



The Parish of St. Michael & All Angels Church, Sandhurst

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Promoting a Safer Church

March 2024

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Promoting a Safer Church

The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on (DATE).

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Ensuring volunteers complete, and update, appropriate Safeguarding training.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors 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 Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the front page of the parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and reviewed annually.
- Inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team if we use an alternative DBS Umbrella Body to APCS and if we receive any DBS Disclosures that contain information.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Safer Recruitment and volunteers

All new staff and volunteers with specific safeguarding responsibilities will be recruited in line with St. Michael and All Angels Safer Recruitment of Volunteers Policy and the Church of England Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance 2016.

As part of our responsibility to ensure we provide a safe and caring place for all, it is important that all volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults undertake the following processes, and update the Parish Safeguarding Officer on completion. These measures are not only to protect our community, but the volunteers themselves:

- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) and this must be completed every 3 years.
- Basic Awareness Training and further courses where necessary. (See Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Training table, appendix 5).

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- Training must be updated every 3 years, for those volunteers that complete training at a higher level, they must only update the highest course completed and are not required to retake entry level training e.g. Basic Awareness.
- All volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Agreement and a copy to be held by St Michael's.

Dealing with Concerns

- If a volunteer is concerned for their own safety, another volunteer or a member of our community, it is important that they share this confidentially with a Group Leader, the Rector or the Parish Safeguarding Officer at the earliest opportunity.
- Any concerns or information that may risk the safety of others will be shared with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) so the correct level of support can be offered.

House of Bishops statement

The Safeguarding Policy Statement has been adopted by St Michael and All Angels; 'The Church of England is called to share the good news of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. The life of our communities and institutions is integral to how we address this task. 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 where it has.' From 'Promoting a Safer Church', The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy Statement.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual>.

Data Protection

On occasions safeguarding may come into conflict with data protection policy, as Safeguarding is of paramount importance, the need to safeguard will always override data protection.

Reporting to the Charity Commission

Should a serious safeguarding incident occur, then this should be reported promptly to the Charity Commission. A safeguarding Serious Incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant harm to the charity's beneficiaries, employees, office holders, volunteers or to others who come into contact with the charity through its work.

This includes where there are allegations or incidents of abuse of or risks to beneficiaries or others connected with the charity's activities. What is considered to be "significant" is a matter for the trustees to determine, as it will depend on the context of the charity, taking into account its operations, staff, finances and reputation.

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Policies, procedures and guidance

The following documents support this policy. Copies have been shared with the leaders of all groups and are available on the websites stated below.

National Church of England documents

- Parish Safeguarding Handbook 2019
- Safer Environment and Activities 2019
- Code of Safer Working Practice

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-resources>

Oxford Diocese document

- Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/safeguarding/>

St. Michael & All Angels Church Policies

- Complaints
- Data Protection

<http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk/>

The following Appendices are an integral part of this policy:

1. Local Resources
2. National Resources
3. Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders
4. St Michael and All Angels Safer Recruitment pathway
5. Safeguarding Learning Pathways

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints Jenny Rose as the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Incumbent

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Churchwardens

Date:.....

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Appendix 1 – Local Resources

Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Team

For urgent safeguarding concerns please call: 01865 208295 or email: safeguardingreferrals@oxford.anglican.org, Mon-Thur 9am-5pm and Fri 9am-4.30pm.

A Safeguarding Referral Form (<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/safeguarding/>) needs to be used to refer safeguarding concerns to the diocesan safeguarding team. All phone or email referrals to the safeguarding team must be followed up by completing the Safeguarding Referral Form and returning it to: safeguardingreferrals@oxford.anglican.org.

For general safeguarding enquiries: Please email safeguarding@oxford.anglican.org

To contact another member of the team details can be found here:
<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-team/>

Police

At immediate risk of harm: 999

Not at immediate risk of harm: 101

Always call 999 in an emergency; if you are unable to speak on the phone, there are systems in place to connect you to the right service:

If you are calling from a mobile phone, you can use the 'Silent Solution' system. Press 55 and the operator will transfer the call to the relevant police force as an emergency. The police call handler will then ask you a series of simple yes/no questions. If you're still not able to speak, listen to the instructions you are given so the handler can assess your call and send help. Please note that calling from a mobile does not allow the police to track your location.

If you are calling from a landline, pressing '55' will not work. If you can't speak you should stay on the line and the operator will connect you to a police call handler. If you need to put the phone down, the line will stay open for 45 seconds. If you pick it up during this time and the operator is concerned for your safety, they will put you through to a police call handler. Calling 999 from a landline means the police may be able to retrieve information on your location to send help.

Local Domestic Abuse Helplines

Berkshire Women's Aid 0118 950 4003

Windsor Maidenhead – DASH 01753 549865

Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse Provides information for those experiencing domestic abuse and their supporters. Provides information on housing, refuge services, injunctions and safety planning.

<https://www.reducingtherisk.org.uk/cms/content/home>

Flag DV Provides free legal advice to victims of domestic abuse in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire. 0800 731 0055, www.flagdv.org.uk

<https://www.oxford.anglican.org/safeguarding/finding-support/>

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Appendix 2 – National Resources

National Domestic Violence Helpline

The Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge.

0808 2000 247

Women's Aid

Provides services for women and children who have been affected by the experience of domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse.

0808 2000 247

www.womensaid.org.uk

Refuge

Refuge is the national charity which provides a wide range of specialist domestic violence services to women and children experiencing domestic violence. The Tech Abuse Chatbot also provides advice on safeguarding devices if a victim feels that they are being monitored by their abuser. 0808 2000 247 www.refuge.org.uk

The Men's Advice Line

A confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence from a partner, ex-partner or other family members.

0808 801 0327

www.mensadvice.org.uk

Mankind Initiative

Support for male victims of domestic abuse and domestic violence.

01823 334 244

www.mankind.org.uk

Rape Crisis

Rape Crisis Centres offer a range of services for women and girls who have been raped or experienced another form of sexual violence.

0808 802 9999

www.rapecrisis.org.uk

National Centre for Domestic Violence

The National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV) provides a free, fast emergency injunction service to survivors of domestic violence.

24 hour helpline: 0800 970 2070

www.ncdv.org.uk

NSPCC ChildLine

Free, confidential service for young people up to the age of 19. Get help and advice about a wide range of issues, talk to a counsellor online, send ChildLine an email or post on the message boards.

0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

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NSPCC Helpline

Free helpline service for anyone with concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing. They offer advice and support and can take action on your behalf if a child is in danger.

0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/

Galop

Advice and support for LGBT people who have experienced hate crime, sexual violence and domestic abuse.

LGBT domestic violence helpline:

0800 999 5428

www.galop.org.uk/

Respect

The Respect phone line is a confidential helpline offering advice, information and support to help you stop being violent and abusive to your partner.

0808 802 4040

www.respectphoneline.org.uk

Samaritans

A 24-hour helpline for any person in emotional distress.

116 123

www.samaritans.org

National Stalking Helpline

0808 802 0300

www.stalkinghelpline.org

Southall Black Sisters

Southall Black Sisters is a not-for-profit organisation set up in 1979 to meet the needs of black (Asian and African-Caribbean) and minority ethnic women.

0208 571 0800

<http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk/>

Karma Nirvana

Karma Nirvana supports those who suffer or are at risk of honour based abuse or forced marriage.

0800 5999 247

<http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk>

Forced Marriage Unit

The Government's Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is dedicated to preventing British nationals being forced into marriage overseas or assisting anyone in the UK faced with being forced into a marriage.

020 7008 0151 or 0207 008 1500

www.gov.uk/forced-marriage

Hourglass

Elder Abuse Response helpline.

0808 808 8141

<http://www.elderabuse.org.uk>

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Restored

Restored is an international Christian alliance working to end violence against women and to transform relationships.

<http://www.restoredrelationships.org/>

RAVE

RAVE is an initiative that seeks to bring knowledge and social action together to assist families of faith impacted by abuse.

<http://www.theraveproject.org>

Additional National resources are listed on Pages 52 and 53 of the Church of England 'Parish Safeguarding Handbook'

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

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Appendix 3 - St. Michael and All Angels Church Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

1 As an organisation using the DBS Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions involving working with children and vulnerable adults, St. Michael and All Angels Church complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice¹ and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

2 St. Michael and All Angels Church is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, volunteers and users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical or mental disability, or offending background.

3 This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders can be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

4 We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. In selecting people, we assess their skills, qualifications and experience.

5 A DBS Disclosure is only requested for eligible positions with children and vulnerable adults. For those positions where a DBS Disclosure is required, all application forms, job advertisements and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

6 Where a DBS Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to complete a Confidential Declaration at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within the Appointing Body and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

7 For eligible positions involving work with children and vulnerable adults we ask questions about the applicant's entire criminal record on the Confidential Declaration Form, as the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 provides that for this purpose no convictions are regarded as unspent. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

8 Under the provisions of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 it is prohibited to employ disqualified people from working in regulated positions.

9 At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position. A risk assessment may be undertaken, when offences are disclosed, which takes into account the circumstances of the offence and the position applied for.

10 We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

11 Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences. 1

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice> 8

12 It is our policy that no-one who has been convicted or who has accepted a caution for a sexual offence against a child will be permitted to undertake regulated activity or have unsupervised access to children.

13 A person convicted of, or who has accepted a caution for, any other offence against a child or vulnerable adult or for whom there are unresolved serious allegations outstanding will only be allowed to undertake regulated activity or have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults with the express agreement of the incumbent following consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the police.

14 A person known to be convicted of, or to have accepted a caution for, an offence against a child or vulnerable adult will be subject to an individual agreement defining attendance at worship and other church activities

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Appendix 4 - Safer Recruitment of Volunteers at St Michael's Church, Sandhurst

Safeguarding Commitment: St Michael's Church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and we expect everyone who works within our church, whether as a volunteer or in a paid capacity, to share this commitment. To achieve this, we follow a Safer Recruitment procedure.

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Notes</i>
1	Identify the need, and write or review Role Description and Person Specification	Group leaders
2	Make a plan for recruiting volunteer(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible for overseeing the process? • How will we advertise it? • Who will give interested persons the necessary information and forms? • Who will "interview"? 	Group leader(s) to consult with Rector/Churchwardens. National Church guidance is that there is a Responsible Person to oversee the recruitment
3	Advertise the role – Church newsletter, announcements in church, word of mouth	Wording of written ad to include the Safeguarding Commitment
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to enquiries with informal chat, explain the Safer Recruitment process • Give/send role description & person spec, Volunteer Information Form and Confidential Declaration Form to interested person(s). • Arrange a time for an "interview" 	Group leaders with Responsible Person (if not the same)
5	Friendly "interview", using Volunteer Information Form and discussing what the volunteer will be asked to do. Emphasise importance of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowing and following Safeguarding policy and practices • doing the required training • raising any concerns about the children/young people/vulnerable adults or other volunteers with the leader, Rector/Churchwardens or Safeguarding Officer. 	To include the group leader and Rector or a Churchwarden. The Safeguarding Officer could be involved, or could meet with the volunteer once appointed, to go through Safeguarding practice in the parish.
6	Follow up references	Safeguarding Administrator
7	DBS Check Volunteer will have to bring copies of passport and other papers to the Parish Office. The process can be done online by Sunita McIntosh with volunteer present.	DBS Administrator: Check whether an existing DBS check can be used
8	Induction: another volunteer or group leader guides the new volunteer through activities, introduces him/her to other members of the team and those being served	Group leader(s) to ensure this is done.

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	(children/young people/vulnerable adults), offers support and advice. Volunteer signs the Volunteer Agreement.	
9	Ongoing support, supervision, Safeguarding and other training as required. Meeting with new volunteer after an agreed period, e.g. one month or 3 months, to get feedback, answer questions and give encouragement	Group leader(s)

NB this is based on www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/; approved by PCC Nov 2022