

St. Matthew's, Parish of Edgeley and Cheadle Heath

DIOCESE OF CHESTER

SAFEGUARDING AND VULNERABILITY

POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

‘SAFE IN OUR CARE’

FOREWORD

The Diocese of Chester understands safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church.

We recognise and respect the dignity of all vulnerable of people and we will strive to take all appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all and practice God's ministry to respond sensitively to their needs in order to keep them safe from harm.

We intend to ensure that all parishes and groups have the confidence to enable vulnerable people to know they will be cared for and respected by their Christian community in our Diocese. This document contains the guidance to enable parishes to be proactive in safeguarding and have confidence in responding effectively to all safeguarding matters that arise.

We would recommend that this policy is adopted by parishes within the Diocese. It is intended to be read alongside the national policies and procedures produced by the Church of England.

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1 - INTRODUCTION

Human beings are, by their very nature, subject to the changes of the world around them and opportunities that presents. Each person has strengths and weaknesses, abilities and limitations. At some time all are vulnerable to a wide range of pressures, concerns and risks. Nobody is without vulnerability. We may for most of the time consider ourselves strong, but we are subject to circumstances, and when these change our strengths can quickly disappear.

Some people, by reason of their physical or social circumstances have higher levels of vulnerability than others. It is the Christian duty of everyone to recognise and support those who are identified as being more vulnerable. In supporting a vulnerable person we must do so with compassion and in a way that maintains their dignity. Vulnerability is not an absolute. An individual cannot be labelled as 'vulnerable' as a child could be regarded as such. Childhood is absolute, until he or she reaches their eighteenth birthday, but that is not the case with adults. Some of the factors that affect vulnerability include:

- A physical disability or impairment
- A learning disability
- A physical illness
- Mental health (including dementia), chronic or acute
- An addiction to drugs
- Failing faculties in the ageing process
- A permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events, for example bereavement or previous abuse or trauma.

However, within the above, there are many people who would not consider themselves to be vulnerable and who lead full lives independently, and the law recognises and endorses this through very clear definitions and thresholds of vulnerability. How people view themselves is important, and we should be deterred from passing our own judgement on the degree of a person's vulnerability. However there is much we can do together, to enable all to live life to the full, maximise opportunities, and ultimately protect those who need keeping safe in our parishes, community and society. That is our Christian responsibility and which we endorse and promote within the Diocese of Chester.

2 - THEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO SAFEGUARDING AND VULNERABILITY

Every person has a dignity and value which we as Christians acknowledge as coming from God's creation of us in His likeness. We therefore believe that all people should be protected from harm. From the beginning (cry of a baby) to the end (the cry from the cross) the life and death of Jesus Christ illustrates the willingness to be vulnerable in order to share to the full our world of pain, poverty, suffering and death. In his earthly ministry He constantly showed himself to be compassionately on the side of the outcast, the marginalised and the stranger, reaching across social barriers with the inclusive love of God. This was wholly in line with the Biblical concern for orphans and widows, its obligation to provide a voice for the voiceless, and its call for justice to 'roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream' (Amos 5.24). The Risen Christ's commission to his followers ('As the Father sent me so I am sending you [John 20.21]) requires the Christian Church to exercise that same concern for those whom some in society treat as the outsider and the stranger, to reach across barriers of exclusion and demonstrate a love which shows itself in compassionate pastoral care and in the quiet justice for all our relationships. The heart of Christian care is love for God and for our neighbours, the expression of which is justice in all human affairs.

In line with the gospel of creation and redemption, Christian pastoral care has often been described in terms of healing, sustaining and reconciling. All people, and especially those who might be marginalised through vulnerability, need to receive the healing love of God to rebuild relationships with others or within themselves which illness, disability or abuse may have fractured. For those who have been abused, that love includes the need for these people to be listened to and be believed, supported as they cope with the effects of trauma, enabled to make the choices which will lead to healing and start on the road to forgiveness.

Within the Diocese of Chester we can demonstrate our commitment to this by carefully planning our ministries for children and adults, supporting families under stress, caring for those hurt by abuse in the past, ministering and managing those who have caused harm. These procedures are intended to help you to do what is required to achieve a safe environment for all.

3 - KEY PRINCIPLES AND VALUES: OUR COMMITMENT

The Diocese of Chester recognises its role in supporting parishes and organisations to support children and adults at risk to achieve their full potential and protected from exploitation, abuse and maltreatment. All adults within the Church of England have a responsibility to act and intervene to achieve the above. To this end we are committed to the following:

- The Diocese of Chester will act in an open and transparent way in working in partnership with the statutory agencies to safeguard those at risk and bring to justice anyone who has harmed a child or adult.
- Any person who brings an issue to the attention of the Diocese will be treated with respect and their issue taken seriously. All concerns will be dealt with in a timely manner in accordance with procedures.
- The Diocese will act within the Guidance set out in Working Together 2013.
- Appropriate pastoral care will be made available to children and their families and to other relevant people where there have been concerns or allegations expressed.
- In relation to adults at risk the Diocese will work actively and constructively within the framework set out in the guidance in Section 3 of 'No Secrets' (DoH 2000).
- The Diocese will promote the wellbeing of adults within the Church, recognising that adults have the right to be protected from harm and exploitation, but also recognising that adults have the right to independence that involves a degree of risk.

4 - THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Children's Social Care Services, the Police and other statutory agencies who work with children have duties and responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These are set out in legislation and government guidance. This policy document has drawn together the current legislation and guidance that is relevant for safeguarding to ensure that services are delivered to children and families. This includes:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013
- Information about Bullying
- Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation 2009
- Safeguarding Children who have been Trafficked 2011
- Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced 2008
- 'What to Do if You are Worried A Child Is Being Abused' 2006
- Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People 2009
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (April 2014)
- Safeguarding Children from Abuse linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession 2007

In Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, it is set out quite clearly that all agencies, not only statutory, including charities, voluntary agencies, faith communities and others are expected to follow the guidance and have procedures and systems in place to ensure children and adults at risk are safeguarded in all environments. In relation to ADULTS AT RISK there is a range of government guidance in place. This includes:

- No Secrets – A National Framework for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults: Department of Health 2000
- Action on Elder Abuse Report 2005
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Mental Health Act 2007
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

- Safeguarding Adults: Report on the Consultation on the Review of 'No Secrets' (DOH 2009)
- Protecting Adults at Risk: London Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures to Safeguarding Adults from Abuse 2011
- Safeguarding Adults from Risk of Harm: A Legal Guide for Practitioners, SCIE December 2011

The diocesan policy has been developed to comply with the legislation and guidance above. Where there are points of difference in updates the legislation will take precedence over these procedures. Please be reassured the Diocesan Safeguarding Commission will regularly review this policy and make appropriate amendments where necessary to enable you to keep up to date with any new legislation or guidance. Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators will be notified of these changes as they arise.

The key government guidance is Working Together 2013 which refers directly in Chapter Two and sets out the responsibilities and expectations of all faith communities in Paragraph Four. It is recognised that churches provide a wide range of services for children, and that religious leaders, staff and volunteers have an important role in supporting children and adults at risk. **All churches and faith communities are expected to have in place arrangements which include:**

- **Procedures to respond and report concerns**
- **Codes of practice**
- **Safe recruitment procedures**
- **Information sharing arrangements**
- **Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including safeguarding training**

The principles contained in 'No Secrets 2000' must be followed with the acknowledgement that the Church of England must not act alone but in partnership with all other agencies to combat the abuse of adults at risk. The Care Act 2014 will cover reforms of the law relating to the care and support of adults and the law relating to support for carers and will make provision about safeguarding adults from abuse or neglect. Future updates will advise of changes as they arise and these should be implemented as guidance is developed.

5 - KEY TERMS IN SAFEGUARDING

The statutory agencies use a range of terms and which can seem confusing to those who are not familiar with them. The following terms have been taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013. They can assist you in understanding what is meant by child abuse, child protection and safeguarding, as well as applying to adults at risk.

If you are unsure as to what a professional might be advising you, eg a Police Officer or Social Worker, please do ask for clarification. They might refer to a process through a shortened name eg MAPPA/MARF/CAF without appreciating you would not know what these terms mean. You are not expected to know such matters so please do have the confidence to ask if there is anything you do not understand. You may also contact the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer on 07703 800 031 or 01928 718834 x221 who will be pleased to help you with anything and explain the procedures and processes you might be required to use.

CHILDREN WHO HAVE NOT YET REACHED THEIR 18th BIRTHDAY

The fact that a child has reached age 16 and may be living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces or in prison, for example, does not alter their status as a child and rights to services within the terms of the Children Act 1989.

SIGNIFICANT HARM

'Harm' means ill treatment or impairment of health or development, and which may include witnessing the maltreatment of others. Development may include physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. Ill treatment includes sexual abuse.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Somebody may harm a child by either inflicting hurt or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can occur within families, in institutions, by those known to a child or adult, by a stranger, or via the internet. They may be abused by another adult or by a child.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

This may involve hitting, shaking, poisoning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may also be incurred when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms or deliberately induces illness in a child

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

This form of abuse can be hard to recognise as it may not be as obvious and which is why training in safeguarding is so valuable. It is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or adult which has an adverse effect on their development. It could include conveying to a person they are worthless and unloved, not allowing them to express their views, silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or adults, including over protection, bullying and cyber bullying (through the internet / facebook / mobile phones etc), causing children or adults to be frightened or feel threatened.

SEXUAL ABUSE

This involves forcing a child or adult to take part in sexual activities. It may involve physical contact (eg penetration, rape, oral sex) or non-penetrative such as masturbation, kissing, touching, even if outside of clothing. It may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at sexual images or being in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not only carried out by adult males, but by women and children.

NEGLECT

This is the persistent failure to meet a child or adult's basic needs, likely to result in serious impairment of emotional, psychological or physical health. This may include a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, protecting a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, ensuring adequate supervision and ensuring access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

SPIRITUAL ABUSE

This is of particular concern to those involved in Church life. Harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing or deliverance ministries. Religious beliefs can also be deliberately twisted by a perpetrator to legitimise sexual abuse or groom potential victims. Those people who are abused by clergy suffer profound spiritual abuse. The abuse shatters the victim's relationship and trust in the Church, severely impacts on the ability to maintain any connection with the sacred, and creates profound confusion and doubt about God's love for the victim.

RITUAL ABUSE

Ritual abuse is the physical, emotional, sexual and spiritual abuse of children and adults in an organised and systematic way involving usually more than one adult abuser. Ritual abuse may be used to imply some sort of religious or spiritual nature to events whether by a religious group or paedophile ring. Some ritual abuse is very violent and sexually extreme. Some involves ongoing abuse through family generations. It is difficult to have any clear indication of the extent of ritual abuse because of the secretive nature of many cults, the high level of control and also the fear of participants and victims. However it is thought that most towns and cities have cults and covens. There is also evidence of this activity in more rural areas. Survivors can often suffer with symptoms of complex post-traumatic stress disorder and dissociative disorders. It is important to be aware that the belief system of Satanism and some other ritual abuse settings are an inversion of Christianity. This means that many signs and symbols and rituals of the Church can be a trigger for survivors, and may affect the extent to which they can participate in Church life.

CULTURAL ABUSE

Abuse can happen irrespective of a person's social background, culture, abilities, religious beliefs or any other factor. It would be easy to dismiss cultural differences within our church communities as either not faith related, or not issues that concern the Church of England. This is ignoring both the reality of today's Church, which has at its core multi-cultural congregations, and where church growth is happening. People bring with them, as an important source of strength, their own cultural practices along with their patterns of religious belief and practice. Cultural abuse can include child trafficking, female genital mutilation, children or adults accused of witchcraft or needing deliverance/exorcism, or forced marriage.

ADULTS AT RISK

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over

"Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or exploitation."

(*'Who Decides'*) Lord Chancellor's Department 1997 and Section Two *'No Secrets'* (DoH 2000)

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 defines a vulnerable adult (adult at risk) as follows:

"A person is vulnerable in the context of the setting in which they are situated or the service they receive as follows:

- *Those in residential accommodation provided in connection with care or nursing in receipt of domiciliary care services;*
- *Those receiving health care*
- *Those in lawful custody or under the supervision of a probation officer;*
- *Those receiving welfare services of a prescribed description or direct payments from a social services authority;*
- *Those receiving services, or taking part in activities, aimed at people with disabilities or special needs because of their age or state of health;*
- *Those who need assistance in the conduct of their affairs*

A person's vulnerability level may increase or decrease according to the circumstances they experience at any given time. Adults at risk could include people with:

- A learning or physical disability
- A sensory impairment
- Mental health needs
- Who are HIV positive
- Substance misuse needs
- Dementia

'Abuse is a violation of a person's human and civil rights by another person or persons' (No Secrets DoH 2000): Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or omission to act or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or to exploitation of the person subjected to it."

A consensus has emerged identifying the following main types of abuse, whether deliberate, through negligence or ignorance:

- *Physical abuse*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Psychological abuse*
- *Emotional abuse*
- *Financial or material abuse*
- *Neglect and acts of omission*
- *Discriminatory abuse*

6 - UNDERSTANDING OUR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN SAFEGUARDING

THE DIOCESE

This Diocesan Safeguarding and Vulnerability Policy and Procedures document reflects the national policy and procedures as approved by the House of Bishops, and has been endorsed by Diocesan Synod. We are committed to:

- Providing a structure to manage safeguarding and vulnerability within the Diocese
- The appointment of a Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer who is directly accountable to the Bishop, and for which appropriate financial, organisational and management support is available. The Officer will have full access to clergy files and other confidential material. He / she may need to act as complainant under the Clergy Disciplinary Measure 2003. The role of the Officer within the Diocese will include work on behalf of adults at risk and take account of the wider sense of vulnerability.
- Ensuring the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer is informed of serious situations, including any allegation against a member of clergy, or anyone else holding the Bishop's Licence, concerning misconduct to children or adults.
- Monitoring of safeguarding through its own independent audit process in addition to the Archdeacon's responsibilities.
- Providing access to the DBS and ISA for parishes, the Cathedral, Bishop's Office and Diocesan Office for those beneficed and licensed clergy, paid workers and volunteers who need to obtain disclosures or to have their registration with the DBS/ISA confirmed.
- Keeping a record of clergy and church officers that will enable a prompt response to bona fida enquiries. This record will include start and finishing dates, all posts held and next post when known, where there have been safeguarding concerns, these should be clearly indicated on file
- Selection and training of all those who hold the Bishop's Licence, in safeguarding matters
- Providing training and ongoing support on safeguarding matters to parishes, the Cathedral, other clergy, diocesan Groups and Organisations
- Providing a clear complaints procedure which can be used for those who wish to complain about the handling of safeguarding issues
- Sharing relevant information about individuals with other dioceses, other denominations and organisations or the national Church as appropriate

THE PARISH

Each parish within the Diocese should safeguard their parish community in collaboration with the Diocese and be supportive of its policies and practice. All parishes committed to safeguarding should:

- Adopt and implement a safeguarding policy, accepting these procedures as a minimum, acknowledging the need for best practice, whilst being responsive to local parish requirements
- Appoint at least one Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator who will work together with the incumbent and Parochial Church Council to implement policy and procedure. The Co-ordinator should report to the PCC at least annually on the implementation of the policy within the parish.
- Consider appointing a separate Children's Advocate for the parish. If so this should be someone whom children know they could talk to about any of their problems. It can sometimes be helpful if the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is not someone whom children know personally.
- Display in church premises where children's activities take place, the contact details of the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Children's Advocate where applicable, together with Childline telephone numbers/cards (placed at children's height) and the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer's details.
- Ensure that all those required to work with children are appropriately recruited according to diocesan safer recruitment practices, and are trained and supported. The Diocese will make safeguarding training widely available.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children undertaken in the parish. You will probably find that your safeguarding insurance cover is dependent upon you having

effective and up to date safeguarding procedures in place and appropriately recruited and trained workers and volunteers.

- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding policies at least annually and complete the Independent Safeguarding Audit in addition to the Archdeacon's Report.
- If appropriate, in rural parishes, you might consider joining together to implement policy and procedures, whilst being aware of the separate legal responsibilities of each parish.
- If working with ecumenical partnerships, agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding policies will be followed, including where to seek advice in urgent situations, and advise your PCC of this arrangement. It is helpful to have a written agreement of responsibility in place.
- In the event of specific safeguarding concerns, ensure that all LEP partners are notified.

Please be aware that Church Schools are not covered by the provisions of this policy. The safeguarding responsibilities of schools usually come under the relevant local authority and Local Children's Safeguarding Board. Volunteers who go into schools from the parish should either undertake a DBS Check through the school's local authority process, or sign the school's visitors' book and comply with the school's internal procedure for managing visitors on site. They would not normally be required to undergo a DBS check from the parish for school volunteering. Similarly, church-related uniformed groups will also have their own separate arrangements.

In this context 'The parish' includes the Cathedral, Fresh Expressions or other diocesan worshipping communities.

7 - DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING STRUCTURE

Within the Diocese the Bishop carries the ultimate responsibility for decision making in respect of all safeguarding matters. He also carries responsibilities for dealing with issues that require Clergy Disciplinary Measures in accordance with canon law, and which are further clarified in the national Church of England policies.

In fulfilling his safeguarding responsibilities the Bishop is assisted by the Archdeacons, and advised by the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer and the Diocesan Safeguarding Commission.

THE SAFEGUARDING COMMISSION

The national policies require that each diocese should have a reference group to oversee the safeguarding strategy within the Diocese. The Diocese of Chester has established a Safeguarding Commission to fulfil this requirement, with an independent lay chair who has extensive experience in working with children and adults at risk. The Commission is accountable to the Bishop and Diocesan Synod for all safeguarding matters. It has a regulatory, advisory and supportive function and exists to discharge these functions at a strategic level in all matters relating to safeguarding within the Diocese. Essentially it seeks to monitor and oversee the work carried out by the Safeguarding Office but is not expected to have direct involvement in the provision or delivery of services. As a Commission, and through sub-groups where appropriate, it will:

- Secure a strategy for the promotion of safe environments in all parishes in line with diocesan and national policies and procedures
- Agree clear and unambiguous arrangements for liaison, consultation and working together regarding any allegations against members of the Church of England within the Diocese
- Ensure that the Bishop receives full information relevant to safeguarding incidents together with recommendations
- Ensure that all information relating to safeguarding matters in respect of parishes, and individuals and families within parishes, who have been victims of abuse through the Church, is passed to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer
- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are co-ordinated by the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer for the pastoral care of individuals and communities affected by abuse
- Ensure that long term arrangements are in place for members of the Church (clergy and laity) who are known abusers. Advise on the commissioning of risk assessments where necessary, for any extraordinary matters brought to their attention by the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer.

- Ensure that in all parishes there is a strategy to raise awareness of and promote training in safeguarding matters
- Monitor implementation of safeguarding strategies and work plans and report regularly to the Bishop via the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer
- Produce an Annual Report to Bishop's Council through the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer and ensure this is timely, accurate and comprehensive
- Establish a small sub group of professionally qualified lay practitioners (Police/Probation/Social Care) to whom confidential reference may be made when there are disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service which require a decision by the Countersignatory in order that a robust risk assessment and clear recommendation can be made to the Bishop or employing parish as necessary
- To assist in the selection of candidates for the position of Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer

In addition the Commission may set up, if necessary, other small sub groups of its members if issues of concern require more detailed work. Other people with specialist knowledge may be brought into these sub groups.

The Commission is drawn from the following membership:

- Independent lay Chair with specific current professional expertise in safeguarding
- Current qualified practitioners from Police, Probation and Social Care Services
- Archdeacon
- Clergy Representative (appointed by Bishop's Council)
- Director of CSR
- Director of HR / Diocesan Secretary
- Legal Practitioner

The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer is not a member of the Commission but is accountable to it. He/she co-ordinates every meeting and agrees and delivers the agenda together with the Chair.

DIOCESAN VULNERABILITY AND SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer is directly accountable to the Bishop for leading and managing child protection and adults at risk safeguarding. He/she is responsible for developing and implementing policy and practice to assist all parishes and organisations across the Diocese.

He/she takes the lead in creating appropriate practice in the prevention of children and adults at risk of abuse within the Church of England and in responding to all child protection and adults at risk protection matters. He/she will advise and inform the Bishop on appropriate practice in managing all matters relating to concerns and allegations of abuse within the Diocese. This includes advice on dealing with media enquiries and press statements and for which he/she will appropriately brief the Diocesan Communications Office.

He/she will liaise with the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators (see below) in their specific area and provide advice and guidance where concerns are raised or allegations made. He/she will have contacts with the statutory agencies in their area and are the point for making referrals to the Police or Children's Social Care Services/Adult Social Care Services in most circumstances. Referrals may be made by Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators directly to the agencies but in these situations they are asked to always inform the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer so that appropriate contact may be made in accordance with their role.

The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will keep records securely and will have active links with statutory agencies and Local Children's Safeguarding Boards within the diocesan boundaries.

PARISH SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR

This is an important role within a parish and one which requires very careful recruitment, although ultimate responsibility for safeguarding in a parish remains with the incumbent. The success of the safeguarding strategy within the Diocese is very much dependent on the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator having a clear understanding of their role and their capacity and willingness to ensure the tasks required are being carried through at parish level. The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator is responsible to the Incumbent and PCC, but is also responsible to the

Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer in ensuring policy is implemented and any issues are appropriately referred. The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will offer guidance, advice, assistance and support to the Safeguarding Co-ordinators as required and will maintain regular communication.

It might be helpful if the post holder has some experience in safeguarding or related work. However what is most important is the ability of the candidate to act with discretion, to maintain confidentiality, remain calm and reassuring and exercise vigilance. They must also be approachable, be a good listener and have the confidence to always pass on concerns they receive or become aware of.

The person appointed should be known to the particular setting and be contactable for advice as well as being a link to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. He/she will be expected to advise within the parish on all matters of safeguarding, for which appropriate training and support will be available from the Diocese.

The diocesan policies, procedures and guidelines will be provided to each Safeguarding Co-ordinator in the form of a Parish Resource Pack, and regular bulletins and newsletters will be issued during the course of the year to assist them with their task and keep them updated with safeguarding developments.

The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator will have received training and have some knowledge of child protection and safeguarding matters.

When a referral is made to the statutory agencies this may be undertaken by the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator in the first instance but he/ she is asked to inform the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer immediately using the form available from the diocesan Office.

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE

The processing of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures has been outsourced to Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS). The disclosure booklet containing all the information together with the forms for registering is available on the Diocesan website.

8 - DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES

Concerns and allegations about a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer some form of significant harm can come to the notice of an adult within the church at any time and in different ways. It may be an observation of a change in a child or a pattern of concerns over time. It may be that a child tells an adult something about themselves or often one child tells an adult about another child. Sometimes it will be the parents of another child who has been told by their own child.

If, as a result of the information, there is a concern that a child may have suffered, or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, a referral to the Children's Social Care Services or Police must be made.

Whatever the source of the information, the adult receiving the information needs to observe some basic rules when responding to the information they have been given:

- Listen to the information and acknowledge what you hear without passing judgement or minimising the information
- Do not put words into the person or child's mouth or make judgemental statements about any person
- Take into account the person or child's age and level of understanding, their culture and use of language
- Do not interrogate the child. You only need to obtain sufficient information to confirm their information meets the requirement for referring. The fewer times a child has to repeat their story the better.
- Remain calm and reassuring. Never show you are shocked by what they are telling you. They may stop sharing their story, believing you might not be able to cope with the information.
- Never promise you will not tell anybody. Explain that the information will be treated with great care and, where necessary, to safeguard the child, the information may be shared appropriately between specific adults trained to deal with safeguarding children matters.

- Make careful notes as soon as you can and include dates, times of the incident, and when the recording was made, who was present, and then sign the notes. Make sure you keep these securely.
- Provide the child or adult with some means to contact you and be clear about how and when you will contact them to feed back what will happen next.
- Do not contact the adult about whom the allegation or concerns are being raised to tell them about the information. You could be putting the child or another child in danger.
- Be clear about what you will do next and when. A child will need reassurance.

MAKING REFERRALS

Most people will require guidance when making a referral, especially when doing so for the first time. It is reassuring to know that when responding to a referral the agencies will do everything they can to assist you. They realise making contact with them can be a stressful experience for those who are unfamiliar with formal reporting. Their primary concern is to keep children and adults at risk safe. They do not over react and will usually ask for as much information as you can give them so that they can then understand the situation you are bringing to their attention, and they will offer you support, guidance and advice as to what to do next, if anything. Once a referral to them has been made, they will deal with the matter sensitively and professionally, and are qualified and experienced in doing so.

REFERRALS FOR CHILDREN

The referral should be made to the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) of the Social Care Services in your local area. Please insert the name and telephone number of your Local Children's Services Department here:

Ged Sweeney - 0161 474 5657

You never know when you might need it.

Outside office hours the call should be made to the Emergency Duty Team or the Police. Contact numbers will usually be available in the Local Area Children's Safeguarding Board Teams. The duty social worker will expect to be given the following information:

- The name, date of birth and address of the child who is the subject of concern
- The names of the parents/carers
- Any other children in the same household
- Details of the concern, allegation or incident
- Time and context of the disclosure, if any
- Any information known about the adult whom the concerns or allegations are about
- Is the adult aware of the referral?
- Are there any other children who may be at risk?
- What has the child been told about the referral?
- The name and contact details of the referrer

The Police and Social Care Agencies have a duty to liaise with each other promptly and work together in all cases involving children who are suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm. The referrer should be provided with the following information by the Duty Worker or Police:

- Their name and contact numbers
- What action they intend to take
- When they are likely to take that action
- Advice on what the referrer should say to the child, if at all
- Advice on what to do next, if anything
- A timescale for feeding back to the referrer the outcome of intervention bearing in mind that confidentiality might prevent certain information being shared

Once a referral has been made by telephone the referrer will be asked to complete a referral form which the statutory agency will send them. **Please also remember to complete the diocesan form available from Church House and send this in to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer who will offer advice and assistance and liaise with the statutory agencies in line with his/her role.**

If the adult or child requests anonymity when the referral is being made, those agencies will respect their wishes as far as possible. However where investigations proceed to Court this may not be possible to maintain. Anonymity should never be assured in such situations.

GUIDANCE FOR RECORDING

When you are faced with making a referral, the following guidance is offered to help you:

- Whenever possible and practical, take notes during any conversation
- Ask permission to do this and explain the importance of recording information
- Explain that the person giving you the information can have access to the records you have made in respect of their own information
- Where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time, make a written note as soon as possible afterwards and always before the end of the day
- Record the time, date, location, format of information (eg letter, tel call, direct contact) and the persons present when the information was given
- The record must always be signed and dated by the person making the record
- Include as much information as possible but be clear about which information is fact, hearsay, opinion and do not make assumptions or speculate
- Include the context and background leading to the disclosure
- Maintain a log of actions on the referral form and record times, dates and names of people contacted and spoken to as well as their contact details
- Include full details of referrals to the Social Care/Police
- Pass all original records, including rough notes, by noon the next day, to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer

The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will create a Safeguarding Case File which will be kept securely and will contain all records, logs, events and information relating to the particular child or adult as appropriate.

Where any meetings are held with the Bishop, Archdeacon or any other Manager the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will take minutes. The minutes will then be shared within 14 days and a record will be kept on the Safeguarding File. The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer is the person authorised to attend any statutory agency case meetings and invitations should be passed to them if received within the parish. They will usually have been the professional who completed the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) referral form and submitted this to the agencies. However, if the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator has carried this out then a copy of the CAF form should be sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Office as soon as possible.

A record should be kept of all actions agreed with the Diocese or Insurers and be placed on the Safeguarding File. The PCC must consider whether any particular incident should be notified to the insurers or Charity Commission. Any copies of information passed on should be retained on the Safeguarding File.

REFERRAL PROCEDURE FOR ADULTS

In December 2013 Adults at Risk replaced Vulnerable Adults in line with national developments of good practice and in line with the Law Commission Report into Adult Social Care (Law Comm No 326) 2011, rec 40.

If any person reasonably suspects or is told that an adult at risk is being, has been or is likely to be abused they must take action. Some actions may constitute a criminal offence.

Under no circumstances must an alleged abuser be alerted, directly or indirectly, as important evidence may be lost. Formal investigation will be carried out by the Police or Adult Social Care Services.

If a concern is actually raised by the adult at risk the following may help you to respond appropriately:

- Listen and acknowledge what is being said
- Be reassuring and calm
- Be aware that the person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend upon age, culture, language, and communication skills and disability
- Do not promise full confidentiality
- Ask their consent to take up their concerns
- Explain what you will do next
- If they do not agree consult with your Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer
- Try to encourage and support them to share their information
- Give them your contact details and those of the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer
- Give them a timescale for when and how you and/or the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator will contact them again. Never leave an adult at risk to wait to hear from someone without any idea of timescale or place
- Do not contact the adult about whom an allegation or concerns are being raised to tell them about the information. You could be putting an adult at risk in serious danger, eg where there is domestic violence taking place
- Where the concerns or allegation are about another adult in a position of trust within the Church do not inform the person in question as you might prejudice any police investigation. Always contact the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer immediately

If the concerns are raised by another person then follow from observations made by a member of the Church, make notes of the information and contact the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer immediately for consultation about what actions to take.

If the information about abuse towards an adult at risk is given by the abuser himself or herself to a member of the Church (clergy or laity) the person who receives the information must make it clear to the person that the information has to be passed on.

In all events do not delay in contacting the statutory agencies as the risk of harm to the adult at risk may be urgent. There will be an Adults at Risk Duty Referral Team within your area. Please obtain the contact details and insert them here **0161 217 6029 or out of hours 0161 718 2118** as you never know when you might need this information. You will be asked for information as in the guidance given above, and you will be given similar advice and support about what to do next. You will possibly be asked to complete and return their official Referral Form which they will send you.

Also please ensure that all information is also recorded on the diocesan referral form and passed immediately to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer, together with a copy of the Local Authority's Referral Form.

CONCERNS ABOUT A PERSON IN A POSITION OF TRUST

Where the concerns or allegation is about a person in a position of trust within the Diocese of Chester, do not inform the person in question as you might prejudice any police investigation. Always contact the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer immediately. Where the allegation concerns the person you would usually refer to, the next available line manager should be contacted.

Where an allegation has been made and the matter referred to the statutory agencies, it will be necessary to consider what action should be taken to safeguard any children or other adults who may be at risk from the adult. The statutory agencies will advise on what to do in this situation, as will the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. A temporary removal from post may be necessary while enquiries take place. This action does not imply guilt. It facilitates the process of the enquiries and reduces possible risks to children and/or adults pending further enquiries.

A volunteer will be required to stand down from their role until decisions have been made.

Employees (including clergy and diocesan Officers) may be suspended on full pay from their position by their employer in line with their disciplinary policies and procedures.

In cases of serious misconduct, the Diocesan Registrar and Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer must be notified immediately. The Clergy Disciplines Measure 2003 will need to be applied and Code of Practice issued in connection with the measure consulted. In such cases it is essential the line manager suspending the employee has the appropriate authority to suspend on behalf of the PCC or other employing body. Unless the police have requested a delay, as soon as preliminary enquiries indicate that a Church Officer may have committed serious misconduct, the allegation should be put to him or her and he or she should normally be suspended while the complaint is investigated. The allegation should be put in a non judgmental manner and the person be invited to have a trade union or other support person present during the meeting. It should be emphasized that the suspension is not a disciplinary action in itself and does not imply guilt, rather it is a precautionary measure that is taken where serious allegations are raised and an appropriate investigation is undertaken. A record of the suspension interview should be taken in case it is necessary to refer to it at a subsequent hearing and the arrangements for suspension should also be confirmed to the Church Officer in writing.

At the time of suspension, where the person is involved in other capacities with children or adults at risk, the LADO should be informed by the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer so that other considerations can be made. In addition it may be recommended that the adult be required to observe certain restrictions in respect of their activities and attendance at the place of work, in some cases this will involve a temporary removal from their normal place of residence to a place approved by the Bishop and away from direct contact with children and adults at risk. This will all be addressed within a Covenant of Care arrangement (see 'Covenants of Care' in section 11.)

Where clergy are concerned, and in all cases involving Church Officers where there may be liability issues, the employer, PCC or Diocese should inform the claims manager of the insurance company as soon as any incident arises that may lead to a claim.

All decisions made in respect of an allegation must be communicated to the adult in writing and in person by the Bishop or Archdeacon, in the presence of the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer.

ASSESSING RISK AND TAKING ACTION

An evaluation of risk to children and adults at risk is a continuous process which starts at the point where concerns are first raised. The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer and the Diocesan Safeguarding Commission are all points where assessment of risk is undertaken and reviewed. It is part of working practice to review all cases on a planned and regular basis. Mechanisms should be in place to ensure reviews are carried out in a timely fashion and/or when circumstances change. The Diocese is available to help parishes consider risk.

It will be necessary in some cases to issue a public statement when a person working within the Church is temporarily removed from post. The content and timing of any statement must be agreed with the Police if there are current investigations and/or the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) if the case has not yet been concluded. All such statements should be agreed with the parish and Diocesan insurance companies, and in liaison with the Diocesan Communications Department.

Once an investigation is concluded and in cases where the adult has been deemed to be a person who poses a risk to children or adults there are more long term actions to be taken in conjunction with the LADO. These can include:

- A referral to the local Multi Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPA)
- A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service
- A process of dismissal from the clerical office or removal from active ministry
- Disciplinary process leading to dismissal

Where an adult has committed an offence or poses a risk to adults, similar actions will be required by the statutory agencies

- A referral to the MAPPA Panel
- A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service

9 - PASTORAL SUPPORT

When an incident occurs within a Church context many people can be affected. It is important that the Church can recognise who might need support and how to respond pastorally.

During an investigation the child or adult and their family will usually require support. A separate person should be appointed to support the alleged perpetrator. These people should be uninvolved with the investigation and not communicate with each other during this process. These situations always require sensitive pastoral care and it will be important to communicate appropriately with the wider congregation at an appropriate time. This will require clarity over who will take responsibility for what information is given to whom and when, and you are requested to seek advice in the first instance from the Archdeacon and Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. They will usually have all the available information and be in liaison with the statutory agencies.

As soon as a situation arises or an incident becomes known, the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will draw up a list of all those affected and co-ordinate the provision of appropriate pastoral support. This may include an alleged victim, their family, alleged perpetrator, their family, the clergy, parish workers, any witnesses, and the parish community.

All those affected by allegations of abuse by an adult acting in a church capacity within any parish, congregation or other setting within the Diocese, are entitled to be treated with care and respect. All support offered will be focused on the best interests and welfare of children and adults at risk as the paramount concern. Where support is provided it will be done in a manner which respects the individual's privacy, dignity and safety, and which ensures as far as possible that particular needs relating to race, culture, age, gender, language or disability are addressed.

Where statutory agencies are involved, all arrangements for the provision of support will be undertaken in close liaison with these agencies. Children and young people will normally be offered support and services by or through the local authority. However there may be circumstances where it is appropriate for the Church to supplement or replace this support. Any such arrangements must be made in conjunction with the statutory agencies.

SUPPORT FOR CLERGY ACCUSED OF ABUSE

Arrangements for clergy accused of abuse and temporarily removed from ministry will be made in accordance with the requirements of Canon Law and the Safeguarding Policies. Clergy accused of abuse are entitled to contact the Bishop's office, through which a senior cleric will be appointed to provide appropriate pastoral care. Pastoral care will be given in line with CDM and other relevant procedures. It is recommended that the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer is present at any meetings and a written record made and retained in accordance with data protection legislation and the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy.

DISAGREEMENTS

If there is any disagreement about the support arranged for those affected by allegations of abuse, the individual may make his or her views known to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer in writing and will receive a written response within an agreed timescale. The letter may be forwarded to the Registrar, diocesan Insurers or Charity Commission as appropriate, and the decision of these bodies in these matters will be final.

10 - OUTCOMES OF INVESTIGATIONS

A CONTEXT

Some cases can lead to conviction and a custodial sentence or other penalties may be served by a court. However there can be many reasons why a case does not proceed to court or a person is found 'not guilty'. It does not necessarily mean there remains no concern and a person is therefore innocent. There may be evidence of inappropriate behaviour which needs to be addressed or a case may not proceed for technical reasons.

The advice of the statutory agencies should always be sought about any continuing risk to children. It may still be appropriate in some circumstances and in accordance with legal advice to continue disciplinary action. If there remain unresolved matters of concern, either untested complaints of serious harm or evidence of inappropriate behaviour by the adult, a professional risk assessment should be carried out to ascertain whether it is safe for the person to continue work which brings them into contact with children or adults at risk. Even if a charge cannot be sustained in court, there may nevertheless be well founded concerns which may mean that the adult should not continue to work with children or adults at risk.

Depending on the outcome of an assessment, it may be necessary to introduce a regime of conditions: training and supervision, to refer the person to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), to redeploy the person or terminate their employment.

FALSE ALLEGATIONS

Words such as false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious are often used in the same context when describing an allegation. The meanings are very different and it is important to understand the distinction between them and use them correctly. The term 'false allegation' can be broken down into several categories:

Malicious – This implies a deliberate act to deceive. A malicious allegation may be made by a child against a teacher for example following an altercation. For an allegation to be classed as malicious, it will be necessary to have evidence, which proves the intention.

Unfounded – This indicates that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of all of the circumstances. For an allegation to be classed as unfounded, it will be necessary to have evidence to disprove the allegation.

Unsubstantiated - An unsubstantiated allegation is not the same as a false allegation. It simply means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term therefore does not imply guilt or innocence.

The perception that an allegation may be false should not prevent a referral being made. Your responsibility is to refer, not to pass judgement. False allegations are sometimes made and they can have a devastating consequence on those concerned, as can the fear of them. Therefore it is important to provide support for alleged abusers during the investigation process and action should be taken to reinstate them quickly where allegations are found to be false.

Encouraging all complainants to give detailed accounts to the Statutory Authorities facilitates an early appraisal of the evidence by experienced professionals. A false allegation can usually be identified at an early stage before any publicity begins. Legal action may be taken against any person who makes a malicious or false allegation, however children are not normally subjected to these.

Efforts to restore a person's reputation should be proportionate, considering the level of publicity which surrounds the allegation, and the falsely accused's wishes re the matter.

CHARACTER REFERENCES

Sometimes as part of court proceedings, the solicitor acting for an accused person might ask you to provide a character reference for the individual. Clergy and others should be mindful of the risks in providing character references in criminal matters. They should avoid commenting on matters under investigation unless invited by the investigation team at a formal meeting or in a confidential discussion with the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer or Registrar. If you do wish to provide a reference you are advised to restrict any information to known facts or first-hand knowledge. It is perfectly acceptable to decline to provide a reference, as to do so might present a conflict of interest where there are alleged victims in a parish community.

ARCHBISHOP'S LIST

The Archbishop's List was set up by the Clergy Discipline Measures 2003. It is compiled and maintained jointly by the archbishops and is kept at Lambeth Palace. A copy of the list is kept by the Archbishop of York at Bishopsthorpe. It is not open for public inspection, but is available to the President of Tribunals and diocesan bishops and registrars. It lists only ordained clergy. There are five categories of names in the list:

1. Those on whom a penalty under the Measure has been imposed (or those liable to a censure under the Measure's predecessor, the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963)
2. Those who were deposed from Holy Orders under the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963
3. Anyone who has executed a deed of relinquishment under the Clerical Disabilities Act 1870
4. Anyone who has resigned following the making of a formal complaint
5. Those who, in the opinion of the archbishops, have acted in a manner (not amounting to misconduct) which might affect their suitability for holding preferment (ie any office or position requiring the discharge of spiritual duties)

The presence of a person on the list does not necessarily imply that the person does or does not present a risk to children. In appropriate cases, information about facts which led to the inclusion of a person on the list may be obtained by authorised diocesan officers from the authorities in Lambeth and Bishopsthorpe. Appropriate cases will need to be referred by the diocesan Bishop. For further information please see the Clergy Discipline Rules 2005 and the Code of Practice under the Measure.

REINSTATEMENT AND REDEPLOYMENT

When there is a clear case for re-integration or the allegation is found to be of an innocent or low level inappropriate behaviour that does not warrant more than a written or verbal warning, the individual will potentially be re-integrated into active ministry having regard to the perceived position and expressed anxieties of those involved.

However limited in its scale, any abuse of trust and the misuse of power and authority by a person acting in the name of the Church community, will impact on members of that community. Forgiveness and reconciliation will always require the offender to acknowledge the ongoing consequences of his or her behaviour. It may not be possible for some individuals to return to a ministry in the Church community.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the future employment or volunteering of any individual who has been the subject of an allegation, especially where a case has not been proven, or in situations where a caution has been given or Rehabilitation Order or similar imposed by a Court. In exceptional circumstances consideration may be given to the commissioning of a professional independent risk assessment with a view to making recommendations regarding a person's future, identifying risks and scope for appropriate treatment plans. However these are undertaken on an individual basis and the fact this may be carried out with one individual does not mean there is a precedent whereby this could be deemed appropriate for another person.

Because of the compulsive nature of sexual offending, a person cautioned or convicted for any sexual offence, including internet offences (eg downloading or possession/making of child abuse images and irrespective of how many), should not be in any position whereby he/she has access to children. Nor should they be given any role which could be perceived by those within the parish to be a position of trust.

11 - MINISTRY TO KNOWN OFFENDERS

INTRODUCTION

The term 'offender' applies only to those people who have a conviction or have accepted a caution, reprimand or warning for a sexual offence. Acceptance of a caution is an admission of the offence and is, therefore, equivalent to a conviction. A caution will appear on a DBS Disclosure Certificate. All sexual offences against children are classed as being never 'spent', despite a person having ceased signing the Sex Offender Register. This can often come as a shock to those with a sexual offending history, especially when the DBS check contains offence history they have not disclosed on a self-declaration.

It is the policy of the Church of England (Promoting All God's Children 8:8.3) that all people with positive or 'blemished' DBS checks should undergo a risk assessment by a suitably qualified person. In the Diocese of Chester, dependent upon the nature of the offence, this may be carried out by members of the diocesan Safeguarding Commission who are qualified professionals in the field of Social Care' Probation and the Police, together with the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. The nature of the assessment should be proportionate to the matters disclosed.

Old minor offences, unrelated to children and adults will not normally bar a person from working with these groups. Whilst not being complacent about risk, some offences do not carry the same level of risk or danger. However it is now a criminal offence for any person who is subject to the ISA/DBS Barred List who subsequently applies for a role with children or adults at risk. It is also an offence for an employer to offer a position knowing a person is subject to a Barred List.

CONVICTED OFFENDERS AGAINST CHILDREN

Research has indicated that a higher proportion of convicted offenders against children may be found in congregations than in the population generally (Donald Findlater of the Lucy Faithfull Foundation). This may be because an offender wishes to be reconciled with his offending and seeks repentance and lead a good life. However it may be that an offender sees the Church as being a place where he/she can get easy access to children and adults at risk and where there is a culture of trust and openness and welcome that supports this.

Within any Church congregation there will be offenders, victims and survivors. It is the Church's duty to minister to all and it can require great sensitivity to meeting conflicting demands and needs. However the safety and welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount. As well as people with convictions against children there are others whose position in a congregation may need to be carefully and sensitively considered to decide if they pose a risk to children or adults. This could include people with internet related offences, people involved in drug or alcohol addiction, people with a mental disorder or special needs which might, in some cases, result in erratic behaviour. It would also include those who do not have convictions or cautions but where there are sound reasons for considering they might present a risk to children. In appropriate cases the approach recommended below for managing sex offenders should be adopted:

MUTLI AGENCY(MAPPA) ARRANGEMENTS

Guidance under MAPPA states that faith communities must put in place effective arrangements that allow them to ensure that they are able to protect their community while allowing a sex offender to maintain his or her right to worship in a safe place where possible. An assessment of risk must be carried out, which should be done together with the Police, Probation Service or Social Care, and with the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer.

Prison chaplains should be aware of the protocols and ensure that there is good liaison when an offender leaves prison and wishes to worship in a church. There should always be a discussion with the offender about expectations of their behaviour and the fact that a written contract determining these, referred to as a Covenant of Care Agreement, will be drawn up and regularly reviewed. Where an offender is unwilling to have his or her information shared with the faith community leaders or consent to a Covenant of Care, consideration should be given as to whether the agencies should seek a SOPO (Sex Offender Prevention Order) or restrictive condition on a licence to prevent the offender from being in a place of worship. The outcome of such decisions will be recorded on a ViSOR (Violence and Sex Offender Register) and the case management record. A SOPO can also be

used to control an offender's involvement in a place of worship. (MAPPA Guidance 2009, S6.5,7.0) Please note that management arrangements are likely to continue to be needed even after statutory agency monitoring has ceased.

MINISTERING TO THOSE WHO ARE KNOWN TO HAVE SEXUALLY ABUSED

Pastoral care is important for everyone within the Church, however the Church is committed to managing and challenging abusive behaviour. It should be offered in a way that seeks to ensure that others within the Church, particularly those who may be vulnerable, are kept safe. Within the Diocese, we show our commitment to those who have sexually offended through the establishment of a Covenant of Care.

WHAT IS A COVENANT OF CARE?

A Covenant is a written formal document which contains some agreed rules and guidance about how an individual identified as posing a risk or potential risk can be enabled to attend and participate in Church life. It is an individualised document and should represent the needs of the individual and be drafted in consultation with him/her. It specifies what the individual subject to the Covenant may expect from the Church and also what is expected from them. This might include restrictions with regard to some of the following:

- Activities
- Contacts
- Residence
- Attire

It should not include blanket bans unless these can be justified with reference to risk. The Covenant agreement is signed by the subject, the priest in the parish, the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. Sometimes the statutory agencies are involved eg if a person is out of prison on licence, and they may also be signatories.

A Covenant of Care is not a legal document. It is hoped that those involved will enter into it knowing that they will be respected and treated fairly with a commitment to practicing safe behaviour. Where a Covenant agreement has been breached it may be necessary to inform the Statutory Agencies.

WHEN IS A COVENANT OF CARE REQUIRED?

A Covenant of Care is required in circumstances where an individual intends worshipping within or being an active member of any Church setting, in circumstances where:

- There are significant concerns/allegations/convictions which indicate a possible risk of harm to others
- When a convicted sex offender or violent prisoner is released from prison and intends to attend Church
- Where ordained and licenced ministers within the Church have been temporarily removed from ministry pending enquiries of a safeguarding matter
- Where after enquiries have been made the Bishop has applied CDM measures and the individual wishes to attend a place of worship
- Where an individual is subject to any current investigation or assessment of risk for a safeguarding matter

PREPARING A COVENANT OF CARE

The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will usually initiate and develop the Covenant of Care. Careful preparation will include identifying all the agencies and individuals who may hold relevant information regarding the risk posed by the subject. The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will assess the risk in liaison with the above. He/she will then identify what Church resources might be available to assist with the individual's needs eg parishes, services which might be appropriate. The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will then determine the nature of the meeting required to draft and agree a Covenant of Care in terms of where and when this will take place and who needs to attend. In the event of others attending, the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer might need to determine what preparation each person might need and brief them accordingly. He/she will also need to identify what preparation the subject of the Covenant will need and what support is available to them during the meeting.

Whilst the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer should demonstrate a willingness to negotiate he/she will also need to be clear on what is open to negotiation and what is not. However the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer should act as a facilitator to achieve an agreed conclusion. He/she will emphasise the support elements of the Covenant as applying to both the subject of the Covenant and those within the parish who need protecting. This will involve making clear any restrictions to ministry, contact etc. How monitoring of the Covenant of Care should be achieved must be clearly advised as should the requirement to share information with the appropriate persons should the individual move to a different parish or diocese. There is a template Covenant of Care in the Parish Resource Pack.

WHAT TO DO IN A PARISH WHEN IT BECOMES KNOWN A SEXUAL OFFENDER IS ATTENDING

A parish might become aware an offender is worshipping in a parish in a number of ways. This might include receiving the information from the Diocese, the Police or Probation Services, contact from the local media, other parishioners sharing information, or the actual person concerned self-disclosing. When you first become aware it is important to understand that you may not have the accurate information. The individual may have minimised their offence, or you may have picked up third party information or rumour. It can also be difficult if the person is well known within the parish community and accepted as a person of good standing who is trusted and might have specific responsibilities. The following protocols are intended to help you to deal with this situation should it occur within your parish:

- Please contact the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. He/She will liaise with the statutory authorities to obtain any necessary information which should be provided to him/her within the terms of the Working Together 2013 guidance and MAPPA arrangements. The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer is qualified and experienced in this area and will be the point of reference for the statutory agencies
- A meeting will then be convened between the parish clergy, Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. This will be for the purposes of sharing information obtained from the agencies and establishing the offender's current participation in parish life. How the person will be approached about the requirement for a meeting to discuss a Covenant will be agreed between those present, and whether the individual might be offered to bring a support person to the meeting
- At the Covenant meeting the group will draw up an appropriate Covenant of Care Agreement. It will be carefully explained to the person that this is not a punitive measure, but one which will enable the person to worship safely within a safe environment. On occasion the statutory agencies may attend these meetings and they often request copies of Covenant agreements.
- The Covenant of Care will include where the person will worship and which service you consider to be the most appropriate. Normally this will be one which has a mainly adult congregation. It will identify any support people required, and agree monitoring and reviewing arrangements. Support, pastoral care and friendship are significant factors in determining recidivism. You may wish to include where a person might sit, and identify restrictions such as declining hospitality where there are children, never being alone with children, and having no official role in the parish (because of the perceived position of trust). The Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for drawing up the Covenant and explaining its implementation to the person concerned.
- It will be made clear that no other people within the congregation or community will be informed of the existence of the Covenant without the knowledge and consent of the subject and clear boundaries of confidentiality will be respected.
- An Agreement must remain in place in an ongoing capacity, even if a person has ceased their involvement with the statutory agencies. That is to ensure any ongoing risks are managed and monitored. It can also lower the possibility of the subject being wrongly accused of abuse. It will be agreed how often the Covenant will be reviewed. Initially this may be more regular, eg after four weeks, then perhaps two months and then four months, depending upon the level of risk and the compliance by the individual.
- If an Agreement is breached the individual will understand that the statutory agencies will be advised. If this happens please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. In some cases it may be appropriate to cease or restrict attendance in a parish and the Diocesan Registrar will be informed and sought for advice. If a person leaves a parish to worship elsewhere, the agencies will approach the new place of worship to ensure that the appropriate safeguards can be put in place there.

- Please be reassured that Covenant of Care agreements generally work very well. They give all involved clarity over what the expectations are and the contents can be reviewed as required to reflect changing circumstances. The statutory agencies welcome these Church arrangements and view them as the Church acting responsibly and demonstrating commitment to the safety and welfare of the parish community.

12 - DOMESTIC ABUSE

WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

The definition of Domestic Violence and Abuse was updated in March 2013 to include the reality that many young people are experiencing domestic abuse and violence in relationships at a younger age. They may therefore be Children at Risk, in need or likely to suffer significant harm. The definition from the Home Office is as follows: 'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence and abuse between those aged 16 or over, or who have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Physical
- Psychological
- Financial
- Sexual
- Emotional

CONTROLLING BEHAVIOUR is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

COERCIVE BEHAVIOUR is an act or pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.'

Physical: For example hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining, assault with kitchen knives etc, smashing possessions, imprisoning them, or forcing them to use illegal drugs as a way of blackmailing them or controlling them

Psychological: For example shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring, ridiculing, threatening to harm children or pets, keeping them deliberately short of sleep, being obsessively jealous, keeping them isolated from friends

Financial: For example withholding money from them, taking control of their finances, giving insufficient money for shopping and clothing, stealing, demanding and making threats unless money is given to them

Sexual: For example forcing a person to take part in sexual activity without consent eg rape or sexual assault, forcing them to carry out sexual acts with others, forcing children to watch sexual acts, sexual name calling, imposition of dress code on a partner, involvement in the sex trade or pornography, knowingly passing on sexually transmitted diseases

Neglect: For example depriving someone of food, shelter, heat, clothing, comfort, essential medication or access to medical care

SAFEGUARDING AND DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse becomes a safeguarding matter if:

- There are children living in the household
- There are children regularly visiting the household for example for contact
- The victim lacks capacity
- The victim is an adult at risk
- The victim is dependent upon their partner for care

In the above situations where concerns are raised, the referral procedures must be followed. In all other scenarios the individual subject to domestic abuse should expect to receive a sensitive and consistent pastoral response.

THE LAW RELATING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE

Research suggests that people subject to domestic violence within their home usually try to resolve the problem within the private sphere. Going public to seek help is often the last resort and requires much courage. There has been understandable reluctance in the past for the Police and Social Services to become involved with private household matters. This is in part due to the failure to acknowledge domestic abuse as being criminal violence against another person, predominantly women. This position has changed in recent years and has resulted in legislation designed to address these situations.

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 empowers the Police to enter premises without a warrant for the purpose of saving life or limb. They can arrest without warrant if they have reasonable grounds for believing arrest is necessary to prevent physical injury. The Family Law Act 1996 can be used to require someone to leave the home or not come near the home. The Act also includes the provision for non-molestation Orders which covers:

- Threats of physical or sexual violence
- Carrying out physical or sexual violence
- Phone calls
- Letters

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 relates to a person whose course of conduct causes another to fear, on at least two occasions, that violence will be used against them.

These pieces of legislation should help to enable those individuals subjected to domestic abuse to live in their own homes and aggressors be excluded. Recourse to this type of public protection can only be sought however if the individual is aware of the law and their rights and is supported in making the choice. The local police force will have in place systems and procedures for dealing with reports of domestic abuse. They operate a risk assessment system referred to as the MARAC model of intervention which involves risk assessment in all reported cases of domestic abuse to identify those at highest risk so that a multi agency approach may be taken to reduce future harm to high risk victims of domestic abuse and their children. A useful booklet is available as guidance for best practice for health staff at 'Improving Safety, Reducing Harm: Children, Young People and Domestic Violence – A Practical Toolkit for Frontline Practitioners.' (DoH 2009)

GUIDELINES FOR A PARISH

All parishes should take domestic violence seriously and should discuss the issue with the PCC and decide on realistically achievable action. When raising awareness of this issue remember that it is quite possible someone in the PCC has personal experience of abuse, and it may arouse deep emotions and stir up memories. Within any year, approximately one in nine women experience abuse. Others will have close family members who are being abused, and others will have experienced it in the home when they were children or young people. It is also important to note that men also can also be victims of domestic abuse.

- Display posters or leaflets and local information about where help can be available, and keep this up to date. Literature and information should reflect the ethnic perspectives and promote cultural sensitivity in appropriate ways.
- Invite a speaker from the Police, Women's Aid or a recognised agency to talk to all members of the Church community. Anyone could be taken into confidence by someone suffering abuse, so it is important that everyone knows about the subject.
- Include in marriage preparation themes of equality, entitlement, conflict, violence, and control.
- Ensure that programmes for children and young people include appropriate opportunities to talk about dealing with anger and violence. Those children who have lived with violence want to talk about it and

make sense of their experiences. Young people often find it easier to talk to peers than with adults, so create opportunities for paired and small group work. Offer support to confidants.

- Give financial support to one of your local projects or an organisation.
- Consider what support can be given to survivors from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with insecure immigration status, and to organisations working with them.
- Organise courses in parenting and confidence building skills.
- Challenge inappropriate comments or behaviour by Church members.
- Encourage leaders and those who preach to speak out against domestic abuse in teaching, sermons, prayers and parish magazines – bearing in mind that many of the congregation may have personal experiences.

GUIDELINES FOR THOSE WITH PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Diocese acknowledges the very important responsibility placed on parishes to respond appropriately to the needs to those who experience domestic abuse. You are welcome to contact the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer at any time for advice and assistance. Guidelines have been drawn up to help you in your task, based on the following principles:

- Belief in God as love expressed in relationships
- Understanding of humanity (male and female) as made in God's image, and possessing equal worth
- Equality among people and within relationships
- Refusal to condone any form of abuse
- Recognition that domestic abuse is prevalent among Christians, as among other groups
- Acceptance that survivors may choose anyone they trust to talk to, and not necessarily those with pastoral responsibilities
- Awareness that training for all is essential
- Partnership with other agencies is the best way to provide informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult suffering abuse
- Support, supervision appraisal and ongoing training for those with pastoral responsibilities is essential and will be made available

FACTORS TO BE AWARE OF

Those suffering abuse are likely to turn to someone they trust, who may or may not be in a position of responsibility. However if you are concerned that someone you know may be a victim, you may notice that he/she exhibits one or more of the following behaviours:

- Has unexplained bruises or injuries
- Shows signs of feeling suicidal
- Becomes unusually quiet or withdrawn
- Has panic attacks
- Has frequent absences from work or other commitments
- Wears clothes that conceal even on warm days
- Stops talking about her/his partner
- Is anxious about being out or rushes away.

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Most survivors want to be asked. If you are able to broach the subject your offer of help could be the first step in enabling them to seek help, eg 'How are things at home?' and if it becomes appropriate, 'Is anyone hurting you?'

- Do try wherever possible to talk in a safe place, private place where you will not be interrupted, or arrange to talk again (although someone in distress may start talking anywhere).
- Do try to make it clear that complete confidentiality cannot be promised, depending on the nature of what is being disclosed.
- Do dial 999 if you are witnessing a violent incident or if the person needs medical care.

- Do take plenty of time to listen and believe what they say. If they sense disbelief they may be discouraged from speaking again.
- Do be sensitive to people's backgrounds and cultures and check your own and their understanding of how the cultural differences and issues affect them. Ask them about the attitude of their families and what support they can expect.
- Do affirm the strength and courage it takes to have survived the abuse and even more to talk about it.
- Do express concern for their safety and discuss it. Do they have somewhere to stay?
- Do ask about the children. Are they abused or witnesses to abuse? If so you may need to report it or allow you to do so. You may have no option to do so if a child is at risk.
- Do encourage them to focus on their own needs, something they may not have been able to do since the abuse began but which is critical in helping them to change their situation.
- Do reassure them that, whatever the circumstances, abuse is not justified and not their fault.
- Do ask them what they want from you and the parish. Offer help which is in response to their needs and preferences and which lets them keep in control.
- Do check if it is alright to contact them at home before doing so.
- Do keep information confidential and never pass on an address unless you have consent (and unless it constitutes a child protection referral)
- Do give information about where to get specialist help, particularly help that is available locally. Do encourage them to seek professional help even if they do not want to leave.
- Do make a brief, objective note of date, facts and context of what you have been told, but keep your opinions separate. This should be kept in strict confidence but could be useful in any future prosecution.
- Do not trivialise, judge, criticize or dismiss what they tell you.
- Do not have physical contact.
- Do not put yourself in a dangerous position. Do not confront the alleged perpetrator or offer to mediate.
- Do not give advice, suggest they 'try again' or make decisions for them or try to take control. Discuss their options, find out what *they* want, bearing in mind that sometimes their wishes may have been manipulated by a perpetrator. Help them to achieve their wishes. They may change their mind several times. You may experience feelings of frustration, but the choice has to be theirs otherwise you are mirroring the behaviour of an abuser.
- Do not expect them to make decisions in a hurry. Leaving may be as frightening as staying. Helping them build a contingency plan may make them feel in control of their life.
- Encourage a victim to talk to their GP and to seek legal advice after an incident has occurred. Often the availability of legal aid and emergency protection from the Family Courts depends upon action being taken swiftly. Every police station has officers who are specially trained to deal with situations of domestic abuse.
- Do not forget your own needs. Such disclosures will be stressful for you. Discuss the situation with a specialist or someone with counselling experience and skills, and without identifying the victim.

SOME PRACTICAL NEEDS

It might be helpful to give some time to considering what practical needs a victim of domestic violence might have and how you can plan to assist with these at an appropriate time:

- A safe place, protection and medical attention
- A safety plan, including locks, personal safety devices (eg alarm, mobile phone). The police or community care schemes can often help with these
- A list of items to take with them, eg books, money, birth and marriage certificates, passports, benefit books, cheque books, address book containing names and addresses of friends and family, children's favourite toys
- Expert professional help
- Childcare while seeking help
- DIY assistance eg mending windows
- Furniture, household and baby equipment, toys, etc, in case of rehousing
- Care for pets
- Advocacy and support during the legal or financial processes such as getting benefits

The above are the more immediate needs. However there are longer term pastoral and support needs that are required. These can include:

- Continued interest, care and support. Leaving is like a bereavement in that it can take many years to get over. Sometimes people turn to abusive partners or young singles move back into abusive homes, out of loneliness, isolation or sexual need.
- All abuse robs people of self-esteem and sexual confidence. Abusers often tell their victims they are sexually unattractive and nobody else will want them. This can have two effects on survivors in future sexual relationships – a need to prove that wrong, or a lasting belief that that is right. Talking with others, either fellow survivors or sensitive friends, in open honest discussion, enables recovery and may avoid repeating patterns.
- Survivors need more than just Christian groups, and their experiences have to be worked through or may cause serious problems in later life, including repeating patterns.
- Survivors should be encouraged to take up post-trauma services for adults, children and young people. Counselling, group and play therapy are offered by many domestic abuse organisations. Fear, anxiety, loneliness and a deep sense of failure, sexual longing and despair about one's attractiveness or adequacy are all long term outcomes, and a safe place to acknowledge these powerful emotions is needed.
- 'Disclosure anxiety' and sense of guilt afflicts survivors sometimes for a lifetime as social sanctions against 'telling' are powerful, especially in Christian contexts of 'honouring parents', loving and forgiving relatives, even abusive ones.
- Self-esteem, assertiveness training and counselling are all vital if the survivor is to avoid future abusive relationships. Sometimes a conversion or spiritual reawakening accompanies an escape, especially if Christians have proved supportive. It is easy to say 'All that's passed now and things will be different' and not to deal with the underlying attitudes and childhood scripts of both adult and child victims that allow abuse to occur.
- Support is needed from the wider community, particularly if the perpetrator is a key member of a church community. There are likely to be many confused feelings around, including shock, disbelief and people's affection for the perpetrator. Help is needed in making sense of the situation and sorting out issues. Openness is critical, especially with the abuser, as abuse thrives on secrecy and misplaced 'confidentiality.'

13 - ELDER ABUSE

INTRODUCTION

The abuse of older people is a hidden and often ignored problem in society. Whilst the profile of child abuse is high, it is only more recently that this area has been recognised by organisations and groups and given a public focus. There is no standard definition of Elder Abuse within the UK and it carries no legal status, although would qualify within an Adults at Risk assessment. Essentially Elder Abuse is the mistreatment of an older person. Both men and women can be at risk of abuse and it can be carried out in a number of ways which include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Psychological Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Neglect
- Inappropriate use of Medication

It can occur anywhere – in someone's home, a carer's home, a day centre, a residential home, a nursing home, or hospital setting.

WHO ABUSES?

The abuser is usually well known to the person being abused. They may be a partner, child or relative, a friend or neighbour, a paid or volunteer worker, a health or social worker, or other professional. Older people may also be abused by a person they care for.

CAUSES OF ELDER ABUSE

There are many reasons why abuse of older people occurs and these may vary with each incident. Many causes are not yet fully understood. Abuse may range from a spontaneous act of frustration to systematic pre-meditated assaults on an older person.

At home, some of the causes would include poor quality long term relationships, a carer's inability to provide the level of care required, or a carer with a mental or physical health problem. In other settings abuse may be a symptom of a poorly run establishment. In this situation it is likely to occur when staff are poorly trained, poorly supervised, have little or no support from management, or work in isolation.

PASTORAL AND PRACTICAL RESPONSES FOR PARISHES

It is important to put this issue into a pastoral context whereby some of the reasons why relationships break down and problems occur might be balanced alongside appropriate responses. Members of the parish who have a visiting role are often well placed to recognise the signs an older person might be being abused or at risk of abuse. If you have concerns you must discuss these immediately with someone. You should be aware that the person might decline any assistance, but it is still appropriate to raise the concern. Older people often do not want to be seen as troubling anyone and to disclose their abuse might lead to further isolation or fear of further consequences for them, particularly if they are in a residential care setting.

Support and information is available from Action on Elder Abuse, a multi-disciplinary organisation that aims to protect and prevent abuse through its helpline:

Elder Abuse Response
Tel 080 8808 8141
Mon to Fri 10.00am to 4.00pm

If you consider the problem to be very serious please call the Police or Adults Social Care Team for your area, or contact the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer for advice.

14 - SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

THE PURPOSE OF SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Everyone in the Church has a responsibility to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of those who worship in our Church or who join us for any activity facilitated by Church members. When Church activities are organised well, with regard for the safety and wellbeing of all, we reduce the risk of avoidable harm to all participants and create spaces of welcome in which relationships which are respectful and enriching can grow. Good procedures outline essential requirements and also provide practical guidance on how to organise these activities well with regard to the dignity, safety and wellbeing of all concerned so that avoidable risks are anticipated and minimised and that relationships with Church representatives are positive, healthy and life giving.

PRACTICAL STEPS WHEN APPOINTING EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

It is not easy to identify those who are likely to harm others. Any procedure that helps to clarify details of a person's background and experience can help with identification and can raise awareness levels in the organisation generally. The same should be applied regardless of the level of responsibility or the duration of appointment of a role involving contact with children, young people and adults at risk, even to those who have been known within the Church for many years. This approach ensures fairness and consistency and avoids potential breaches of the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice.

All staff and volunteers working with children, young people and adults at risk will be selected in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service Policies and Procedures. The Diocese of Chester is committed to the good practice of giving all employees and volunteers a clear description of their specific roles in their contact with children, young people and adults at risk. As a minimum a role description should include:

- A detailed description of the work
- A list of responsibilities, including the responsibility to become familiar with the national and Diocesan Safeguarding and Vulnerability Policy and Procedures
- The duty to promote safe practice, minimise all risks of abuse and maximise the response to reports of concern
- Include clear and detailed content that reflects the specific nature of the role that justifies the requirement for a DBS Disclosure where appropriate.

Formal and extensive job descriptions will always be drawn up for paid appointments by the employing body. Employees and volunteers should sign a document to indicate that they have received and understood the job/role description and agree to comply with the national and Diocesan Safeguarding and Vulnerability Policy and Procedures. This should be retained by the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator if it is a parish appointment. A sample document can be found in the Forms Library.

Any contact that an individual has with a child/young person or adult at risk in a particular role must be within the confines of that role and responsibility and in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Every job description should be reviewed annually by the person or body that made the original appointment to ensure it still adequately reflects the role.

GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Children and adults should always be treated with respect and consideration. Those engaging in ministry should portray at all times a positive role model by maintaining an attitude of respect, courtesy and maturity.

PHYSICAL CONTACT GUIDANCE

Appropriate affection between adults and between adults and children is important for development, as well as being a positive part of ministry. Touching is an essential part of life and necessary for:

- Basic care
- Showing love and reassurance
- Praise and communication

It should be safe, appropriate and according to need. It should be remembered that touch can be perceived as warmth and friendliness or as a sign of dominance. Touch should always be related to the recipient in terms of

- Their needs at the time
- Limited duration
- Appropriateness of age, development, gender, disability and culture.
- All people have the right to decide how much or how little physical contact they have with others. Except in exceptional circumstances, such as when in need of urgent medical attention, their wishes should always be respected.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

It may be appropriate to hold and comfort a distressed child but be aware of how this may be interpreted by the child and others:

- Everything should be in public. A hug or touch in a group or openly visible to others is quite different from that done behind closed doors or in an unobservable place. However, a hug in an open place can also be unwelcome to the recipient. Caution should always be exercised, as people who have experienced abuse in the past may find any physical contact difficult and intrusive.
- When ground rules for activities are being discussed, those supervising activities should introduce the idea of safe touch.
- Providing care for those with additional needs or disabilities may require levels of physical contact. In some circumstances, consultation with the individual, their parents, carers etc is essential to fully understand the requirements and abilities of the person being cared for.

- Children and adults with additional needs may require higher levels of personal support in such areas as washing, dressing, toileting, feeding and mobility. Special arrangements may have to be made in these circumstances and agreed and supported by the individual, their parents, carers, care workers etc
- As far as possible support the person in their own care. Avoid doing things for them if they are able to do it for themselves, albeit slower. Where the person is dependent on help, offer choices
- In a group, team members, as part of good practice, should monitor one another in relation to physical contact. They should be able to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misunderstood or uncomfortable for a child, young person or adult at risk
- If an adult engages in inappropriate touch with a child, young person or adult at risk, this must be challenged. If there are any concerns about an adult's contact this must be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Diocesan Safeguarding Office for advice.

GUIDANCE ON MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

An important part of the way we care for others is shown in the way we cope with disruptive or difficult behaviour. Children, young people and adults at risk need to feel safe and be prevented from harming themselves or others, or getting into situations where this may happen. The first step to creating a safe environment where people feel safe and therefore cared for is to establish clear expectations and boundaries for all concerned. Where possible, ie where age and ability permit, leaders and participants will together agree what expectations they can reasonably have of each other and what will happen if these expectations are not kept.

GOOD PRACTICE:

- Leaders set and maintain safe, consistent and understandable boundaries
- Explain expectations re behaviour. Develop an ethos of care and control with activities
- Each individual's circumstances are taken into account in deciding measures to be taken in responding to them in relation to what is appropriate touch and any physical restraint
- Positive behaviour will be rewarded

SANCTIONS:

Sanctions must always be used as the final resort after instruction and problem solving. Under no circumstances is physical chastisement acceptable.

- Sanctions to be utilised by leaders should be explored and agreed prior to the activity taking place
- Any sanction must be proportionate to the misbehaviour and only about the issues in hand. Do not bring up previous incidents to confuse the issue
- Any sanction should be for a short period of time
- No sanction is an end in itself and should assist the individual in understanding how they should be behaving.

It is the behaviour and not the person that is not welcome.

SUPERVISION AND RATIOS

It is important that whatever activity or event is taking place has an appropriate level of adult supervision. There may be additional factors to take into consideration that may affect or determine staffing ratios, for example

- Age of group members
- Gender of those participating
- Children or adults with special needs
- First aid cover
- Nature of the activity
- Accommodation arrangements

There **MUST** always be a minimum of two adults linked to every group activity or event.

The NSPCC guidelines for minimum supervision are given below:

- One adult leader for every 3 children aged 0 – 2 years
- One adult leader for every 4 children aged 2 – 3 years
- One adult leader for every 6 children aged 4 – 8 years

- One adult leader for every 8 children aged 9 - 12 years
- One adult leader for every 10 children aged 13 – 18 years

Supervision ratios for adults at risk should be based on your assessment of need. For example if an adult at risk is infirm or wheelchair bound, the ratio should be as minimum of 1:1. When children, young people or adults at risk are identified as having additional needs that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist care or support, this must be discussed with the person's parent or carer. Where possible try to also obtain the views of the child or adult concerned. Consideration can then be given to increasing the levels of supervision so as to meet the assessed needs.

During any activities, if you are splitting into sub groups it is good practice to ensure you have close proximity between groups, so as to permit adult leaders being able to support each other while safeguarding the interests of all.

Young people under 18 are welcome and encouraged to assist with outings or activities. However their involvement should be monitored so they do not have the responsibility of a group leader or are used to meet the supervision criteria above.

VISITORS TO CHURCH PREMISES

It is important to be mindful of safeguarding when receiving visitors to church premises, including the vicarage, rectory or parsonage. Such visitors could include clergy, any person holding a licence, lodgers or tenants, house-minders, parish volunteers, casual workers (eg maintenance or gardeners).

VICARAGES

All visitors should adhere to the safeguarding policies in respect of contact with children, young people and adults at risk. A vicarage can have a dual function. It is both a private residence and can be used for public functions, meetings and pastoral work. These functions should be kept separate and there are expectations of conduct for those who live and work within the premises.

VISITORS TO PARISH CENTRE, HALL OR GROUNDS

Whenever there are non-parish activities involving children and young people on church premises, the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator must be informed. Where a non-parish group uses church premises on a regular basis:

- The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator must ensure that the group has public liability insurance and a Safeguarding Policy in place, including proper recruitment procedures for their leaders and helpers and that references and DBS checks have been obtained
- Evidence of this should be provided and continued use of the premises is subject to this condition.

A written agreement should be devised with non-parish groups using church premises (eg keep fit, dance groups etc) detailing that:

- They have safeguarding measures in place
- Their agreement to adhere to these measures

When any adult (eg children's entertainer) has contact with children, young people and adults at risk during a single event organised by the parish:

- The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator should ensure that the person responsible for the event manages the situation so that the adult does not have unsupervised contact with children

If church premises are used on a casual basis for non-parish events that include children, young people or adults at risk (eg parties) a written agreement is advisable that states:

- It is a private booking
- The adults responsible for the event will exercise a supervisory role and are responsible for safeguarding those who attend

This agreement could be included on the Booking Form for the hire of the premises.

TRIPS OUT/RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

PURPOSE

This section is intended to provide guidance and advice for the benefit of parish groups and Church organisations in the planning of outings, day outings and residential events. Examples might include:

- Trips to the cinema or theatre
- Day trip to the seaside/zoo
- Youth residential and holidays
- Children's camps
- Retreats
- Pilgrimages

It is expected that each parish will have its own Health and Safety policy that has been approved by the PCC and insurance company.

PREPARING FOR OUTINGS/RESIDENTIAL OUTINGS

Organisation of events can be shared amongst a group of people, however one person should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event. The group leader is responsible for ensuring that all reasonable preparation has been made for the event and must:

- a. Ensure that appropriate approval is obtained and a Consent Form is completed (see Forms Library in Appendices)
- b. Ensure that all leaders for the event have been appointed in accordance with the parish Safer Recruitment Procedures and that DBS disclosures are valid
- c. Ensure that there is an appropriate balance of leaders to group members
- d. Check with the venue to ensure that their policies and procedures can be adhered to (eg capacity at the venue is compatible with those participating)
- e. Ensure that suitable insurance cover for the outing and activities are in place prior to leaving
- f. Check that the event and transport arrangements are covered by insurance. Insurance should include public liability, personal accident, injury
- g. For visits involving an overnight stay, ensure that the residential venue has a current building and fire certificate
- h. Ensure that the building can meet the needs of all participating
- i. Ensure that a risk assessment for the visit is completed and brought to the attention of all leaders who should be made aware of their areas of responsibility (see template Risk Assessment Form in Forms Library in Appendices)
- j. Appoint a co-leader of the opposite sex for co-educational outings
- k. Ensure that one leader is first aid trained
- l. Ensure that all contact details for those participating are available in case of emergency
- m. Ensure a system of liaison between the leader and parents/carers
- n. Ensure that parents/carers are aware of the arrangements for transporting children to and from the event
- o. Brief the children at the start of the event as to expectations of behaviour and how to pass on any concerns they might have
- p. The leader must ensure that all risk assessment and consent forms travel with the group
- q. Have an evaluation meeting after the event and make recommendations for learning and development where required

Having a suitable ratio of adult leaders is essential in ensuring that appropriate and safe levels of supervision are maintained. Factors to take into consideration in the assessment will include:

- Gender, age and ability of group
- Additional support or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Duration and nature of the experience

- Type of accommodation
- Competence of staff
- Requirements of the organisation to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of participants

The following guidelines apply to residential outings at night time, once the participants have gone to bed:

- Accommodation must be gender specific and careful consideration should be given when allocating
- The adults supervising must reflect the gender of the group
- Principles of good practice apply to evening and night time supervision. For this reason any monitoring arrangement must always involve two adults and no adult should be alone with a child or adult at risk
- It is unacceptable that one adult shares a bedroom with a child or adult at risk. Children may be allocated rooms together. It is advisable to group children together in similar ages, unless there is a sibling group. Also, in the case where there is a child with a profound disability or specific medical condition, whose parents think it is necessary for one leader to share with the child in a twin room, special care must be taken. Those with parental responsibility must give specific and detailed permission for this arrangement. In addition the matter must be referred to the event leader and Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator. In case of any doubt the matter can be referred to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer for advice.
- The consumption of alcohol by leaders must be discussed prior to the event and a written agreement in place with regard to decisions made and which has been approved by the PCC where appropriate
- No leader should smoke in the presence of a child or adult at risk.

RECORDING

We know from experience that when making complaints or raising issues, these can be made some time after an event has taken place. For this reason it is advisable to keep a record of the trip to include those present, the activities undertaken, outcomes and any other significant happenings during the event, and should be kept on file. A sample Recording Sheet can be found in the Forms Library in the Appendices.

15 - ANTI-BULLYING

OBJECTIVES OF AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The Church is required by God to foster relationships of integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. The abuse of this obligation by harassment or bullying will not be tolerated in the Diocese as it undermines the love we should demonstrate for each other and our Christian witness to the world. It is acknowledged that the best way to stop bullying and harassment is to have a culture where any inappropriate behaviour is stopped quickly and the Church demonstrates welcoming and loving support to all who come through its doors. There is a separate diocesan policy 'The Dignity at Work and in Church Life Policy and Procedure' which should be read in conjunction with this section. http://www.chester.anglican.org/dev/docs/hr/Dignity_at_Work_Report.doc

The objective of this policy is so that it can be understood we do not tolerate bullying in relation to Church activities. All adults involved in any church activity or event must be aware of this policy and should follow it when bullying is reported. If bullying arises, children and adults need to know what they should do, and they should be supported whenever such behaviour is reported.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is advisable to have a positive statement of anti-bullying available within your parish. A sample statement is included here for guidance:

'We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children and young people so they can develop in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our _____ parish/group (name activity). If bullying does occur, all children and young people should be able to tell and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the group leaders.'

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour by a person or group which may be unintentional or deliberate but which causes hurt to another person, and results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying is also appropriately defined within the diocesan policy 'The Dignity at Work and in Church Life Policy and Procedure' which should be read in conjunction with this section.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional (eg refusing to talk to somebody or picking on a person)
- Physical (pushing, kicking, hitting, or threats via text or emails etc)
- Racist (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures)
- Sexual (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments)
- Homophobic (because of or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation)
- Verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, unwanted teasing including via emails or text messaging)
- Related to a person's impairment or disability, may include name calling or ridiculing
- Directed at an adult as well as a child or young person

RESPONDING TO BULLYING

Bullying hurts and nobody deserves to be a victim of bullying. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should consider the possibility that the child may be bullied. Strategies can be adopted to prevent bullying. These may include:

- Writing a set of group rules
- Signing a behaviour contract
- Writing stories or drawing pictures about bullying
- Making up role plays
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters

PROCEDURES

- a. Report bullying to staff, event or activity leaders or organisers as appropriate
- b. In cases of serious or persistent bullying, the incidents will be recorded by leaders
- c. In serious or persistent cases parents will be informed and asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- d. If it is thought that an offence has been committed, contact the police
- e. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and all bullying stopped quickly
- f. An attempt must be made to help the bullies change their behaviour

OUTCOMES

Wherever possible, the children/young people will be reconciled. After any incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure that repeated behaviour does not take place. Parents and carers should be informed of the action taken. In some cases it may be necessary to suspend or exclude a person.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

You must:

- Operate within the Church's principles and guidance and any particular procedures of the Diocese and parish
- Treat all children, young people and adults at risk equally and with respect
- Engage and interact appropriately with children, young people and adults at risk
- Respect a person's right to personal privacy
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow – an environment which allows bullying, inappropriate shouting or any form of discrimination is unacceptable
- Recognise that particular care is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues

- Avoid situations that compromise your relationships with people and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust. This rule should apply to all behaviours including those which would not constitute an illegal act.
- Ensure two people are present as a minimum during any activity and follow the guidelines for supervision ratios as set out within this policy

You must not:

- Discuss topics or use vocabulary with people which could not be used comfortably in the presence of parents or another child
- Arrange an overnight trip with a child, young person or adult at risk without ensuring another approved person will be present and parental consent has been given
- Take a chance when common sense suggests another more prudent approach
- Physically, emotionally or sexually abuse, maltreat or exploit any child, young person or adult at risk

16 - ACCESS TO AN INDEPENDENT PERSON FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK

It is vitally important that groups working with children, young people and adults at risk develop and promote a culture where they are encouraged to talk about any concerns they might have. Children, young people and adults at risk should be reassured that whatever is said will be listened to and taken seriously. Leaders must be encouraged to respond to any safeguarding situation in line with national safeguarding policies and procedures. All children and adults must be encouraged to talk to parents, carers or leaders if there is anything worrying them. Groups and parishes must have in place procedures for dealing with complaints from those who are involved in church activities.

AUTHORISED LISTENERS

The national safeguarding policy 'Responding Well to Those who have been Sexually Abused' (House of Bishops 2011) advocates the use of designated people who can act as 'Authorised Listeners' and be a reference point for people who wish to raise a concern or share something they are worried or unhappy about. The concern can be in relation to their own experiences or those of another person. Within this Diocese a system has been put in place whereby people can access an Authorised Listener by telephoning the following **confidential number 0845 120 4551**. This facility is operated by the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) which acts independently of the Diocese of Chester. A prompt response will be provided and an appropriate Authorised Listener will be made available to hear the concern and to support an individual.

Independent helpline numbers eg Childline should be displayed on the noticeboard at children's height inside all church entrances.

17 - USE OF IT / COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY / PHOTOGRAPHY IN RELATION TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

It is a sad reality that children and young people are at risk of abuse and exploitation through advances in technology. The Diocese of Chester is committed to protecting and safeguarding all children and young people within its parishes and organisations to ensure as much as possible that they stay safe.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and Standard 5 of the National Service Framework place an obligation on us all to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The Data Protection Act 1998 also emphasises the need to ensure that appropriate consent is given for the use of images of clearly identifiable people, children and adults alike. This section of the policy relates specifically to the use of the above in terms of the safeguarding issues they present.

The internet, mobile phones, social networking and other interactive services have transformed the way in which we live. New technologies offer tremendous opportunities to reach, communicate, evangelise, and engage with those involved in the Church including clergy, parishioners and those in our communities who may have an interest in the Church. The Diocese of Chester is keen to promote the safe and responsible use of communication

and interactive communication technologies within all church activities. These guidelines seek to ensure the message of safe and responsible use of communication and interactive communication technologies is understood and guidelines are followed within its parishes and organisations.

PHOTOGRAPHY

As an aspect both of celebration of faith, of personal achievement and evangelisation it has long been common practice to take and display photographs of children on noticeboards, websites and in parish and diocesan newspapers and bulletins. We know that the overwhelming majority of images taken are entirely appropriate and are taken in good faith. There are also opportunities however to distort the original intention behind taking such photographs. It is important for this reason to consider potential risks such as:

- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use on child abuse website on the internet
- The identification of children when a photograph is accompanied by significant personal detail that will assist a third party to identify a child. This can lead, and has led to children being 'groomed.'

In addition, under the Data Protection Act 1998 photographs constitute 'personal data' and where it is possible to infer a person's religious beliefs from that photograph, constitute 'sensitive personal data.' In view of this the following guidelines are recommended:

DO:

- Ensure you have parental consent to use photographic images of a child or young person if it is to be used in the public domain eg parish noticeboard, websites, newsletters or papers
- Where possible focus on the activity rather than the individual
- Ensure that all featured in photographs are appropriately dressed
- Be general in labelling photographs eg 'Communion Group 2013' rather than naming or tagging each child. A list of names could be provided separately.
- When commissioning photographers ensure they are clear about what is expected by establishing who will hold the recorded images, what they will be used for and where they will be displayed.

DON'T:

- Publish or display photographs with the full name of the person or person's featured unless you have written consent to do so and have informed parents as to how the image will be used.
- Use an image for something other than which you have obtained permission for eg publish in a parish newspaper when initially intended for a parish noticeboard.

ESTABLISHING A WEBSITE

Websites or social networking profile pages are the centrepiece of any social media activity. The following are guidelines recommended for the establishment of a site. These can apply to a profile or fan page on social networking sites such as Facebook, a blog, a Twitter account etc:

- Site administrators should be adults
- There should be at least two site administrators (preferably more) for each site, to allow rapid response and continuous monitoring of the site.
- Personal sites should not be used for diocesan or parish programs. Separate sites should be created for these.
- Passwords and names of sites should be registered in a central location, and more than one adult should have access to this information.
- Be sure those establishing a site know these key rules:
 - a. Abide by diocesan/parish guidelines
 - b. Appreciate that even personal communication by Church personnel reflects the Church.
 - c. Write in the first person. Do not claim to represent the official position of the organisation or the teachings of the Church, unless authorised to do so.
 - d. Abide by the copyright
 - e. Do not divulge confidential information about others. Nothing posted on the internet is private.

- f. Don't cite others, post photos or videos of them, link to their material etc without their permission. Once posted material often becomes property of the site.
- g. Consider adding the CEOP help button link to help users report abuse or bullying where necessary

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Alongside the very beneficial aspects of modern communication technologies we have to recognise that there are also increased risks to children and young people. We must all take reasonable steps to appropriately manage these risks. If a group, parish or other body decides that the most effective way of communicating to children is via a social networking site then it is advisable to set up an account in the name of that group, parish or body. It should also be made explicit as to how that site should be used and for what purpose.

The following is best practice in relation to social networking:

DO:

- Ensure that the privacy settings are located so that pages are only used for their intended purpose and not for meeting, sharing personal details or having private conversations.
- Nominate a named individual to monitor the networking page regularly and report on any content that causes concern and remove access for anyone behaving inappropriately.
- Make sure that this person is known to all parties using the social network and how they may be contacted in order to pass on any concern.
- Obtain parental consent before access is provided to any child.
- Keep a record of any inappropriate, threatening or offensive material and report to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer

DON'T:

- Accept as a friend any child on social networking sites set up within the Church
- Share your own personal contact details on social networking sites with any child
- Make contact with children known through a Church networking site outside the context of Church ministry or other social networking sites.
- Use internet or web based communication to send personal messages not related to Church ministry to a child.
- Engage in any personal communications eg banter or comments.

ELECTRONIC METHODS OF COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN

It is strongly recommended that texting should not be considered as a method of communication between adults involved in Church ministry and children.

If texts and emails are to be used in specific circumstances then:

DO:

- Get signed consent from parents to allow use of these methods of communication
- Explain to parents the purpose and method of this, who may communicate with their son or daughter and what communication is restricted to.
- Only use group texts or emails and always copy parents in.
- Ensure that all such communications are strictly about specific aspects of Church related activity such as change of date, time or venue.

DON'T:

- Use texts or emails for personal conversation, sending pictures or jokes or other items of a personal nature
- Respond to emails from young people other than those directly related to Church activity. Advise the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer if you receive any inappropriate texts or emails.

ACCESS TO COMPUTERS – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Where children have access to computers as part of Church activities, the leader has a duty to ensure that:

- a. Measures are in place to ensure that the likelihood of children and young people accessing inappropriate materials is reduced eg – parental controls and software to filter out internet material
- b. Children are aware that their personal details eg last name, address, school, passwords, email addresses and telephone numbers are private and should not be disclosed unless approval is given by the leader
- c. Children and young people should never send photographs and should be wary of chatrooms
- d. Children and young people are aware that they should inform a leader about any emails or anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable or bothers them
- e. Children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader and their parent/carer of a request to meet up with someone they have met online and not to make plans to do so without alerting an adult and never go alone to such planned meetings
- f. Children are advised of a code of conduct for using chatrooms.
- g. A sample Code is C.H.A.T:

C = Careful – people online might not always be who they say they are

H = Hang – Hang on to your personal information. Never give out your home address or other information

A = Arranging – Arranging to meet can be dangerous. Never arrange to meet someone unless you are sure who they are.

T = Tell – Tell your friends or an adult if you find something that makes you feel uncomfortable.

REPORTING AND MONITORING

- Parishes and Organisations should appoint appropriate adults to monitor the content of their websites
- Children should be advised to always tell an adult they trust about communications that make them feel uncomfortable or where they have been asked to keep communication secret
- Any discovery of inappropriate use (of a safeguarding nature) of social networking sites, computers, emails or texting should be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer.
- Church personnel must report unofficial sites that carry the diocesan or parish logo to the Diocesan Secretary or parish priest. It is important that the owner (the Diocese or the parish) is able to protect its identity and prevent unwanted publications. Any misinformation found on a site, such as Wikipedia, should also be reported to the Diocesan Communications Officer.

LINKS AND RESOURCES

The 'UK COUNCIL FOR CHILD INTERNET SAFETY' is a voluntary organisation chaired by Ministers from the Department for Education and the Home Office. UKCCIS brings together over 180 organisations and individuals from government, industry, law enforcement, academia, charities and parenting groups. Some of the organisations UKCCIS work with include Cisco, Apple, Sony, Research in Motion, the four largest internet service providers, Facebook and Microsoft.

The 'CHILD EXPLOITATION ONLINE PROTECTION' (CEOP) has numerous resources for parents and carers and children using the internet. See also 'THINK U KNOW, CEOP website'

18 - PARISH SAFEGUARDING AUDITS

BACKGROUND

The National Office recommends that all dioceses adopt a parish self-audit approach to check that parishes are working safely and to provide assistance where needed. | You may already have a parish audit system in place. The following is a model of good practice. This is a template which you may choose to use as it stands or adapt to suit your purpose in your parish.

Guidance for Completing the Audit

1. The vicar, Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator, churchwardens and any other appropriate church officers should work together to answer all the questions in this self-audit tool.
If there has been a serious safeguarding issue during the year a confidential sheet, summarising the matter may need to be completed by the vicar and filed confidentially.
This sheet should not be disclosed to the PCC.
2. The audit follows the references to the role of parishes in the House of Bishop's Policy *Protecting all God's Children Edition 4 2010*¹
3. While some PCCs may not have approved work with children or adults who are vulnerable, all will at some time have children in their church and most will have approved pastoral volunteers.
4. For each question, indicate whether you have met the criteria wholly, partially or not at all. If a question does not apply to you (e.g. you are not in a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP)), tick the N/A box.
5. Keep notes as you go, in sections, of actions that you need to take in order to be wholly compliant.
6. Add up your scores for each criterion in each section. Complete the table at the bottom of the last page of the audit document.
7. Summarise your notes of actions needed in the Action Plan sheet.
8. Take your table of results, with your Action Plan, to your PCC for discussion.
9. At this meeting, the PCC needs to agree the Safeguarding Action Plan for the following year, with clarity about who will take responsibility, and with target dates.

Abbreviations used in this section:

PSO – Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator	APCM – Annual Parochial Church Meeting
DVSO – Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer	PCC – Parochial Church Council
HoB – House of Bishops	DCC – District (or Rural) Church Council
LEP – Local Ecumenical Partnership	

¹ [Protecting all God's Children](#) paragraph 4.6 page 20

Safeguarding (Child and Adult Protection)

Parish Safeguarding Self Audit

Diocese:

Parish:

Before you start

List Church related activities approved by the PCC which involve children in this parish	List Church related activities approved by the PCC which involve adults who are vulnerable in this parish
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Are you in a Team Ministry, United Benefice or a Local Ecumenical Project?

Yes

No

If you are in a Team Ministry or United Benefice, please work together with Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators in each of your churches. You may choose to share your results and discuss your plans either at your District or Parish Church Council.

If this is your first audit, you will be asked to repeat the audit annually. Your scores and Action Plan from this audit give you a baseline against which you can compare future scores; and safeguarding implementation can be measured against this year's agreed Action Plan.

Safeguarding (Child and Adult Protection)

Parish Safeguarding Self Audit

Diocese:

Parish:

The Parish. Each parish should:-		N/A	Please indicate whether you have met the criteria wholly, partially or not at all		
			Wholly	Partially	Not at all
1.	Adopt and implement a safeguarding policy and procedures, accepting as a minimum the House of Bishops' Policy on Safeguarding ² or the Joint Safeguarding Principles but informed by additional diocesan procedures and recommended good practice, while being responsive to local parish requirements				
2.	Appoint at least one Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator to work with the incumbent and the parochial church council (PCC) to implement policy and procedures. The co-ordinator must ensure that any concerns about a child or the behaviour of an adult are appropriately reported both to the statutory agencies and to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer. It may be appropriate for this co-ordinator to be someone without other pastoral responsibility for children [or adults who are vulnerable] in the parish. The co-ordinator should either be a member of the PCC or have the right to attend the council and should report at least annually on the implementation of the policy within the parish;				
3.	Consider appointing a person, who may be different from the coordinator, to be a children's [or vulnerable person's] advocate. This should be someone whom children know they could talk to about any problems, if they so wish. It can be useful if the co-ordinator is not someone whom children [or adults who are vulnerable] know personally;				
4.	Display in church premises where children's activities take place, the contact details of the co-ordinator or children's advocate, along with the 'Childline' ³ and 'Parentline Plus' ⁴ telephone numbers				

² [Promoting a Safe Church](#) (safeguarding policy for adults) 2006,

[Protecting All God's Children](#) (safeguarding policy for children and young people, 4th edition, 2010) [Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused](#) (2011)

[Responding to Domestic Abuse](#) (guidelines for those with pastoral responsibility, 2006) [Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment'](#)

³ [ChildLine](#)

⁴ Parentline Plus now known as [Family Lives](#)

Safeguarding (Child and Adult Protection)

Parish Safeguarding Self Audit

Diocese:

Parish:

The Parish. Each parish should:-		N/A	Please indicate whether you have met the criteria wholly, partially or not at all		
			Wholly	Partially	Not at all
5.	<p>Ensure that all those authorized to work with children [or adults who are vulnerable] are appropriately recruited according to safer recruitment practice, and are trained and supported;</p> <p>Have all approved volunteers written job roles and DBS checks (every five years)</p>				
6.	<p>Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children (or adults who are vulnerable) undertaken in the name of the parish;</p>				
7.	<p>Review the implementation of the safeguarding children [or adults who are vulnerable] policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually</p> <p>Is there a Safeguarding report to your Annual Parochial Church Meeting? Written, plus opportunities for questions and discussion?</p>				
8.	<p>If appropriate, in rural parishes or parishes held in plurality, consider joining together to implement the policy and procedures, while remembering that legal responsibility will continue to rest with the individual parishes</p>				
9.	<p>If working within Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs), agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding children [or adults who are vulnerable] policy to follow, including where to seek advice in urgent situations. This decision should be ratified both by the bishop and other appropriate church leaders in the partnership</p>				
10.	<p>In the event of a specific safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are notified.</p>				
Scores					

Safeguarding (Child and Adult Protection)

Parish Safeguarding Self Audit

Diocese:

Parish:

Parish Safeguarding (Child and Adult Protection) Audit outcome

Name of Parish:				Completed by:				Date of Completion:			
				Role in parish:				Date discussed by PCC:			
Scores	Standard 1	Standard 2	Standard 3	Standard 4	Standard 5	Standard 6	Standard 7	Standard 8	Standard 9	Standard 10	Total Scores
Wholly											
Partially											
Not at all											
N/A											
Date of last audit by PCC											

Confidential Sheet completed? (see instructions for completing the audit above)

Yes

No

Is the parish an LEP?

Yes

No

Has an action plan been completed?

Yes

No

Notes	
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Parish Safeguarding Self Audit

CONFIDENTIAL DATA SHEET

For the incumbent only (or churchwarden in a vacancy)

Diocese		Parish	
Name of incumbent/churchwarden completing this form:			
<i>If you answer Yes to any question below, please return this form in a sealed envelope, to the Diocesan Vulnerability and Safeguarding Officer.</i>			
1. Have there been any safeguarding allegations/concerns regarding children or adults since your last safeguarding audit?	Yes		No
<i>If yes:</i> Was this person a church officer ⁵ (paid or volunteer) at the time?	Yes		No
Name of person, if a church officer			
How did you respond?			
Who did you inform?			
From whom did you seek or take advice?			
Churchwarden		PSO	
			DVSO
			Other (please specify)
Is the matter still current?		Yes	No
2. Have there been any concerns or allegations about domestic abuse since your last audit?	Yes		No
<i>If yes:</i> Was this person a church officer ⁵ (paid or volunteer) at the time?	Yes		No
Name of person, if a church officer			
How did you respond?			
Who did you inform?			
From whom did you seek or take advice?			
Churchwarden		PSO	
			DVSO
			Other (please specify)
Is the matter still current?		Yes	No
3. Do you have, or have you ever had, any agreements with offenders or those who pose risk to children or adults?	Yes		No
<i>If yes:</i> What is the name of the offender/risk poser?			
Who else is party to the agreement?			
When was the last agreement signed?			
When is the next review due?			
For all of numbers 1, 2 & 3 above:			
Are there any outstanding matters which require attention, or others who need to be informed?		Yes	No
What electronic or hard copy records do you hold? Where are they stored? Who has access to them?			
How will you ensure that safeguarding information is passed on to relevant post holders if you move from your post?			
Signed		Date	

Parish Safeguarding Self Audit

ACTION PLAN

Safeguarding (Child and Adult Protection) Action Plan : (year 20_____)					
Diocese			Parish		
Area for action	Action Plan	Target date	By whom	Date completed	
Uncompleted actions from previous audit: (year 20_____)					
New audit actions for this year: (year 20_____)					
Completed by					
Role in Parish		Date			

Forms Library

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

CONSENT TO DISPLAY OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN CHURCH/CHURCH BUILDINGS

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR AN ACTIVITY/EVENT INCLUDING:

PARENT/CARER AND YOUNG PERSON CONSENT FORM FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEO

RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

SAFEGUARDING : HIRING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHURCH PREMISES

SESSION RECORDING SHEET

VOLUNTEER DECLARATION FORM ON SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

(insert your logo here)

**APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
BY INCUMBENT OR LEADER OF THE ORGANISATION**

Parish / Organisation:			
Event Leader:			
Details of Activity/Event:			
Places to be visited:			
Date of Departure:		Time:	
Date of Return:		Time:	
Transport arrangements: Include the name of the transport company if known (<i>where applicable</i>)			
Name and address of accommodation to be used: (<i>where applicable</i>)			
Tel No:			
Named Head of Centre: (<i>if known</i>)			
Details of any hazardous activity and the associated planning, organisation and staffing:			
Insurance arrangements: Please provide details of insurance provision for the activity/event i.e. is it covered by existing diocesan arrangements? If not, what arrangements will be made?			

Names, gender, experience and specific responsibilities of adult leaders:

	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	
	F <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/>	

Proposed size and composition of the group:

Age range		Adult to child ratio	
Number of boys		Number of girls	

Any known specific needs of participants:

Contact Details of Liaison Person:	
Name:	
Tel No:	

PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF ANY INFORMATION SHEET (OR SAMPLE SHEET) SENT TO PARENTS, THE PARENTAL CONSENT FORM AND THE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM (IF COMPLETED AT THIS STAGE).

Risk assessment to be undertaken:			
By:		On:	
Signed:		Date:	
Event Leader: <i>(Full Name)</i>			
Event approved:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Assessment received:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Any comments:			
Signed:		Date:	
Position:			

(insert your logo here)
COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

NB This is a template to adapt, please do not use this form as is.

We believe that everyone is entitled to courtesy and prompt attention at all times to their needs and wishes.
Our intention is to work with children, young people, parents and the community. We welcome suggestions on how the: <i>(insert name of parish group/organisation)</i> can improve the activities we provide.
HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMPLIMENTS AND COMMENTS?
We are very happy to receive compliments and comments from you. You can do this in writing and submit it to: <i>(insert name of event leader)</i>
Alternatively you can speak with:
whilst at the: <i>(insert name of activity e.g. youth group)</i>
We will make sure that your compliment or comment is passed on to the relevant person. Any comments will be carefully considered and you will be informed of any decisions taken as a result of your comment. A written record of your compliment or comment will be held.
HOW YOU CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT:
Anyone who is unhappy about any aspect of: <i>(insert details of activity/event e.g. youth group)</i> - e.g. the way it is run or policies/procedures, should share their concerns with: <i>(insert leader of activity/event)</i> either in person or in writing.
If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem persists, you should put those concerns in writing and request a meeting with <i>(insert details of relevant person e.g. parish priest, Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator)</i>
If the matter is not resolved at this stage, it will be referred to the PCC or to the Diocese: <i>(delete/insert as appropriate)</i>
We believe that most concerns can be dealt with at an early stage as quickly as possible and we will strive to do this. We also believe that it is in everyone's interest that such concerns/complaints are taken seriously, dealt with fairly and in a way which respects the confidentiality of those concerned. You will be informed of any actions taken as a result of your complaint. A written record of your complaint will be held.
CONTACT DETAILS: <i>(insert relevant contact details for above named individuals)</i>

(insert your logo here)
CONSENT TO DISPLAY OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN CHURCH / CHURCH BUILDINGS

Parish	
I hereby give my consent to allowing a photograph of: <i>(insert name of child/young person)</i>	
to be displayed in: <i>(insert location)</i>	
for the period of:	
after which it will:	be destroyed / be returned to me <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>
Signed by Parent :	
PRINT NAME:	
Date:	
Signed by Child :	
PRINT NAME:	
Date:	

(insert your logo here)
INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Event Leader:		Contact Number:	
Details of Event:			
Name of person involved:		Date of Birth:	
Date of Incident:		Time:	
Place of Incident:			
Circumstances of Incident: <i>(continue on separate sheet if necessary)</i>			
Names of those present at the incident:			
Nature of Harm:			
Treatment Given:			
Reported to Whom: (eg parish priest; PCC; Diocese – include dates and names)			
Other Action Taken:			
Signed:		Date:	
Printed Name:		Position:	

THIS FORM MUST BE FORWARDED TO THE PARISH SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR

(insert your logo here)
PARENTAL CONSENT FOR AN ACTIVITY/EVENT

1. NATURE OF EVENT/ACTIVITY:			
Date(s):		Time(s):	
Child's name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I agree to his/her participation in the activities described; I understand that if group/activity photographs are to be taken during the event, a "Parent/carer and young person consent form for the use of photographs/video" will be supplied to me;; I acknowledge the need for him/her to behave responsibly and will ensure that he/she is aware of the expectation to behave responsibly. 			
2. TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS: (for which parents/carers hold responsibility) Please detail how your son/daughter will travel to and from the activity or the pick-up point for the day/residential trip.			
3. MEDICAL INFORMATION:			
a) Does your child have any condition(s) requiring medical treatment including medication e.g. inhalers, anti-epileptics or insulin?			
YES	<i>If YES please give details below</i>	NO	
b) Please outline any special dietary requirements of your child (including allergies e.g. nuts) and the type of pain/flu relief medication your child may be given if necessary.			

<p>c) Please outline any FEARS OR PHOBIAS your child has. <i>(This information will assist the adult helpers to assist your child should any difficulties arise)</i></p>			
<p>d) Is your son/daughter allergic to any medication e.g. penicillin?</p>			
YES	<i>If YES please specify below</i>	NO	
<p>e) When did your son/daughter last have a tetanus injection?</p>			
<p>f) Is there any other relevant information/specific requirement(s) that the organizer should know? e.g. travel sickness/mobility</p>			
<p>g) <u>FOR RESIDENTIAL TRIPS ONLY</u> - To the best of your knowledge, has your son/daughter suffered from or been in contact with any contagious or infectious diseases in the last few weeks?</p>			
YES	<i>If YES please give details below</i>	NO	
<p>I will inform the event leader as soon as possible of any changes in the medical or other circumstances between now and the commencement of the journey.</p>			

4. CONTACT INFORMATION:			
Work /Mobile No:			
Home Tel No:			
Home Address:			
Alternative emergency contact:			
Name:			
Tel No:			
Address:			
Name of Family Doctor:			
Doctor Tel No:			
Doctor Address:			
5. DECLARATION			
<p>In the event of an illness or accident every effort will be made by the event leader or their assistants to contact me. If for whatever reason this is not possible I agree to my son/daughter receiving medication as instructed and any emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.</p>			
Signed:		Date:	
Full Name: <i>(capitals)</i>			

(insert your logo here)

PARENT/CARER AND YOUNG PERSON CONSENT FORM FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEO

Our Parish _____

or

The event _____

recognises the need to ensure the welfare and safety of all children and young people.

In accordance with our safeguarding policy we will not permit photographs, video or other images of children and young people to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and children.

The named parish/event will follow the guidance for the use of photographs, a copy of which is available from:

The named parish/event will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform:

_____ immediately.

PARENT/CARER TO COMPLETE:

I _____ consent to the named parish/event photographing or videoing my child: _____

I understand that these images will be displayed in the following circumstances: *(give details including dates)*

and I hereby agree to this.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON TO COMPLETE:

I _____ consent to my involvement in the event / activity referenced above being photographed or videoed.

I understand that these images will be displayed as noted above and I hereby agree to this.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(insert your logo here)
RISK ASSESSMENT FORM NOTES

NB - The bullet points included in these notes are examples to be considered under the headings in Boxes 1-6. The blank form on the following page should be completed using the guidance and considering the specific activity to be undertaken along with the needs of the children and young people who will participate in the planned activity.

<p>1. Place to be visited: e.g. retreat centre</p>
<p>2. Potential hazards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• environmental e.g. weather, terrain• health e.g. polluted water• human and behavioral e.g. violence• activity e.g. swimming• travel e.g. driving• accommodation e.g. fire exit
<p>3. List groups of people who are especially at risk from the significant hazards you have identified e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• children• young people• event leader• leaders• impact of age/stamina/ability
<p>4. List existing controls or note where information may be found e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensure sufficient supervision• clear guidance to pupils• exploratory visit or research – this will allow for unforeseen or unknown hazards to be identified
<p>5. How will you cope with the hazards which are not currently or fully controlled under (3) e.g.: <i>List hazards and the measures taken to control them</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• removal of hazard• modifying the design of an activity• supervising an activity more closely• training• emergency procedures
<p>6. Continual monitoring of hazards throughout visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• share plans with leaders prior to the event• during the event, on-going assessment of risk and remedial action as required

(insert your logo here)
RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

1. Place to be visited:	
2. Potential hazards:	
3. List groups of people who are especially at risk from the significant hazards you have identified:	
4. List existing controls or note where information may be found:	
5. How will you cope with the hazards which are not currently or fully controlled under (4) ? <i>List hazards and the measures taken to control them</i>	
6. Continual monitoring of hazards throughout visit:	
Risk assessment completed by:	(PRINT NAME)
Review date:	
Signed:	
Date:	

(insert your logo here)

SAFEGUARDING : HIRING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHURCH PREMISES

Organisations that work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and hire or use church property should be advised of their responsibility for the welfare and safety of the people in their care. The Church of England requires that such groups have adequate safeguarding policies and procedures in place and these are seen by the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer if necessary.

This organisation: *(insert name)*

..... recruits staff in accordance with best practice (e.g. Safe From Harm).

Furthermore, the organisation: *(insert name)*

..... has its own safeguarding policies and procedures, and undertakes to follow these policies in relation to working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, preventing child abuse and responding to safeguarding concerns.

OR

This organisation: *(insert name)*

..... has been given a copy of the Parish/Diocesan (delete as necessary) Safeguarding policies for the Church of England and undertakes to follow these policies in relation to work with children, young people and/or adults, preventing child abuse and responding to safeguarding concerns.

This organisation: *(insert name)*

..... has its own public liability insurance to cover any claims arising as a result of the group activity.

Signed:
(Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

Signed:

Print Name:

Role/Organisation:

Date:

(insert your logo here)
SESSION RECORDING SHEET

Session Recording Sheet for: <i>(insert details of activity)</i>			
Held on: <i>(insert date)</i>			
Children/young people in attendance: <i>(record names)</i>			
Staff on duty: <i>(list names)</i>			
Focus of activity:			
Incidents of significance: <i>(if any - including concerns)</i>			
Action taken:			
Signed:		Date:	
Position:			

(insert your logo here)

VOLUNTEER DECLARATION FORM ON SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

Parish Name:			
Name:			
Role:			
I _____ <i>(insert full name)</i>			
hereby declare that I have received and understood the procedures on how to deal with allegations or suspicions of abuse and will comply with the Church's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.			
Signature:		Date:	

When completed this form should be handed to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator who will store this appropriately and securely.