

St Peter's Tiverton

Guidance on Safeguarding Procedures

This guidance sets out the procedures to be followed within the context of the Safeguarding Policy Statement endorsed by the PCC on 24 May 2018.

Church activities involving vulnerable children or adults

At St Peter's there are a number of members of the congregation who are involved with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable to abuse. Their tasks can include for example, home visiting, lift giving, counseling, the choir and bell ringing where children or young people are involved, Time Together, Holiday Club and Make Lunch volunteers.

It is important that individuals take care not to place themselves in a position where they might have an allegation made against them; for example when parents are present they should not undertake the toileting of young children unless a parent requests that they do so. It is also wise, if holding a one to one conversation, to do so within sight of other adults if possible.

Vulnerability

Some of the factors which may increase vulnerability in babies, children and young people are:

- Single parent living in poverty
- Domestic violence at home
- Sensory, physical disability or impairment
- Low body weight or small stature
- Experiencing bullying at school
- Parent/parents who have mental health or physical health issues
- Parent /parents addicted to drink or drugs
- Learning difficulties
- Slow speech development

Some of the factors which increase vulnerability in adults are:

- Sensory, physical disability or impairment
- Learning disability
- Physical illness
- Mental ill health (including dementia) whether chronic or acute
- Addiction to alcohol or drugs
- The failing faculties of age
- Permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental, or emotional capacity brought on by life's events such as bereavement, trauma, or previous abuse

Abuse

Abuse of children, young people and adults can come in many forms:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Sexual
- Organized or Institutional
- Spiritual
- Abuse that is linked to faith or belief e.g. belief in possession or witchcraft
- Financial
- Psychological

Reporting incidents

Incidents of abuse, suspected or actual, including when allegations are made against a church member, should be reported to the appropriate authorities via the Rector and the Parish Safeguarding Representative Catherine Makepeace; they will consult the Diocesan Safeguarding Representative and notify the appropriate outside authorities where necessary.

Among statutory authorities who may need to be informed are the Police, Probation Services and Adult and Social Care Services. In the event of anyone witnessing or being told about current abuse it is essential that a careful note is made immediately of what was seen or heard. No promises of total confidentiality can be given if there is risk to the child or adult, or to other children or adults. The advice is to explain what will happen to the information given and to reassure the person concerned that no blame is attached to them. Allegations or suspected abuse must never be kept secret. Where allegations are made against a member of the clergy, the Diocesan Safeguarding Team must be informed:

Safeguarding Adviser

Charlie Pitman 01392 345909

Assistant Safeguarding Adviser

Phill Parker 01392 294969

The Rector and Safeguarding Representative will, in conjunction with the Church Warden, and on behalf of the PCC, provide information about the provision of pastoral care for children, and vulnerable adults and their families, and to any member of the Church against whom an allegation has been made, when this is required.

Appointments to paid or voluntary posts

Applicants for any job or task, whether paid or voluntary, should be given clear explanations as to what this job or task involves and made aware of the level of support they can expect. Applicants must be committed to

- Treating individuals with respect
- Recognizing individual abilities and their potential development
- Promoting their rights to make decisions unless unsafe to do so
- Ensuring welfare and safety

- Promoting justice, responsibility and respect for others
- Never passing on personal information except to the person to whom they are responsible

All those who apply for, or are asked to participate in, activities which bring them into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults should receive the appropriate DBS checks before they can be employed. Such checks are undertaken by the Parish Safeguarding Representative who will determine the level of check required. Before the check is made, the individual will be required to fill in the Confidential Declaration Form. DBS checks must be renewed every 5 years.

The Safeguarding Representative will also advise on the level of training required for the relevant activity; and training must be refreshed every 3 years.

Dealing with ex sex offenders who may wish to join the Church

Ex-offenders, including sex offenders, have the right to join the Church but only after conversation with the Rector or Safeguarding Representative and after consultation with the Diocesan Adviser. Such consultation will probably lead to the drawing up of a document stating the conditions under which this may happen and signed by the person concerned. If family members of the person concerned are members of the congregation, it will probably be necessary to direct the ex-offender to another church which is willing to have him/her in their congregation. An ex-offender should not be given any post within the Church which might be regarded as giving him/her authority and the appearance of being a trusted person.

Undertaking new projects

There should always be a careful analysis of any safeguarding issues likely to arise out of a new project if children, young people or vulnerable adults are likely to take part. This should include practical safety issues such as those which arise from the positioning and construction of the font. Those who participate in the project should be considered for DBS checks and safeguarding training, and any queries raised with the Rector or the Safeguarding Representative.

Storage handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information

As an organization using the DBS service to help assess the suitability of applications for positions of trust, the Church has undertaken to comply fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, storage, retention and disposal of disclosure information. At St. Peter's, the Safeguarding Representative is responsible.

June 2018