

Parish of St. Clement, Oxford

Policy on Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults

The following policy was last agreed by the PCC in 2019. Amendment of it was approved under Rule M29 following the PCC meeting held on 25 November 2020.

1. In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy we are committed to:
 - The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
 - Promoting safeguarding as everyone's responsibility
 - Establishing a safe, caring community which provides a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.
 - Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
 - Providing for the care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children and all adults
 - 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.
2. We will create a safe and caring place for all.
3. We will appoint a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the Incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
4. We will carefully select all those with any responsibility for children, young people and vulnerable adults, in line with Diocesan safer recruitment principles, including the use of Disclosure and Barring Service criminal records checks.

Using the Diocesan Training Scheme, we will train and equip Church Officers to have the confidence and skills to support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse.
5. We will ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
6. We will display in church premises and on the parish website the details of whom to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
7. We will listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
8. We will take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance. Should a potentially

serious incident occur, we will notify the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.

We will refer any potentially serious incident to our Safeguarding Referral Group consisting of the Rector, one or both Church Wardens, the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and / or the Deputy PSO to which Group authority to act on behalf of the PCC is hereby granted without obligation to refer back to the PCC. The Group will however be required to report to the PCC from time to time on the exercise of its delegated powers, bearing in mind any legal requirement to maintain confidentiality. It will meet periodically to review any incidents which have occurred whether serious or not, with a view to learning from experience.

9. We will offer support to victims / survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
10. We will use all reasonable endeavours to 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.
11. We will ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
12. We will appoint a Verifier to institute DBS criminal record checks, to keep up to date records and to ensure that renewed checks are done when they are due. The Rector will fulfil the role of Recruiter to receive the outcomes of checks and will either oversee appointments on behalf of the PCC or will appoint an Assistant Recruiter to do so. We will inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team if we use an alternative DBS Umbrella Body to APCS
13. We will appoint a Safeguarding Training Officer (STO) to ensure that staff and volunteers working in areas to which safeguarding applies receive the training stipulated by the Diocese and that a proper record is kept of such training. The Officer will liaise with the Diocese as required.
14. We will advise the Diocesan Safeguarding Team if we receive a Disclosure which is 'blemished', 'positive', or unclear.
15. If a safeguarding Serious Incident is identified, immediate action will be taken in accordance with the House of Bishops' Policy and Practice Guidance "Responding to, Assessing and Managing Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations against Church Officers", the Church Handbook and all and any other policies and guidance in place from time to time.

A Serious Incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant harm to the charity's beneficiaries, employees, office holders, volunteers or to others who come into contact with the charity through its work, loss of the charity's money or assets, damage to the charity's property or harm to the charity's work or reputation. What is considered to be "significant" is a matter for the trustees to determine, as it will depend on the context of the charity, taking into account its operations, staff, finances and reputation.

We will delegate the responsibility for promptly submitting safeguarding Serious Incident reports to the Charity Commission to the Diocesan Secretary, who will need to confirm to the Charity Commission that they are submitting the Serious Incident report on behalf of the charity trustees of the PCC.

16. We will review this Policy and the implementation of our Safer Recruitment Procedures at least annually, check that our other safeguarding policies are up to date, and supply a copy of this updated Policy to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Provision will be made for regular reporting to the PCC and annually to the APCM.

17. Each person who works within this church community in areas relating to safeguarding will be asked to agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church. All church officers will have access to Promoting a Safer Church. All volunteers will be asked to read it and the Diocesan Safer Environment and Activities guide and the Code of Safer Working Practice.

Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is:

Name: Mrs Fiona Livingstone
Telephone 01865 246674 (Parish Office)
Email safeguarding@stclements.org.uk

Signed - Incumbent: Rachel Gibson

Churchwarden: Merry Patel

PCC Secretary: Sue Cleave

Date: 17 February 2021

A copy of this Policy is to be sent to: Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, Oxford OX5 1GF

*Based on the Diocesan model dated August 2020
with the addition of material relating to the reporting of serious incidents
Last updated November 2020*