

St Mary's Church - Safeguarding Policy 2021



1. INTRODUCTION

1. The PCC adopts from the National Church the House of Bishops:
 - "Promoting a Safe Church: Safeguarding Policy" (CofE)
 - the Parish Safeguarding Handbook (CofE)
 - Practice Guidance Safer Recruitment (CofE) to also include the following points agreed at the PCC meeting 10/9/19 :-
 1. Requests to invite someone to a role requiring a DBS check should be sent to the Churchwardens and rector by email for their approval to proceed
 2. The process is carried out
 3. A list of those who have received a first time or renewed (every 5 years) DBS certificate will be presented to the PCC for its approval.

And Additional detailed advice and guidance for youth and children's leaders at St Mary's Church Eastrop attached.

This policy covers activities organised by the church under the legal or joint auspices of St Mary's Church, Eastrop, Basingstoke PCC.

Other groups hiring the church premises from time to time are not covered under this policy and would be expected to have their own Safeguarding Policy. This must be made explicit in any hire agreement. (See Model Safeguarding Provision for Church Premises Hire on Church of England Website).

2. The PCC appoints Caroline West as the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Fiona Edwards as Safeguarding administrator. In practice Caroline West will delegate some responsibilities to the staff member in charge of youth work (11-18s), with oversight from Revd Rob Phillips. All staff members and leaders working with children, young people or vulnerable adults are responsible for following the national Church of England Safeguarding Policies and Guidance. The PCC also appoints Chris Fry and Philip Hiorns as Safeguarding Advocates to champion safeguarding and to be independent points of contact.
- 1.3 The PCC approves the use of a Facebook and Instagram page for Unite+ (14-18) and appoints Rob Phillips as the person responsible for ensuring appropriate oversight.
- 1.4 The PCC will undertake to ensure safeguarding arrangements are easily accessible on the church website.
- 1.5 The PCC will ensure information about how to contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Safeguarding Officer is clearly displayed on the church premises.
- 1.6 A copy of Parish Safeguarding Handbook and the additional detailed advice and guidance for youth and children's leaders at St Mary's Church Eastrop will be provided to all Leaders and helpers of the children's and youth work on appointment and also at any future revision.
- 1.7 This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC and will be amended to take account of changes to personnel and any changes to national policy or the law in the past year. The PCC will report in the Annual Report to the APCM on Safeguarding and will review Safeguarding as a standing item on the PCC agenda.

Signed:  (Rector & Chair of PCC)

Date: 14 September 2021

Additional detailed advice and guidance for youth and children's leaders at St Mary's Church Eastrop.

This guidance is designed to supplement the advice given in the National Church of England Parish Safeguarding Handbook.

1. ACCIDENTS

- 1.1 Should there be an accident, an adult leader should stay with the child/young person while another leader or assistant leader gets:
 - First Aid box (located at Reception, Hall Kitchen and Annexe Kitchen)
 - A doctor or nurse if present.
 - Or phones for an ambulance.
 - Consults the Health and Consent form. (Church Office has the master copies).
 - When appropriate and as soon as possible, ensures the parent/guardian is notified.
 - If a child/young person is taken ill and their parents cannot collect them or they need to receive hospital treatment urgently, where possible two leaders should accompany them, including at least one leader of the same sex as the child/young person. Extra adults should, if possible, be called to replace the leaders at the hospital or group left behind.
 - First aid, where possible should be administered by an adult in the presence of another adult
- 1.2 Any leader who does not have medical training or a First Aid certificate, should act reasonably and do the minimum necessary to preserve life and limit the consequences of injury until help arrives.
- 1.3 No medication should be given to a child/young person without written parental consent.

2. CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE

- 2.1 The rules for each group should be clear and reasonable and age relevant. Control and discipline should be exercised verbally rather than physically. Children should not be physically restrained except as an absolute last resort to prevent injury to them or another child. In the event of an incident, make every effort to separate the child away from the immediate area at an early stage.
 - Talking calmly to the child will reassure them that you remain in control of the situation.
 - Do not shout or lose your temper.
 - Make sure that only one person takes the lead in resolving the situation with assistance from other adults.
 - Warn the child about unacceptable behaviour and be clear that they may be asked to leave or be collected by a parent/guardian.
 - Parents/guardians must be informed if the child needs to be excluded from any particular activity.
 - Keep a record of any incident where physical restraint was required and share this with the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
 - Where a child regularly presents with challenging or concerning behaviour you should discuss it with the relevant staff member and with the child's parents/guardian.

3. RECORD KEEPING

- 3.1 These procedures apply to both regular weekly meetings and occasional excursions.
 - A signing in and signing out book will be operated in any crèche.
 - For mid week activities children under the age of 11 should only be released from their groups into the care of their parent/guardian, after which responsibility for supervision belongs to the parent/guardian.
 - For groups during Sunday services children under the age of 7 should only be released from their groups into the care of their parent/guardian, after which responsibility for supervision belongs to the parent/guardian. Children in Explorers (7-9's) and Pioneer (9-11's) groups on Sunday mornings can be released from their Sunday activities at the end of the service as long as parents are on site and the church notices remind parents that they are responsible for their children from the end of the service.
 - Each group will keep a register of who is there each time, and in addition other basic

information including contact telephone numbers of parents/guardian and any important medical or health information. Sunday children's groups do not need any more than a register, providing there is a parent or responsible adult on site.

- For children's and young people's groups meeting when parents are not on site, parents/guardian will be required to complete a registration form when a child or young person joins a group and each time a child or young person moves up to a new group. Completed forms will be retained for reference whilst the child/young person remains in the group. These forms will be completed as soon as possible after the child or young person first attends the group and ideally within a month of joining. (* Unite+ may wish to use an additional consent form for college age young people to cover mentoring, texting and church policy on social networks)
- In the event of fire or any incident requiring evacuation of the building the registers must be taken and used to ensure all children and young people are accounted for.
- Additional consent forms are required for any off-site outings or residential events including sleepovers.

4. DAY TRIPS, SPECIAL EVENTS AND RESIDENTIALS

- 4.1 On residential events or outdoor activities, the ratio of staff to young people will depend upon:-
- the distance and complexity of travel
 - the activities being undertaken
 - the type of transport, and
 - the environment, including the weather
- 4.2 It may be appropriate, at the discretion of the overall group leader, to allow responsible older children to explore, say, a park, zoo or small town centre in small unsupervised groups of no less than three, in a specified area and for a specified period of time. No child should be left to wander alone and a central, easily recognised contact point (e.g. coffee shop or park bench) should be staffed by a leader at all times. Risks should be assessed in advance and parental permission sought.
- 4.3 Before any overnight activity or off-site activity, a Health and Consent form must be filled in by a parent/guardian. Blank forms are available from the Church Office, and you must take a completed form on the activity with you, one for every young person. If a young person arrives without a completed form, leaders can telephone the parents/guardians and get verbal permission for the young person to attend and make a written note of the information required. Activities for over 11's within walking distance of church, e.g. games in the park, are excluded, as long as parents are made aware of the planned activity.
- 4.4 A risk assessment form must be filled in for all off site or unusual activities and filed in the Church Office, this should include travel arrangements. Under no circumstances must dangerous/ adventure sports be undertaken without fully-qualified instructors and equipment.
- 4.5 A portable First Aid Kit is available from the Church Office, and should be taken when groups are organising off-site events. Ideally one leader in each group (excluding Sunday morning groups) should be a First-Aider.
- 4.1 Where children sleep in churches, church halls or other public buildings not designed for that purpose, a risk assessment must be carried out and consideration given to the following:
- Males and females must be allocated separate sleeping areas.
 - Consideration should be given as to where staff should sleep so as to ensure the safety, security and supervision of the children. Leaders should not however share sleeping accommodation with children.
 - Ensure parents/guardian understand and agree to the planned arrangements.
 - There must be two clear unobstructed marked exits from the sleeping area.
 - All exit doors must be easy to open from the inside.
 - To prevent the spread of fire and smoke, all internal doors should be closed at night.
 - Portable heaters should be turned off at night.
 - If there is no emergency lighting system that turns on when the power fails, leaders must have torches.
 - A list of all those staying should be kept by the main exit door.
 - Practise evacuating the building to the agreed assembly point before anyone goes to bed.
 - An exit or a fire appliance must not be obstructed by car parking.

- At St Mary's – no group must sleep in the Annexe due to the gas fire which could be turned on at night by young people

5. RISK ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT

5.1 Carrying out a Risk Assessment

Churches and organisations have a responsibility to assess the risk involved in the activities that children will be involved in. A risk assessment form must be completed and kept on file for every off-site or new unusual activity. The church office can provide a risk assessment form to be filled in. Where we are using the facilities of another organisation (e.g. canoeing) a copy of their risk assessment should be requested.

5.2 How to carry out a Formal Risk Assessment

There are five steps of assessing risk that the Health and Safety Executive suggest are as follows:

Step 1 – Look for the hazards and write them down

Step 2 – Decide who might be harmed and how and then write this down

Step 3 – Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate

Step 4 – Record your findings

Step 5 – Review your assessment, revise it if necessary and take whatever steps are necessary to manage the risks

5.3 Remember young people do not recognise risks as readily as adults and easily get into potentially dangerous situations of which they are unaware – so be alert.

Useful questions to consider when assessing risk:

- Is the activity suitable for the young people bearing in mind their age, ability, fitness and temperament?
- Is the staff team able to provide adequate supervision bearing in mind the young people and the nature of the activity? Should suitably qualified or experienced personnel be used?
- Is the location for the activity suitable and are there any weather related factors to consider?
- If equipment is being used, has it been checked to ensure it is safe?
- What rules or safety instructions can be given to the young people to aid supervision?
- What risks are associated with the individual children or young people attending.

6. TRANSPORTING CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

6.1 Whenever a group goes off-site for whatever purpose (e.g. visit to the park, a private house, a social activity) and by whatever means (walking, car, minibus, coach), a list of those in the group will be held by the Leader/driver and a copy retained at a central point (church office, church centre, start point). This list will specify who is travelling in which party/vehicle and will give an emergency contact number.

6.2 Walking

If an activity includes walking to and from a venue, the supervision ratios applied within normal activities in section 3 will also apply.

6.3 Private Cars

There may be occasions where transporting children and young people in a leader's/helper's private car is a sensible option. However, the general responsibility for arranging transport of children or young people to and from group meetings should be left with parents/guardians. Where the church is organising transportation of children or young people under 18:

Driver Expectations

- Only adults approved by the group leader should transport children
- Parental consent is required for all transport of children including to and from a meeting or as part of an activity
- Drivers must be over 21 and have held a full licence for three years
- Only responsible and experienced drivers should be used. If the overall group leader judges that a leader's driving might not be of an acceptable standard, then they are expected to err on the side of caution and use a different driver.
- Members of Unite+ who have a Driving Licence are NOT allowed to offer lifts on official

- Unite+ run activities and will not be asked to do so.
- Drivers with 6 points or unspent serious road traffic offences should not transport children for the church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state, i.e. not too tired, under the influence of alcohol or drugs or taking medication that could make them drowsy
- Except in emergency, all journeys should be with the knowledge and consent of the leader in charge.
- The safety of all children and teenagers is of paramount importance and the driver must take full responsibility for the due care of all those entrusted to their care.
- Under normal circumstances, it is preferable that an adult leader should not be alone in a vehicle with a child.
- Wherever possible there should be a validated leader in a vehicle used to carry children or young people to an event or activity.
- Consideration should be given to suitable additional adults to support a child with particular needs or challenging behaviour.

Insurance and Car Expectations

- All drivers must hold comprehensive insurance
- Leaders/Helpers and others responsible for the use of vehicles to transport young people on a Group activity should satisfy themselves that there is full and effective insurance for every vehicle and every driver taking part in the activity.
- We would strongly recommend that any Leader/Helper who is going to transport members of their Group in their own vehicle should phone their insurance company explaining this. (We have been advised that social domestic and pleasure insurance includes voluntary transportation but would suggest owners check with their own insurer).
- If the driver of a vehicle is not the vehicle's owner, then consent must be obtained from the owner - preferably in writing. A check should also be made that the owner's insurance policy covers such use. This is particularly important if a company or lease vehicle is used.
- If the above requirements are not satisfied, then use of the vehicle may be illegal and in the event of an accident, injured passengers may have no access to insurance funds. The driver would then become personally liable to pay compensation, which could be for a very substantial amount.
- All cars must comply with the law in respect of MOT and roadworthiness.
- Overloading a vehicle may constitute a failure to take due care, which may invalidate the insurance. Drivers and organisers of activities should ensure such a situation does not arise.
- All drivers must comply with the seatbelt and child restraint law.
- The back seats should be used first when transporting children.

Those organising outings requiring the use of private cars are responsible for ensuring that car drivers are aware of the above.

6.4. Minibuses

- A minibus permit (4 are available from the church office) must be displayed in each minibus to show we are a "not for profit" organisation not charging for the use of the minibus.
- Minibus drivers must be over 25 and with at least a minimum of 3 years regular driving.
- Only responsible and experienced drivers should be used.
- Drivers must ensure their licence covers the driving of a minibus or that the church has a minibus permit to cover use of the vehicle. (Check at permits@vosa.gov.uk).
- Only minibuses with fitted seat belts (both front and rear) will be used. Seat belts must be used by all passengers and the driver is responsible to ensure seat belts are being used.
- When off site trips are organised, involving the use of a Minibus, there must be the driver (age over 25) + 1 adult (over 18) accompanying the minibus at all times. Children must comply with the law with regard to child restraints.
- A minibus should have a working charged mobile telephone on board.
- A list of all passengers on board should be kept on each bus and an electronic version of who is on which minibus should be shared amongst the leaders of the group and also sent to the Rector and Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- A First aid kit should be on board.
- All medical forms for individuals should be on the bus they are travelling on.

6.5 Coaches

Coach bookings will be made with reputable hire firms whose vehicles are fitted with seat belts and these will be used.

7 Personal work (or “one to ones”)

As a church we recognise the benefits of personal work. Most personal work with young people occurs as informal conversations during the regular weekly youth meetings such as Engage and Unite (in a public space, where other leaders and young people are present) and in more formal Bible study groups such as Pathfinders, Unite+, 4Bs and GBGs (where at least two youth leaders and two young people are present).

On occasion, a leader may meet with a young person who is in school years 12 and 13 on their own. These must be arranged with the following conditions:

- Written consent (such as an email) is provided by the young person's parent or guardian.
- The overall youth leader has been consulted about the nature of the meeting and when it will take place.
- The youth leader is the same gender as the young person.
- The meeting takes place in the parent or guardian's home with the parent and guardian present and in a room with an open door.
- If a meeting in a home is not possible, the meeting takes place in a public place such as a coffee shop or the St Mary's coffee shop where at least one other person is present in the area (such as the church office) and it is during office hours or before and after Sunday services (when others are present).
- Meetings should never take place in a leader's home nor in a closed room. On occasion, groups of young people in school years 12 and 13 may meet at a leader's home with each of the young person's parent or guardian's knowledge, the overall leader's permission and at least one other youth leader present from the start to the end of the meeting.
- While there are benefits to personal work, we recognise there can be dangers to an intense and sustained one to one work between an adult leader and young person. Therefore, personal meetings (on the above basis) should be limited to four sessions and run no longer than a calendar month. There may be need for more meetings, however, permission for an extended number of meetings needs to be granted from the overall youth leader.

8. INSURANCE

- 8.1 The church is covered by the Ecclesiastical Insurers, used by most Anglican churches. The insurance covers all standard church activities, including those for children and youth. It does not cover insurance for risky activities (e.g. canoeing, abseiling etc, where a qualified instructor and separate insurance is required), nor does it include insurance for residential trips away. Residential establishments are required by the church to have their own full insurance liability. Youth leaders are responsible for checking that residential/ off site activities have their own insurance for visitors and a copy should be filed in the church office.