

# Promoting a Safer Church

## St Michael's Church Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and vulnerable adults

At St Michael's we believe the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in our activities is the responsibility of our whole church. It is important therefore that **everyone** who participates in the life of our church must play their part in promoting a safer church for all.

This document sets out our safeguarding policy for children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is based on the good practice advice set out in the Church of England's own guidance (also called Promoting a safer church) which was produced by the church's National Safeguarding Team which can be found at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/3896819/cofe-policy-statement.pdf>

The policy ensures that we meet our duties under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have 'due regard' to the safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops.

By applying the policy we will seek to promote the welfare of children, young persons and adults, work to prevent abuse from occurring, protect those that are at risk of being abused and respond well to those that have been abused. We will take care to identify where a person may present a risk to others and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks. In practice this will be by:

- Safely recruiting and supporting all those within the church with responsibilities towards children, young persons or vulnerable adults.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The PCC have appointed Bill Macdonald as Safeguarding Coordinator to advise them on safeguarding issues and Peter Manning as Children's Advocate to assist in child and family pastoral issues. We have also agreed an action Plan which we will use to put the policy into effect, and which we will review and amend as necessary.

The Church is called to share the good news of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. The good news speaks of welcome for all, with a particular regard for those who are most vulnerable, into a community where the value and dignity of every human being is affirmed and those in positions of responsibility and authority are truly trustworthy. Being faithful to our call to share the gospel therefore compels us to take with the utmost seriousness the challenge of preventing abuse from happening and responding well when it has.

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## St Michael's Church Action Plan for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

In order to ensure that our safeguarding policy is put into action and reviewed regularly, the following steps should be taken:

All church officers should be clear about the extent of their responsibilities under the policy.

All those who work with children, young people or vulnerable adults at St Michael's should be selected carefully, with due regard to their suitability to their roles. Unless a person is a long standing member of the church community, their application for a post must be supported in writing by two referees before taking up such a role.

Enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) should be obtained for everyone person engaged in a regulated activity under the DBS rules, and for all church officers having a role in the safeguarding process.

Suitable training in safeguarding principles and practices should be provided and required for all those working with the above groups, and all church officers having a role in safeguarding matters.

In the event of any member of the congregation becoming concerned about a child/vulnerable adult protection issue they should contact Bill Macdonald (Safeguarding Coordinator) as soon as possible either by e-mail at [bill.macdonald@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bill.macdonald@hotmail.co.uk) or by phone on 07768711777 if it is more urgent. If Bill is unavailable, Derwyn Williams or Churchwarden Rosemary Thomson should be contacted in the first instance.

**If anyone is concerned that someone is at risk, or is being abused, or presents a serious risk to others, they should report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Services or the police without delay.**

After gathering the facts of the case, the Safeguarding Coordinator (or in his absence one of the church officers named above) will refer the matter to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (Jez Hirst), who will oversee any investigation and give advice on how church officers should respond to the issues raised.

Where an allegation is made, or an issue arises, which affects one of the persons named above, they should not be involved in the reporting process or in fact gathering before the matter is referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Each person having a role in the matter of concern should keep promptly made and safely retain careful notes of the matters raised. They should deal with any person affected by the matter in an empathetic and caring manner, but should not attempt to carry out an investigation themselves. They should reassure the individual that the matter will be looked into properly, but never promise to keep anything secret. They should not discuss the matter with anyone else, except the church officers named above.

Whilst the results of any investigation carried out are likely to remain confidential, attempts should be made to contact the person who raised initial concern, to confirm to them that appropriate action has been taken as a result of their actions.

As a congregation, we should be mindful of the needs of any person in our midst that has experienced any form of abuse, and seek for St Michael's to be a place for sharing and healing.

Whilst acknowledging the right of all people to worship, we should respond appropriately to any member of the congregation that presents a potential risk to others. In particular, after consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser we should consider drawing up a Covenant of Care setting out the terms under which any such individual may continue to worship at our church safely.

A Children's Advocate (Peter Manning) has been appointed to assist in child pastoral issues. This is someone that children and parents will be able to talk to about their problems if the need should arise.

The Education Group should produce and regularly review Good Practice Guidance for all those in the church that work with children and/or vulnerable adults, to encourage consistently high standards in safeguarding at St Michael's.

The Safeguarding Coordinator should update the Parochial Church Council (PCC) on safeguarding issues and compliance with this action plan at each PCC meeting.

This action plan should be reviewed and adapted as necessary at appropriate intervals.

St Michael's Church PCC  
November 2017