

Safeguarding Policy

This policy is rooted in the Diocesan Child Protection Policy which is accepted and agreed by the PCC

Recruitment and Selection Policy

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the parish of Mark, West Huntspill and East Huntspill is dedicated to the emotional, physical and spiritual development and welfare of children and young people in our care and to the support and training of adults who undertake this valuable ministry.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. National guidelines state that all organisations that work with children, young people and vulnerable adults share a commitment to safeguard and promote their welfare. Everyone in the church community has a responsibility to ensure there is a welcome for all people and a responsibility for the safety, well being and protection of others.

The Church works with statutory agencies to help safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. Since its first child protection policy, and before, the Church has taken the view that matters which are the subject of statutory provisions should be brought to the relevant agencies for determination. This is particularly important if there is a possible need for statutory action to protect a child or adult, or to bring an alleged offender to justice. For faith communities to fulfil this commitment and for there to be an integrated approach there needs to be the following arrangements in place:

- Those involved with working with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the parish need to know how to report concerns that they may have about the children, young people or vulnerable adults they meet that are in line with national procedures.
- Those involved in working with children, young people and vulnerable adults need to adopt this code of practice.
- All who work directly with children, young people and vulnerable adults need to undergo safe recruitment procedures.

Principles

Summary of the Policy

We are committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all children, young people and all adults within our church community.
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide an environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.
- We will follow safe recruitment procedure to carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the church for children, young people and vulnerable adults, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- We will respond to every complaint made which suggests that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, co-operating with the Police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with him or her an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognized good practice.

Christian communities should be places where all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse. The Church is particularly called by God to support those less powerful and those without a voice in our society. The Church is working towards creating a safe and non-discriminatory environment by being aware of some of the particular situations that create vulnerability. Issues which need to be considered include both the physical environment and the attitudes of workers and volunteers. A person who might be considered vulnerable has the right to:

- Be treated with respect and dignity.
- Have their privacy respected.
- Be able to lead as independent a life as possible.
- Be able to choose how to lead their life.
- Have the protection of the law.
- Have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background.
- Be able to use their chosen language or method of communication.
- Be heard.

To appoint and support a Safeguarding Officer to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures. The coordinator must ensure that any

concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult or the behaviour of an adult are appropriately reported both to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and to the statutory agencies. The coordinator is someone without other pastoral responsibility for children in the parish.

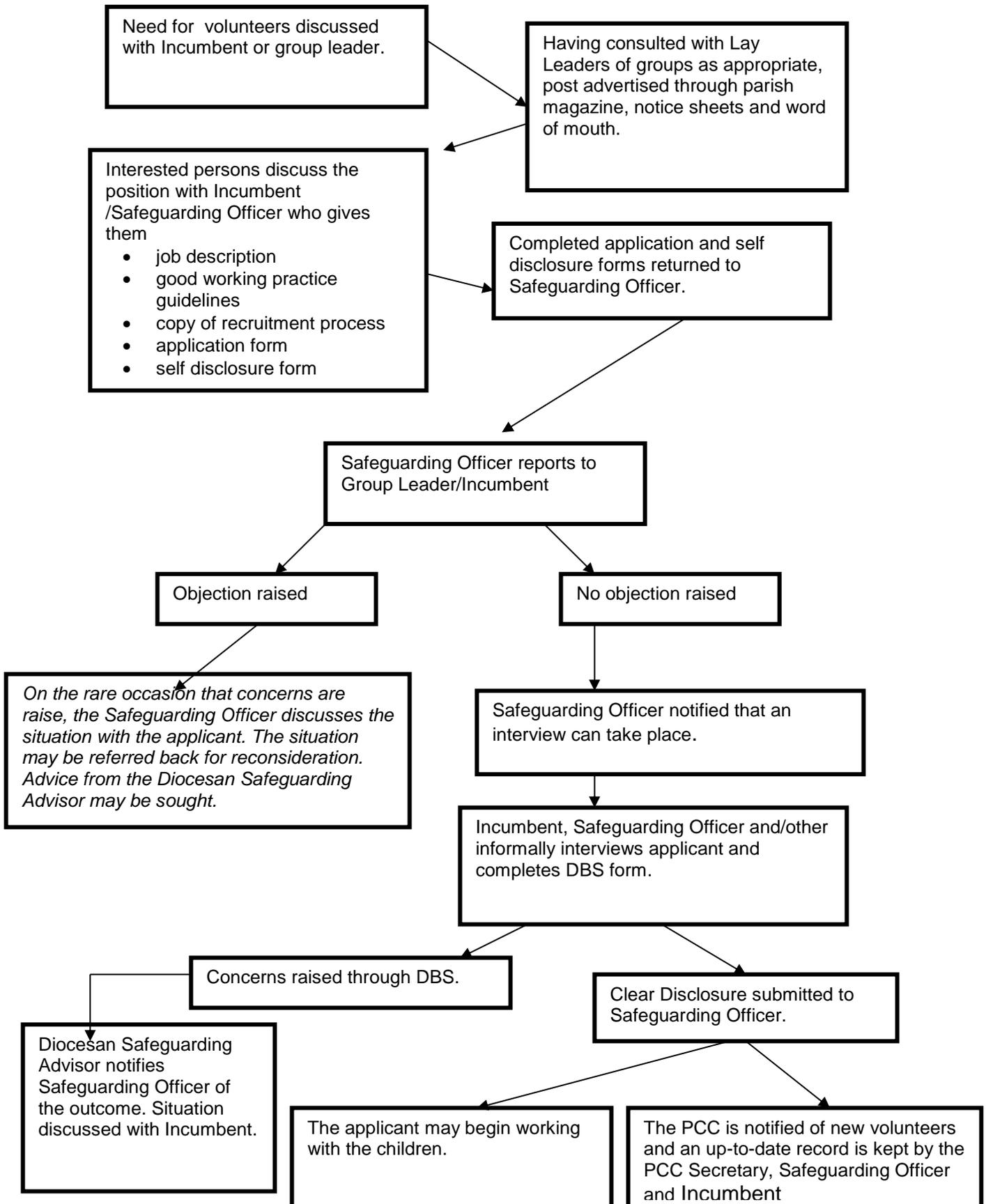
The coordinator will be responsible for implementing the agreed recruitment procedures ensuring that DBS disclosure is obtained. The PCC shall also consider the appointment of a children's advocate to whom children could talk to about any problems should they so wish.

Responsibilities of the parish

The PCC shall ensure that all those authorized to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are appropriately recruited, trained and supported. The PCC will ensure all authorized personnel are familiar with the Diocesan Child Protection policy and that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the parish.

- Display in church premises where children's activities take place, the contact details of the Safeguarding Officer or children's advocate, along with the 'ChildLine' telephone number.
- Review the implementation of the safeguarding policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually.

Recruitment Procedure for Youth and Children's Ministry to include Avalon Camp



Responding to concerns

If you are concerned or have a sense of unease about any behavior or abuse toward a child, young person or vulnerable adult take the concerns seriously. If a child, young person or vulnerable adult tells you that they or someone they know is being abused this must be taken seriously.

All and any concerns should be referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

What to do:

- Listen carefully to what is said, rather than directly question him/her.
- Accept what is said – children or vulnerable adults rarely tell lies about being abused.
- Take the abuse seriously (no incident of abuse is ever insignificant).
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in bringing it to your attention.
- Write down exactly what was said, including any inappropriate language that might have been used, whilst it is still fresh in your mind, making a note of the timing, setting and people present.
- Explain what actions you are going to take – that the information must be shared.
- Report what you have heard, seen or suspect, either to Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Children's Social Care, the Police or the NSPCC.

What not to do:

- Dismiss your concerns – the diocese will take them seriously.
- Approach the person about whom you have concerns, instead seek advice from either the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, your local Children's Social Care, the Police or the NSPCC.
- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Ask questions to obtain further information.
- Promise confidentiality, or make promises to them that cannot be kept.
- Stop the person who is freely recalling what has happened. If they are interrupted at this stage, they may not continue and might not let you, or anyone else know what has happened.

Making referrals

If somebody believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be suffering or is at risk of significant harm that person should take the concerns seriously and always, without delay, make an immediate referral of the concerns to local authority Children's Social Care or the NSPCC or the Police.

Creating a culture of informed vigilance which takes children seriously

The PCC will ensure:

- Appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place.
- Appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the parish is provided.
- That an annual review of the implementation of the child protection policy, procedures and good practice, takes place.
- The ChildLine telephone number is displayed – 0800 11 11.
- That particular attention is paid to children and adults with special needs and those from ethnic minorities to ensure their full integration and protection within the church community.
- That appropriate pastoral care is available for those adults who have disclosed that they have been abused as children.
- That support for all parents and families in the congregation is provided as appropriate, being aware particularly of parents whose children have suffered abuse.
- That those who may pose a threat to children and young people are effectively managed and monitored, whilst cared for and supported.

Younger Helpers

Young helpers do not need to be appointed using the above procedure, but they should not be 'left on their own' with children, nor should they 'take a group off' into another room without adult supervision, in case they are the unwitting cause of ill-treatment through immaturity. It should be our concern to guard such young helpers from potentially awkward situations. It is important that they fully understand their responsibilities and work within the guidelines for their own safety and those of the children in their care. The PCC ensures that adult leaders supervising the younger helpers (usually between the ages of 14 and 18) are willing to implement guidelines and offer appropriate support.

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Safe Recruitment Policy and Recruitment Forms can be downloaded from the Diocese website under Safeguarding. www.bathandwells.org.uk.

**Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor: 01749 685135
Assistant Safeguarding Advisor: 01749 685103**

Further Useful telephone numbers available page 55 of Diocesan Policy.