

The Parish of Handsworth, St Mary (Birmingham)
DRAFT NEW SAFEGUARDING POLICY
PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy 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.

The Parish will: -

- Create a safe and caring environment for all.
- Appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit (enhanced DBS check and at least two independent references), train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people 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 Church.
- 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 cyclically.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Each person who works within this Church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this Church.

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Safeguarding Procedures

All PCC members, staff/contractors and volunteer adults working with the Church will be required to undertake mandatory safeguarding training and a DBS check. A standard DBS check is required in most cases, but when dealing directly with the children, an enhanced check will be required.

In its dealings with vulnerable adults and children it is important that the congregation shall demonstrate:-

- Kindness
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Politeness

Adults must never:-

- Enter into inappropriate relationships with children
- Go into a child's toilet or dressing room unless doing so to perform your duties
- Use unprofessional language
- Enter into a sexual relationship with a child; or have any form of physical contact unless doing so protects the child from harm
- Give out your contact details - phone number, social media, email or address direct to a child or vulnerable adult
- Refer to a child on social media
- Post an image or any information about one of our children on the internet or social media without written parental consent beforehand and the authorisation of the Director of Music □ Bring nut products into a space with children

For staff and contractors engaged by the Church but working off site, they must:

- Follow Handsworth St Mary safeguarding policy
- Communicate quickly with their line manager and school/church safeguarding officer if a concern arises
- Wear your Handsworth St Mary ID at all times whilst off-site on Handsworth St Mary business
- Carefully adhere to procedures for children or vulnerable adults making disclosures (see below)

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- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Never leave children unattended
- Always challenge poor behaviour
- Ensure children never walk home alone, they must leave with a relative. If they have an afterschool club, ensure you hand the child over to staff *after* you have dismissed the other children to parents. If children are being collected by siblings, they must be over 14. If in doubt always ask their age. If the sibling is underage, tell a school senior staff member immediately and do not release the child.
- If in doubt about anything, ask a school senior staff member and inform the Director of Music. Do not release a child until a school senior staff member has been satisfied of safety.
- If you notice any unusual behaviour or a child feels unwell, tell a school staff member and inform the Director of Music immediately. If this requires you to leave the room, bring all children with you.
- Ensure children walk calmly and safely round school and do not allow them to leave the premises for any reason
- Be extremely careful with hot drinks around the children
- Report all issues to the school Safeguarding Officer and Headteacher
- Ensure all procedures in the risk assessment are carefully followed if on an external visit/trip with children.
- Keep abreast of any updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

Online Profiles of PCC members and staff/contractors

It is important to consider your online profile and if your past, present or future online presence could bring Handsworth St Mary into disrepute. It is therefore critical that you carefully monitor your activity on the internet and social media. PCC members and staff/contractors must never engage with a child on social media. If you are a contractor, accepting friend requests from parents/carers is also prohibited.

Disclosure procedures

NSPCC states abuse can be any of the following:-

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Criminal exploitation and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Grooming

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- Neglect
- Non-recent abuse
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

In the circumstance a child makes a disclosure:-

- Support the child to tell you the full story. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the matter but try not to be overly inquisitive. Do not ask leading questions.
- Tell them that you now have to do what you can to keep them (or the child who is the subject of the allegation) safe. Tell them you cannot keep it a secret, you must inform the Safeguarding adults.
- Try not to be alone with the child so far as possible
- Make accurate notes of the conversation including date, time and location on the Church form
- Reassure the child that telling someone was a good thing.
- Ask the child what they would like to happen from telling you, but don't make commitments because you will not be able to keep them
- Any concerns should be reported on a Safeguarding Report Form, which is a confidential process and managed by the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

This church has appointed Delia Arnold as the Parish Safeguarding Officer with Mary Jones as Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Contact Email – safeguarding@handsworthstmary.org

Incumbent currently vacant (Lizzie Longhurst from 30th September 2024)

Churchwardens: Keith Hemmings, Christopher Perry

Date: 7th September 2024