



St John the Baptist Church Bishops Tawton Policy Statement for the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

The following policy statement was agreed at the PCC meeting held on 27 February 2017.

Aim

As members of the PCC we commit our church community to the support, nurture, protection and safeguarding of all, especially the young and vulnerable. We recognize that any work with children, and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the whole church community. We will act in an open, transparent and accountable way in working in partnership with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Children and Adult Social Care Services, the Police, Probation Services and other agencies to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

Definition Children are defined as under 18 years old.

Principles

1. The safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility. Procedures and formal processes alone, though essential, will not protect children and vulnerable adults. The community, including all its members, needs to be prepared to report concerns and to take action if necessary.
2. The welfare of the child is paramount in matters of private or public law, affecting children which come before the family courts. The Church accepts and extends this principle to all areas of its work with children. Where conflicts of interest arise between the welfare of children and that of adults, it is the welfare of children that will be given priority.
3. We will ensure that those who are employed or who volunteer to work with children, and vulnerable adults are suitable for the role; that they know what the role entails; and that they are supported in carrying it out. Therefore, we will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility for children and vulnerable adults within the Church in accordance with the House of Bishop's Guidelines on Safer Recruitment.
4. We are fully committed to acting within current legislation, guidance, national frameworks and the Diocesan Safeguarding procedures but the suitability of an applicant or nominated volunteer should not be solely dependent upon DBS checks
5. We will respond without delay to any complaint made which suggests that an adult or child may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
6. We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

Practice

The PCC will appoint a Safeguarding Representative to work alongside the incumbent to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults who come into the care of the church.

The responsibilities of the parish safeguarding representative are:

- To implement and monitor the Parish Policy on Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults and encourage good practice.
- In accordance with current safer recruitment diocesan guidelines, to ensure the suitability of all volunteers and PCC employees in regular contact with children and vulnerable adults
- To obtain necessary DBS checks (including verifying applications) and renew these appropriately
- To actively encourage volunteers and PCC employees to undertake training, and keep a record of training taken
- To receive, but not to investigate, any suspicions of allegations of abuse which may arise in the church and to inform immediately and subsequently liaise with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.
- To send and update by email their contact details to the Diocesan Officer
- To undertake basic safeguarding training where appropriate.

The PCC will appoint a children's advocate, when it is appropriate to do so. This person will be someone whom children know they can talk to about any problems, if they so wish.

In accordance with the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, all staff and volunteers will work under named leaders who will manage, and support staff and volunteers in accordance with the latest legal requirements and national church guidance.

All leaders of organisations concerned with children, or vulnerable adults have a duty to liaise with the church Safeguarding Officer when recruiting staff or volunteers.

All adults working with children and with vulnerable adults in Regulated Activities are required to have current DBS certification and attend safeguarding training appropriate to their standing within the organisation.

All allegations of abuse or misconduct in relation to children by church workers or connected to an activity we provide will be referred to the Church Safeguarding Officer in the first instance who will liaise with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

In the event of an incident, statutory agencies (police and/or children's or adults' services as appropriate) should be contacted as a first priority if there is an immediate risk of continuing harm to a vulnerable person. It is the responsibility of the Church Safeguarding Officer to contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor as soon as possible in every circumstance, who will then offer guidance and support to manage the process.

Other organisations to be contacted may include the following:

- Ecclesiastical insurance 0845 777 3322 (Policy 04/XPG/9070288)
- Churches Disclosure and Barring Service (CCPAS) 0845 120 4550
- Charity Commissioners 0300 065 2199

The PCC is committed to co-operate fully with the diocese and appropriate statutory agencies during any investigation into abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

The incumbent; or in the case of a vacancy or the incumbent being directly involved, the churchwardens; have the responsibility to arrange for the provision of pastoral care to children and vulnerable adults and their families and to any member of the church community against whom an allegation is made.

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to proper authorities, of any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or vulnerable adult.

The PCC is committed in partnership with the Diocese and other agencies, to provide (where it is possible and safe to do so) care and supervision for any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or vulnerable adult, or to pose a risk to them.

In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognized good practice. We will act in an open transparent and accountable way in working with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Children and Adult Social Care Services, the Police, Probation Services and other agencies. This will involve, in particular, openness among those with a legitimate need to know, confidentiality for those not directly involved and the sharing of information with the statutory authorities.

Safeguarding Officer for this church is Mrs Anne Paget 01271 326482. This information is displayed on the Church Noticeboard and website.

Safeguarding is a standing item on the PCC agenda and this policy will be reviewed annually in the first full meeting after the APCM

Safety concerns:

If an individual child or adult, tells of abuse of any kind take the following action:

Listen, do not question. Never agree to keep secret

Report immediately to the Church Safeguarding Rep

Written report with dates, events, places to be given as soon as possible – preferably within the hour.

Immediate danger phone Police 999

Action for Safeguarding Rep

Contact the Diocesan Safety Advisor (01392 294912/345910)

Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) giving as much information as possible

Tel 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk

24 hour helpline The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) runs an emergency helpline if you are unsure what to do or need support **08451204550**

Appendix 1

Recruitment process

Appointments of volunteers and employees to work with children or vulnerable adults

Responsibility for all appointments ultimately rests with the PCC. The recruitment process for all roles that requires work with children or vulnerable adults is delegated to the Vicar, Safeguarding Officer and Group Leaders.

In the case of volunteers, a discussion or interview will take place to explain the role with the applicant. For employees a job description will be provided.

The applicant will complete a Personal Details and Self Declaration Form giving references

The applicant will complete an online DBS application through the Church Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

Appointment will be made on receipt of a clear DBS or as advised by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. Appointments can only be made by the Vicar, Safeguarding Officer or the Group Leader as delegated by the PCC

Before appointment all volunteers and employees will receive and complete a Volunteer Agreement and copies of the Safeguarding Policy.

Volunteers and employers will receive adequate training and support to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities

We will seek to offer safeguarding training to all those working with children/vulnerable adults every three years or within three months of appointment via the Diocesan online training programme

All volunteers will normally have been a regular member of the church for a least six months and are well known within the church community.

References will be sought for all volunteers

References for volunteers who have been attending the church for 6 months or more can be from members of St John the Baptist Church so long as the referees are of suitable standing and not related to the applicant. In this instance the referee must have known the applicant well for a significant length of time and had the opportunity to see them carry out various functions where the applicant has shown their trustworthiness and not exhibited any behaviour to have raised concern. A dated and signed record of a verbal reference is satisfactory for such volunteers.

Appointment of paid staff

In all appointments of paid staff we will comply with recruitment and selection practices detailed in the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Guidance for Parishes (2014) and the Safeguarding and Clergy Disciple Measure (2016).

DBS checks will be renewed after 5 years (as advised by Diocese)

Appendix 2 Audit of Activities

Sunday school Occurs alternate 5th Sunday. Involves supervision and instruction of children aged 4-11.

Takes place in village hall. This role may involve some personal care (eg taking younger children to the toilet) and therefore meets the criteria for Enhanced Plus DBS check.

School Work – Experience Easter/Pentecost Occurs once a year in the Church. It involves instruction of children from years 3 – 6 who are accompanied by their Teachers. This falls outside the frequency criteria and so not eligible for DBS.

Open the Book Occurs Monthly. It involves instruction of children in their school premises. Mandatory DBS required by The Bible Society.

Monthly prayer breakfast Does not involve any roles in a Regulated Activity and does not meet with frequency criteria. Not eligible for DBS.

Pints of View Meets monthly in the Village Pub. Does not involve any roles in a Regulated Activity and does not meet with frequency criteria. Not eligible for DBS.

Small home groups Adult Bible teaching and discussion group. Does not involve any roles in a Regulated Activity and does not meet with frequency criteria. Not eligible for DBS.

Bell Ringing Teaching Adult teaching together. Activity takes place in bell tower. Tower Captain to have DBS certification.