities, e.g. Initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one child or group.
- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking, including that which is overtly physical or sexual in nature. It is always your responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries in your work with children and young people.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own.
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children.
- Drink alcohol when responsible for young children, or offer to give or buy them alcohol.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children.
- Invite a child to your home alone.
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members or close family friends) outside organised group occasions.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.
- Allow strangers to give children lifts.

This policy should be read alongside the Billingshurst Parish policies on Safeguarding, Whistleblowing, Anti-Bullying, and Reporting Concerns about a Child.

This policy applies to all staff, including clergy, PCC members, paid staff, volunteers including children's and youth workers, those involving in leading or coordinating music and worship, and anyone else involved in working or volunteering on behalf of St Mary's Church, Billingshurst.

Purpose of Policy

- To protect children and young people who are ministered to by St Mary's Church, Billingshurst and who make use of information technology (such as mobile phones/devices, games consoles and the Internet) as part of their involvement with the parish.
- To provide our staff, volunteers, and parents with the overarching principles that guides our approach to e-safety.
- To ensure that, as a Christian community, we minister in line with our values, and also within the law, in terms of how we use information technology and behave online.
- To guide us as we seek to equip the children and young people with whom we minister to be safe, discerning and wise users of information and communication technology.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the children and young people to whom we minister and with whom we come into contact is paramount, and should govern our approach to the use and management of electronic communications technologies and online behaviour;
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, careers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare, and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to e-safety;
- The use of information technology is an essential part of all our lives; it is involved in how we as a church gather and store information, as well as how we communicate with each other. It is an intrinsic part of the experience of children and young people, and is greatly beneficial to all. However, it can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly, and, if misused either by an adult or a young person, can be actually or potentially harmful.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Treating any child protection concern arising from the online world in the same way, taking it just as seriously, as concerns arising from the offline world.
- Ensuring that our parish safeguarding officer has access to up-to-date information and training regarding online safety, assisting them as appropriate to access this training.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers at St Mary's Church, Billingshurst avoid using private forms of electronic communication (text message, email, direct messaging including on social media) to communicate with the children and young people they are responsible for.
- Taking the use of such private communication between staff or volunteers and young people as seriously as one-on-one contact between adults and children without another responsible adult present. It is always

the responsibility of the adult staff member or volunteer to put appropriate boundaries in place in their relationships with the young people with whom they minister, in both the offline and online worlds.

- Using open online forums to communicate with children, such as Facebook youth group pages to notify young people of events etc.
- Avoiding any form of inappropriate content in what we, our staff and our volunteers post online, including (but not limited to) sexual content, racist, sexist or otherwise bigoted content, or content promoting illegal activity.
- Maintaining electronic versions of sensitive personal data securely, according to the principles of the Data Protection Act.
- Providing age-appropriate awareness material, including training, to children and young people with regards to online safety. In particular, we will make them aware of the Thinkuknow website, and about Childline.

Providing awareness material to parents with regards to online safety. In particular, we will make them aware of the Thinkuknow, Parents Protect, and UK Safer Internet Centre websites.

Responding to Safeguarding Allegations in the Parish: Parish Policy and Guidance



- Billingshurst parish recognise that in all matters that involve allegations that someone has, or may have, caused harm to another person, whether child or adult, the welfare of the alleged victim is paramount and is our primary concern. No other consideration, however legitimate or important, can outweigh this primary responsibility.
- Billingshurst parish recognise that all allegations that someone may have harmed a child or adult must be taken seriously. In all but the most exceptional circumstances, this will mean letting a safeguarding specialist know about the allegation.
- Billingshurst parish recognise that it is not our responsibility to investigate allegations, nor would it be appropriate for us to do so. Our responsibility is to pass allegations on to the person/people who can respond appropriately.
- In the first instance, this will normally involve informing the incumbent and the parish safeguarding officer (unless the allegation is about them).
- Billingshurst parish will inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team upon becoming aware of any allegation that someone in our church community has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult (this will normally be done by the incumbent and/or the parish safeguarding officer)
- Billingshurst parish recognise that any allegation that a person in a position of responsibility for children (paid or voluntary) has behaved in such a way that indicates they may present a risk to children, will be referred by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). If the alleged behaviour is of a criminal nature, the police will always be involved.
- Billingshurst parish recognise that any allegation that a person in a position of responsibility for adults (paid or voluntary) has behaved in such a way that indicates they may present a risk to adults, will be referred by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team with the local Adults Services team manager. If the alleged behaviour is of a criminal nature, the police will always be involved. (The issue of consent are more complex with harm to adults: this will be discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in individual cases).
- Billingshurst parish recognise that human behaviour is complex and many-layered, and that any individual may have motives or intentions that are not apparent, even to those who believe they know them well. Practically speaking, this means that we will commit to ensuring that any allegation that a person has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult will be taken seriously as per the above points, even when that person is a highly respected individual whose integrity appears to be without question.
- Billingshurst parish recognises that the best way to identify any false or malicious allegation is to treat all allegations the same. A transparent, fair and accountable process that is consistently applied is best for all involved, including those against whom allegations are made.
- Billingshurst parish recognise that all involved in situations where allegations are made require pastoral support. In particular, the person making the allegation and their family, and the person against whom the allegation is made and their family, will require skilled and careful pastoral support. Providing that support may be complex, and we recognise and commit to working with the wider Diocese should this situation arise.

- Billingshurst parish recognise commit to implementing the advice received or any outcome arising from the above process.

Expressing Concerns and 'Whistleblowing': Policy and Guidance



Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: given this, encouraging people to express concerns appropriately and in a timely fashion is an important aspect of a strong safeguarding culture. Additionally, 'whistleblowing' has been recognised as having an important place in developing a strong safeguarding culture within organisations. At the most simple level, anyone can spot a genuine concern and it is important that everyone who does so feels safe to raise that concern. At a more fundamental level, organisations – including the church – can become hierarchical and opaque, and a strong whistleblowing policy recognises the importance of empowering those who may not hold positions of structural influence within the organisation to feel confident enough to speak out, should they believe poor practice to be present.

The aim of this policy and associated guidance is to provide a clear and transparent way for anyone involved in the Billingshurst parish to raise genuine concerns regarding poor practice that impacts upon the safety or wellbeing of children or adults to whom Billingshurst parish ministers. It also aims to ensure that any concerns are dealt with effectively and in a timely fashion.

This policy and guidance provides a simple set of steps to deal with concerns, ensuring that people are not penalised for raising genuine concerns, even if those concerns appear to be unfounded.

This policy and guidance applies to everyone involved in Billingshurst parish, including all workers who are involved on either a paid or voluntary basis. **Like all parish safeguarding policies, this policy should be easily available for all – for instance at the back of church and on the church website. It should not be necessary for someone who wants to see this policy to ask a leader within the church to provide it.**

Our Commitment:

- Billingshurst Parish recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- Billingshurst Parish recognises that no other concern or responsibility, however genuine, outweighs the need to prioritise the welfare of children and adults at all times
- Billingshurst Parish welcomes, encourages and urges anyone who is concerned about any aspect of our safeguarding practice or provision to raise those concerns, as outlined in the Guidance below
- Billingshurst Parish welcomes, encourages and urges anyone who is concerned about any the safety and welfare of a child or adult to report those concerns as outlined in the Guidance below, and in accordance with the Guidance found in the section of the Diocesan Safeguarding Website, entitled 'What Do I Do If?'
- Billingshurst Parish undertakes to treat all such concerns seriously, as outlined in the Guidance below
- Billingshurst Parish guarantees that no-one who raises any concern in good faith, even if those concerns are ultimately found to be unfounded, will face any adverse consequences whatsoever.

Guidance

What to do if you have a concern:

- In the first instance, speak to the leader of the area of church about which you have a concern (for instance, if your concern is about U-Nite (Friday Night Youth Club) speak to the Youth Worker). A good principle is that concerns should be dealt with at the lowest level necessary, and only escalated beyond that if those concerns remain, having been expressed. However, if your concern is about the

behaviour of a leader in the church (lay or ordained), you may feel that you need to escalate it to someone in authority over them; you would be perfectly justified in doing this.

- Try to be as specific as possible: what or whom are you concerned about exactly? Can you give specific dates or examples of what has caused your concern? Vague concerns are difficult to investigate. If you only have an impression, or cannot give specific examples, you may still wish to express concerns but be open about the limited details you have.
- Try and avoid language that is either accusatory or emotive: your aim is to improve an area of church life, not to put the recipient of your concern on the defensive.
- It is very helpful to quote policy, if you can (although if you cannot, this is not a reason to avoid expressing your concern). This helps the person receiving your concern to see very quickly that you are simply holding the church to account to its own policies, or to Diocesan policies.
- Face-to-face is usually best, but follow up the conversation in writing. “Last Sunday after church I expressed a concern about X, you replied by saying Y, and you said you would get back to me by Z. Please could you reply by confirming my understanding of our conversation is correct”: a simple written communication such as this can assist greatly in providing clarification to all concerned about what was said (although see below guidance for the person receiving the concern along similar lines).
- If you are satisfied that your concern has been resolved, you can leave the matter there. If you are not, it is important that you escalate it. We suggest that a suitable ‘order of escalation’ would be:
 - 1. Lay Leader in Church (e.g. Children’s Work Leader)**
 - 2. Incumbent (and/or churchwarden in a vacancy)**
 - 3. Diocesan Safeguarding Team**
 - 4. Bishop**
 - 5. National Safeguarding Team**
- In escalating your concern, you are acting in an entirely appropriate way. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility; there may be the rare occasion where you just have to raise your concern outside of your local parish context, in order to ensure that the children and adults your church ministers to are safe.
- If you feel that the concern has great urgency and cannot be escalated in this manner (for instance if you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child or adult), then you must raise those concerns without delay with the appropriate statutory authority. Please follow the guidance on the Diocesan Safeguarding Website, under the section entitled ‘What Do I Do If?’. Use the appropriate sub-heading to find out how best to report these concerns.

What to do if you receive a concern

- If someone tells you that they have a concern, you should arrange to meet him/her as soon as possible.
- Approach the situation sensitively, recognising the discomfort that the person may feel. Offer to meet him/her away from the church if they wish, and allow them to bring a friend if that would help.
- Do not promise confidentiality: you do not know what they are going to share, but if they share an immediate safeguarding concern you will have no choice other than to break that promise.
- However, be prepared to discuss the possibility of anonymity for the person sharing the concern. People may have reasons to want to stay anonymous, even if they know they have to say something, and closing this option off may mean that the concern never gets aired.
- Reassure the person that there will be no negative repercussions for any concern shared in good faith – even if it turns out to be unfounded or mistaken. ‘Concerns’ shared out of malice or divisiveness are a different matter but at this stage, assume the person to be acting in good faith.
- You may wish to suggest sources of support for the person – especially if they are on their own without the support of a friend or family member. Sharing concerns in an institutional context can be very intimidating – even in church – and the concern may have been a source of great anxiety for a long time. The person may be sharing the concern with you because this anxiety has reached the

point where they feel compelled to act, and in coming to you they are expressing a great measure of faith that they will be well-received, and not have their intentions misinterpreted. They may wish to speak to someone outside of the immediate context to receive some pastoral support (for instance from a neighbouring parish), or they may wish to speak to someone in the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

- Recognise that not everyone expressed genuine concerns appropriately. Someone can say something in the wrong manner, at the wrong time and with the wrong language – but still be right. Don't be too quick to dismiss what someone says because of how they say it.
- Make notes of the conversation, ideally at the time or immediately afterwards.
- Follow-up your conversation in writing, as soon as you can. "On date X, you expressed your concerns about Y. I replied by saying I would look into what you said, and would get back to you by date Z'. This helps provide clarity for all involved.
- Make sure you are clear about what you will do with the concern, by when you will do it, and when you will let the person know. Give the person a clear indication of when they can expect to hear back from you, and keep to this promise if you have made no progress – hearing from you with no news is better than not hearing from you.
- Unless the concern is easily resolved, we suggest that you seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. If the concern is about the behaviour of an adult in the church, you must follow the policy 'Managing Allegations in the Church'. If the concern is about the safety and welfare of a child or adult, you must follow the guidance provided in the 'What Do I Do If?' section of the Diocesan Safeguarding Website.
- The crucial principle for any adequate Whistleblowing policy is that anyone raising any concern in good faith – whether or not that concern is ultimately justified – should suffer no adverse consequences whatsoever. Further guidance regarding this can be found in the web links in this section of Simple Quality Protects.¹¹

¹¹ <https://safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org>

Safeguarding Policy Statement

Parish of BILLINGSHURST



As members of this PCC we are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of all our members.

- We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- We are committed to implementing all safeguarding policies and practice guidance issued by the House of Bishops
- We will carefully select and train all those who work or volunteer in positions of trust. We will use the Disclosure and Barring Service, amongst other tools, to check the background of each person.
- We will respond, without delay, to every concern made that a person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.
- We will co-operate fully with statutory agencies during any investigation concerning a member of the church community.
- We will seek to ensure that anyone for whom we have pastoral responsibility who has suffered abuse is offered support that meets their needs.
- We will respond appropriately to those who have committed sexual offences who wish to join our fellowship, following House of Bishop's guidance and the advice of the Safeguarding Team.
- We will review this policy annually and as part of this process will ensure that all our procedures, particularly in relation to the Disclosure and Barring Service, are up to date.

Our Safeguarding Officer is:

Name.....

Address.....

..... Post Code.....

Telephone number.....

Email address.....

Signed on behalf of the PCC:

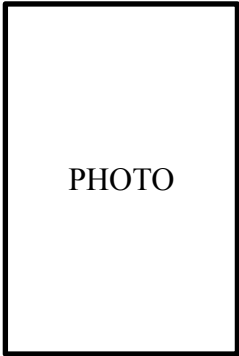
Name/Signed.....Incumbent

Name/Signed.....Churchwarden

Name/Signed.....Churchwarden

Date:

A copy of this statement is to be displayed in the church and a copy sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team



SAFEGUARDING OFFICER



Christina Arnold

safeguarding@stmarysbillingshurst.org

For more information please see the safeguarding page on our
website: stmarysbillingshurst.org/safeguarding

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St Mary's Church Non-Disclosure Agreement

This form is for all paid and unpaid staff working on behalf of St Mary's Church, Billingshurst in which they might see, or obtain personal data of service users.

St Mary's Church Non-Disclosure Agreement



THIS AGREEMENT is between, St Mary's Church, Billingshurst ("the Disclosing Party") and all paid and unpaid staff, ("the Recipient") (collectively, "the Parties").

Purpose for Disclosure ("Business Purpose"): Personal data, sourced by staff, on behalf of St Mary's Church, Billingshurst.

The Parties hereby agree as follows:

1. For purposes of this Agreement, "Confidential Information" shall mean any and all non-public information, including, without limitation, personal data: names, contact information, personal addresses, personal situations, disclosed to the Recipient. For convenience, the Disclosing Party may, but is not required to, mark written Confidential Information with the legend "Confidential" or an equivalent designation.
2. All Confidential Information disclosed to the Recipient will be used solely for the work of the Church, and for no other purpose whatsoever. The Recipient agrees to keep the Disclosing Party's Confidential Information confidential and to protect the confidentiality of such Confidential Information with the same degree of care with which it protects the confidentiality of its own confidential information, but in no event with less than a reasonable degree of care. Recipient shall not make any copies of Disclosing Party's Confidential Information except as needed for the work of the Church. At the request of Disclosing Party, Recipient shall return to Disclosing Party all Confidential Information of Disclosing Party (including any copies thereof) or certify the destruction thereof.
3. All right title and interest in and to the Confidential Information shall remain with Disclosing Party. ALL CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IS PROVIDED "AS IS".
4. The obligations and limitations set forth herein regarding Confidential Information shall not apply to information which is: (a) at any time in the public domain, other than by a breach on the part of the Recipient; or (b) at any time rightfully received from a third party which had the right to and transmits it to the Recipient without any obligation of confidentiality.
5. In the event that the Recipient shall breach this Agreement, or in the event that a breach appears to be imminent, the Disclosing Party shall be entitled to all legal and equitable remedies afforded it by law, and in addition may recover all reasonable costs and solicitors' fees incurred in seeking such remedies. If the Confidential Information is sought by any third party, including by way of summons or other court process, the Recipient shall inform the Disclosing Party of the request in sufficient time to permit the Disclosing Party to object to and, if necessary, seek court intervention to prevent the disclosure.

6. The validity, construction and enforceability of this Agreement shall be governed in all respects by the law of the UK. This Agreement may not be amended except in writing signed by a duly authorised representative of the respective Parties. This Agreement shall control in the event of a conflict with any other agreement between the Parties with respect to the subject matter hereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Agreement.

St Mary's Application Form

This form is to be used by all people who are wishing to fill a role at St Mary's church. This includes those of an unpaid nature.

Application Form



Application for the post of:

Full Name:	Previous experience related to this position (Inc. training / qualifications):
Date of Birth:	
Former Name (if applicable):	
Home Address:	
Post Code:	
Telephone:	
Mobile:	
How long have you lived at the above address: (if less than 12 months) Previous Address:	
Previous Church (inc. Minister):	
Reference 1 (Not a relation & known for more than 2 years) Name: Phone number: e-mail:	Reference 2 (Not a relation & known for more than 2 years) Name: Phone number: e-mail:
Signed: Print Name:	Date:

St Mary's Interview Form

This form is to be used as a guide when meeting with people who wish to work within our children and young people's teams.

Interview Record

The purpose of the interview / discussion is to explore the applicant's suitability. Please feel free to use this guide as a prompt for the interview. Notes of the interview / discussion must be retained and attached to this form which must be returned to the Vicar to be held on behalf of the PCC. The following factors may be addressed:

Name and address of applicant:

Name of interviewer(s):

Date of Interview:

1. What experience have you of working with children / young people, including those at risk of abuse or neglect?

Interviewer's Notes:

2. Can you give an example of something that you have done that demonstrates your commitment to working with vulnerable groups (i.e. children and/or young people experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect)?

Interviewer's Notes:

3. Can you give some examples of how you would provide kind, consistent and safe care for children and young people?

Interviewer's Notes:

4. What are your reasons for wishing to work with our children / young people at St Mary's?

Interviewer's Notes:

5. How would you treat all children / young people as individuals with equal concern?

Interviewer's Notes:

6. Do you know of any reason why you should not be working with children or young people? Are there any police or employment matters outstanding, which could affect your ability to volunteer?

Interviewer's Notes:

Record of Outcome:

Are there any issues in the Confidential Declaration? YES / NO

Do the references support the appointment? YES / NO

Do you recommend their approval to the PCC? YES / NO

Signed:

Name & Role (Print):

Date & Signature - reviewed by Vicar / Safeguarding Team:

Reporting Concern About A Child Form

This form is for any person who has a concern about the welfare of a child (anyone under the age of 18). Please fill in as much information as you possible can, and once complete please send to St Mary's Church Safeguarding Officer who will either advise you further, or handle the form from there on.

Reporting Concerns About A Child

This form should be used in conjunction with the procedure for dealing with concerns about a child.

Details of Child and Parents

Name of Child:		
Male / Female	Age:	D.O.B:
Ethnicity:	Language:	Additional Needs:
Parent(s) / Guardian(s):		
Child's Address & Parent's / Guardian's Address (if different use two entries)	Child:	Parents / Guardian:

Your Details

Name:	
Position / Role:	
Date & Time of Incident (if applicable)	

Report

Are you reporting your own concerns or those of someone else? If the concerns came from someone else, how did you become aware of them?

If someone else, please give their name, and the nature of their relationship to the child:

Please give details about the name of the incident/concern (*any details you have, incl. time, date, location, who else was present, observations that led to concern, injuries, behaviour of child and others - especially observed changes in behaviour, first incident or pattern, anything else of relevance*):

(Please continue on separate sheet if needed)

Please give any details about how the child described this incident/concern (*please use the child's own words if you know them*):

(Please continue on separate sheet if needed)

Details of anyone alleged to have caused the incident or be the source(s) of concern:

Details of anyone who observed the incident or shares the concern:

PLEASE NOTE: concerns should be discussed with the family unless:

- a family member is the cause of the concern
- someone may be put in danger if the family is told
- telling the family may interfere in a criminal investigation

If any of these apply, please contact the Local Authority Children's Services Department first.

If you have discussed the concerns with the family, please record their reaction here:

(Please continue on separate sheet if needed)

Are you aware of any previous incidents or concerns, which may aid the understanding of this present concern:

Please give details of who else you have discussed this with in the church, and/or Diocese:

Details of referral with Local Authority Children's Services: Integrated Front Door (IFD).

IFD: 01403 229900

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 0330 222 6664

If EDT is unavailable and it's an EMERGENCY use: 07711769657

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/raise-a-concern-about-a-child/>

E-mail: wschildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk

What has happened since the above referral? *(Please note: you may not be made aware of actions taken by the local authority):*

Date:

What actions have your church taken since the referral? *(E.g. pastoral care, Youth Work etc.):*

Date:

After any addition to this form please sign below to show who has amended this document.

Name	Signed	Position / Role	Date

Accident Record Form

This is the replacement form to an “accident book”. Please fill one of these in when an incident occurs, including as much detail as you possibly can. Once filled in, please hand in to St Mary’s Church Office.

There will be printed copies of these in St Mary’s Room, St Mary’s Church, and St Mary’s Church Office.

Accident Record

Record completed by:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Role:

Tel:

Person involved in incident:

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Postcode:

Details of incident

Date:

Time:

Where did the incident occur?
Describe the events (*include specific nature of harm/injury*):
Names of others present:
Other comments:
What actions were taken? (*Include any medical treatment, and whether incident was reported to 3rd party*)
Record completed by: (*Signature*)
Record read by: (*Signature of parent or guardian*)
Print Name:
Print Name:
Date:
Date:

Reporting Concern About A Vulnerable Adult

This form is for any person who has a concern about the welfare of an adult (anyone over the age of 18). Please fill in as much information as you possible can, and once complete please send to St Mary's Church Safeguarding Officer who will either advise you further, or handle the form from there on.

Reporting Concerns About A Vulnerable Adult

This form should be used in conjunction with the procedure for dealing with concerns about a Vulnerable Adult.

Details of Individual

Name of Individual:		
Male / Female	Age:	D.O.B:
Ethnicity:	Language:	Additional Needs:
Carer(s) [if applicable]:		
Individual's Address & Carer's [if applicable] Address (if different use two entries)	Child:	Carer:

Your Details

Name:	
Position / Role:	
Date & Time of Incident (if applicable)	

Report

Are you reporting your own concerns or those of someone else? If the concerns came from someone else, how did you become aware of them?

If someone else, please give their name, and the nature of their relationship to the individual:

Please give details about the nature of the incident/concern (*any details you have, incl. time, date, location, who else was present, observations that led to concern, injuries, behaviour of individual and others - especially observed changes in behaviour, first incident or pattern, anything else of relevance*):

(Please continue on separate sheet if needed)

Please give any details about how the individual described this incident/concern (*please use the individual's own words if you know them*):

(Please continue on separate sheet if needed)

Details of anyone alleged to have caused the incident or be the source(s) of concern:

Details of anyone who observed the incident or shares the concern:

Are you aware of any previous incidents or concerns, which may aid the understanding of this present concern:

Please give details of who else you have discussed this with in the church, and/or Diocese:

Details of referral with Local Authority Adult's Services: West Sussex Adult Social Services

West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board: 01243 642121

Adult Social Services Out of Hours: 0330 222 7007

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-support/adults/raise-a-concern-about-an-adult/#how-to-raise-a-concern>

What has happened since the above referral? *(Please note: you may not be made aware of actions taken by the local authority)*:

Date:

What actions have your church taken since the referral? (E.g. *pastoral care*):

Date:

After any addition to this form please sign below to show who has amended this document.

Name	Signed	Position / Role	Date