

Safeguarding policy for Harnham Parish in the Deanery of Salisbury



This policy was agreed at the parochial church council held on 21st March 2019 and reviews of the policy took place at PCC on 23rd March 2022 and 12th July 2023.

Policy statement.

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

We make every effort to provide a safe and welcoming environment underpinned by the culture of openness where both children and adult feel secure, able to talk and believe they are being listened to.

We maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

The purpose of this policy is to provide, staff, volunteers, and visitors with the framework they need in order to keep children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe in our church buildings and activities. Specific guidance is available to all within the procedure documents.

Harnham Parish recognises that none of us is invulnerable. Yet there is a particular care for those whose vulnerability is increased by situations, by disabilities or by reduction in capacities. This increased vulnerability may be temporary, or permanent, may be invisible, or visible, but does not diminish our humanity.

This policy addresses the safeguarding of individuals.

It is intended to be a dynamic policy.

It is intended to support the Church in being a safe and supportive and caring community for children, young people, and vulnerable adults, for survivors of abuse, for individuals and communities affected by abuse.

Harnham Parish recognises the serious issue of abuse of children and vulnerable adults and that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, domestic, spiritual, or institutional abuse, neglect, or any combination of such types of abuse.

All people should feel safe and feel that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained. We accept that we must support, listen to and work for healing with survivors, offenders, communities, and those who care about them.

Aims

The following procedures apply to all staff, volunteers and visitors working in our church buildings and church environment.

The parish will aim to

- Prevent children, young people, and vulnerable adults from being abused and to safeguard and promote the welfare of all in our church and community

- Protect all children, young people, and vulnerable adults in our care
- Committing to raising awareness of why we need to have a safeguarding policy
- Provide the support, advice and training for lay and ordained people, volunteers, and visitors so that everyone is clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable especially in our care and using our premises.
- Appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer and support them in their role to
 - A. Support and advise the minister, volunteers, and visitors
 - B. Provide a point of reference to advise on safeguarding matters
 - C. Promote safeguarding best practice in the parish
- Provide the PCC, staff, volunteers, and visitors with the framework they need in order to have the confidence and skills to keep children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe in our church buildings, to recognise and respond well to abuse
- Produce clear guidelines for all to follow
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Carefully select all those with any responsibility within the church, in line with safer recruitment principles.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- 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
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Respond quickly to any complaints or disclosures made which suggest that an adult, child or young person may be harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- Seek to offer pastoral support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred. **This can include the supervision and referral to the proper authorities, of any member of the church community known to have offended against a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.**
- 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.
- 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.

Good practice

Good practice means that:

- All people are treated with respect and dignity
- Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a child 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 noting date, time and place of visit
- The Church premises will be assessed for safety for children and vulnerable adults and the risk assessment report will be given annually to the PCC in written form. 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.

- Any driver using their own vehicle for the transportation of children or vulnerable adults is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is road worthy and comprehensively insured. The driver should be accompanied by a second adult.
- Promotion of safeguarding is recognised to include undertaking those tasks which enable all God's people to reach their full potential.

Lay Pastoral Assistants and Church Links.

In terms of safeguarding, pastoral assistants will be supported in their role with the provision of safeguarding training on appointment. This training will be updated according to Diocesan guidelines.

Training for Church Links, although not official visitors, will be updated regularly.

Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The guidelines are reviewed under this policy's annual review and are accessible to each worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults outlining good practice. (See appendix.)

Events with church groups off the premises.

Adequate staffing will be ensured for such events. Notification of the event will be given to the PCC in advance. Risk assessments will be prepared prior to each event.

E-safety.

The guidelines are reviewed under this policy's annual review and are accessible to each worker with children, young people and vulnerable adults outlining good practice. (see appendix.)

Other groups on church premises.

Where the building is hired, for outside use, the person will be required to sign a letting agreement. If the group, whether a one off or regular use, includes children, young people or vulnerable adults they will be expected to sign a declaration confirming that they have active safeguarding procedures.

Complaints.

The Grievance and Complaints policy exists and is reviewed regularly by the PCC.

Disclosures.

Guidelines exist. They are displayed in the hall and vestries of the Churches. They are reviewed regularly as part of safeguarding training.

Review.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC.

Date 25 July 2023



Sign

Appendix

1. Guidelines for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
2. Disclosure procedures.

E safety policy and Complaints policy are kept separately but should be referred to.

Guidelines for all workers

Appendix 1

The Harnham vision is to engage, inspire and equip people in order that they can share God's love with children and young people in their communities and provide opportunities for children and young people to develop and share their faith.

We hope that everyone will use the guidelines as a tool to help children and young people to be safer when they come to our churches, activities and groups;

Leaders of children's and young people's groups, including Messy Church, will feel informed and confident in knowing what is expected of them and clear where they can go for further help and guidance if they need it. All should be actively aware of the code of practice below.

Vulnerable Adults

The Harnham vision is of the church in its widest sense as a safe and sacred space which all God's children may enter, whether that is to worship, to explore their faith or to seek sanctuary from the world.

It is easy to assume that adults can take care of themselves – but if we are honest, we know that there are times when they can't. We need a friend, companion, or advisor. Sadly, there are those who will try to take advantage of our vulnerability (our humanity) for their own gratification. Some of these may be among our congregations. We cannot assume that "it won't happen here" because it can and does.

The church (and society as a whole) now recognises the need to safeguard vulnerable adults in the same way as children and to provide pastoral care to those who have been abused, whenever and wherever that abuse has taken place. We need to be honest enough to understand the need for vigilance in this area and brave enough to do something about it when we see it.

Please

ask yourself what you are doing, why are you doing it and who benefits. Think about what is safe for you and your volunteers as well as for any children, young people and vulnerable adults in your parish, congregation or group.

Please ensure that you as group leader and those who are volunteers in the group are fully informed of the following, for the safety of both the child, young person and vulnerable adult and the adult volunteers, and the points below are actively followed.

DBS responsibilities

- The person in charge of the group must have an active full DBS check and other volunteers have the correct checks according to the Parish safeguarding officer's advice.
- Those who volunteer should be safely recruited.
- The site and activities of the group should have been risk assessed
- A risk assessment form has been completed ahead of time and sent to the Parish Administrator.
- Plan your work so as to minimise situations where abuse may occur.

One-to-one situations: one-to-one situations should be avoided. If someone is distressed and it is desirable to take them to one side to give them privacy, tell one of the other leaders what you are doing and why. No one should be alone with a child out of sight. As far as possible, no one is to enter the toilet areas with a child apart from the parents/ carers and if not then please ensure another adult is informed.

Always aim to work within the sight of another adult. Toilet breaks should be organised where applicable.

Touch:

- If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child, young person, vulnerable adult and their parent/carers are aware of this and its nature beforehand
- Physical contact should be the appropriate response to child/vulnerable adults needs, not the needs of the adult.
- Always ask if someone wants to be touched or hugged and respect their 'no.'
- Shaking hands is courteous & often appreciated by older people.
- If you touch or hug, hands should be outside the person's clothing and never on any part of body that might be considered inappropriate (knees, bottom, breasts).
- It's important that those with learning disabilities learn what form of body contact is appropriate in different social situations, this helps to keep them safe and helps them to become aware when people are behaving inappropriately and possibly exploiting them.
- Occasionally it may be necessary to restrain someone who is harming themselves or others. Use least possible force and inform parent/carer as soon as possible. Incidents should be recorded and information given to safeguarding co-ordinator.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around- see advice below.
- All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.
- Colleagues must be prepared to support each other.
- Be prepared to speak out if you think an adult/colleague is behaving inappropriately.

Attitudes and creating a positive and safe atmosphere.

- Behaviour/Language – leaders should model the standard of behaviour they expect from others and ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability or sexuality. Avoid favouritism. Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful. Be prepared to challenge any unacceptable behaviour or language from both the leaders and service users.
- Treat everyone with respect and dignity;

- Ensure that young people and vulnerable adults know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern
- If you see another Leader or Worker acting in a way which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to your supervisor about your concerns. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.
- Respond appropriately to people's needs and concerns ensuring there are other adults around.
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed.
- Always share concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or Parish Safeguarding Representative or Incumbent.
- Record any concerning incidents and give the information to your Group Leader. Sign and date the record.

You should NOT:

- initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact should be initiated by the individual;
- invade the individual's privacy while washing or toileting;
- play rough physical or sexually provocative games;
- use any form of physical punishment;
- be sexually suggestive about or to an individual even in fun;
- touch an individual inappropriately or obtrusively;
- scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group;
- permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying;
- show favouritism to any individual or group;
- allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature;
- give lifts to an individual on their own;
- drink alcohol when responsible for children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- share sleeping accommodation inappropriately;
- invite a child, young person or vulnerable adult to your home alone;
- arrange social occasions with children, young people or vulnerable adults (other than family members) outside organised group occasions;
- allow unknown adults access to children, young people or vulnerable adults. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person;
- allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Money/ gifts: If you are given money or gifts for any reason, ensure the donation is acknowledged (by receipt and/or thank you letter) as soon as possible. This both preserves the audit trail for the donation and protects you against any complaint that money has been taken without the knowledge or consent of the vulnerable adult, young person or child.

E-safety: Please see Harnham Parish separate policy on E-Safety. Though most often thought about in connection with children, remember that adults also belong to on-line communities.

Consent forms: Every child or young person under 18 who attends the group needs a completed consent form from their parents/guardians to attend. Ensure that there are spare consent forms available in case new members come along.

Bullying: adults can be bullied as well as children. Never ignore or trivialise bullying.

Medical health and First aid: first aid boxes are kept in the hall kitchen and both churches. No one should administer significant first aid without being trained. No one should administer any first aid without another adult present. No tablets may be given to vulnerable adults or children. Some people have allergies to plasters- this should be included in any consent form. Check the consent form before using any plasters. Ring the parent/ carer for advice. Ensure that the local doctors name and number are on any consent forms. If the child/ adult is in immediate danger ring 999.

Medication: group leaders should not be responsible for giving routine medication to any child or adult

Food hygiene: if you are preparing and serving food for others it is common sense to ensure that good hygiene has been preserved. Courses on food hygiene are run by most local authorities and we would recommend that at least one person on the team attends one of these courses.

Good practice in your group routines:

- **Monitor and evaluate activities** regularly to ensure they remain suitable.
- **Have a support or debriefing time for group** volunteers to share what went well or to offload concerns.
- **Allow volunteers to say “no” occasionally** – mistakes and poor practice happen when people are tired or disengaged.
- **Provide regular training** and awareness sessions for all volunteers

Some tips to consider for good discipline within children and young people’s groups

- Have clear rules that the young people have helped to create – display them during the group meeting times, ensure that they are consistently followed.
- Have positive incentives to keep to the rules e.g. points for listening well or helping out, arranging children into teams to be awarded points can help as they then encourage one another to behave.
- Have a written behaviour agreement signed by both the young people and their parents.
- Ensure all the leaders model good behaviour.
- Make sure you vary activities and sessions to suit all learning styles and that the young people are engaged and have enough to do.
- Have a system of warnings and clear sanctions for bad behaviour.
- If you are speaking to someone about their behaviour make sure it is clear that is their behaviour you are not happy with for example saying “the way you spoke to John was unkind and not acceptable” rather than “you are horrible”.
- Maintaining discipline can be hard but being calm and consistent, having clear expectations of young people and rewarding good behaviour can all help.
- Whilst we may be keen to ensure young people have fun and that any groups we run do not feel like school, it is important that there is respect for one another and the premises, and that everyone can enjoy themselves. Any reprimand should be fair, appropriate and be given with a clear explanation of what the young person is receiving it for.
- Ensure that teasing and joking does not go too far and that leaders do not make personal jokes or remarks about young people, even if it seems like it is just a bit of fun.

Appendix 2

DISCLOSURE PROCEDURES

What to do if I suspect abuse?

If you see or hear something which makes you think that a child, young person or adult may be being neglected or abused in any way, you should not hesitate to report your concerns.

- Do not attempt to investigate or resolve the situation. Listen to the person if they have approached you. Do **not** promise confidentiality but that you will listen and will need to tell someone if you feel they are in danger of harm to themselves or others.
- If someone is in immediate danger ring 999.
- If someone is not in immediate danger, then share your concerns as follows:
- Contact your incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) this might well be your incumbent, unless they are the alleged abuser. In this case contact the relevant Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.
- The incumbent will discuss with the PSO and one of them will contact the local social care to discuss their concerns. They will also contact the appropriate Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor either before or after their contact with social care.
- All referrals to social care need to be followed up in writing within 48 hours; if it was seeking advice good practice indicates that it is worthwhile confirming the discussion in writing.
- Whether it is a referral or seeking advice any directions and advice given by social care should be written up by the Parish Safeguarding Officer or sent to the Parish Safeguarding officer.
- There is no confidentiality in safeguarding with regard to any discussion with the statutory agencies, *but there is within the diocese and parish*. Within the parish safeguarding support will be given by the safeguarding officer and incumbent. Do not discuss any safeguarding issues with other members of the team.
- The appropriate Diocesan Advisor will give support as well as advice and can be contacted at any point in the process.

The 4 Rs If you receive information indicating a possible risk of immediate harm to, or a report of current or historical abuse of, a child or adult then follow these 4 steps:

1. RECOGNISE

Recognise that you have a concern or someone has made a disclosure to you.

2. RESPOND

Reassure them that they did the right thing by telling you

They are not in trouble

You will tell someone who can assist them

Everyone has a right to feel safe and protected

3. REFER

Children/ vulnerable adults regarded as being currently at risk of harm

Any form of abuse (including physical or sexual assault, ill-treatment or neglect, psychological harm, spiritual abuse)

Professional misconduct in the workplace, even as volunteers (including sexual misconduct, crossing boundaries, violence, bullying, harassment)

4. RECORD

Immediately (or as soon as it is practical) anything that you are told or that you observe

Only the facts (no subjective statements)

Include the date, time, parties involved

Sign the record