

PCC SAFEGUARDING UPDATE – March 2021

A. BACKGROUND

Safeguarding is always and remains a high priority for the church of England and St Peters.

B. WHAT WE HAVE DONE

- Followed up and checked on people who were due -Only a few outstanding.
- Liaised with diocesan advisor on best practice regarding pandemic volunteering.
- Attended a safeguarding seminar/ workshop (online)
- Read and reviewed the serious incident reporting advice sent out by the diocese.

C. WHAT WE NEED TO DO

There are broadly three areas where we still have work to do:

1. Parish dashboards
2. DBS training.
3. Risk assessments and consent forms.
4. Corona Virus -online line services
5. Review and remind The PCC of safeguarding processes and serious incident reporting.

1. Summary of Parish Dashboards report

An update of the parish dashboard has been completed (enclosed). Action, that was required:

- The PCC must renew / update approval of the procedure to deal promptly with any safeguarding concern or allegation (including any suspicion of abuse). An updated safeguarding policy document must be signed by the current church warden and posted up in church. (notice board by octagon and at the back of church)
- A list of church activities still needs to be completed on the dashboard.

2. DBS checks and training

DBS

With regard to DBS checks, Liz Moyle has updated the spread sheet (according to the requirements of the Church of England, see appendix 1) and post lock down we now have 4 outstanding DBS renewals all of which are in progress.

Regarding safeguarding training

Much of safeguarding is about awareness and hence training to ensure all relevant people / roles have a suitable level of knowledge and awareness of the issues is important. There are significant gaps in the training completed vs training required. Much of that is due to the training processes in the dioceses being in a state of flux caused by the pandemic and the shift of the world and training courses to online formats.

Who needs what training?

See appendix below. Specifically, for the PCC;

- PSO
 - I need to complete the C2 training when the dioceses finalise and relaunch their programme post March / April.
- Clergy- are all up to date, Alex has a recruiter training to update
- PCC
 - All the PCC need to complete or renew C1 online training

this can be found on the Church of England online learning portal
<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

- Churchwardens
 - Mark Waller needs to renew his C2 in July.
 - Both Mark and Lisa need to do C1 (online)
- Recruiter
 - Liz needs to complete the S1 training when it becomes available in April 21

3. Risk assessments and consent forms

In March 2019, Alex drafted a letter for the churchwardens to send to leaders of activities regarding requests for risk assessments and consent forms to be completed for all church activities which is being complied with although as we have no youth worker there has been no recent activity needing consent / risk assessment.

4. The coronavirus pandemic

This created another set of safeguarding issues to be addressed.

- We liaised with the dioceses to ensure that as we, as a church go about supporting our own church community and the wider community, we need to be mindful of safeguarding principles.
- We have also reviewed and ensured we are compliant with safeguarding principles in respect of streaming services online to ensure people are aware and are not captured and broadcast at services online if they do not wish to be.

5. Safeguarding policy and process

- PCC have reviewed the principles and process of reporting safeguarding concerns.
- PCC have reviewed and readopted the safeguarding policy, wardens need to sign and publish.
- Safeguarding notices in church need to be refreshed and be more prominent.
- PCC are aware of its responsibilities in case of serious incident reporting to the charity commission in accordance with recent guidance issued by the diocesan safeguarding advisor. (document enclosed) and adopt a delegation policy

1. What is a safeguarding "Serious Incident"?

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.

D. NEXT STEPS

- Ensure the PCC and others who need to, complete the relevant training.
- Finalize the few outstanding DBS checks.
- Ensure continuous communication to keep safeguarding front of mind for all at all PCC meetings.
- Post signed and updated safeguarding policy in church.
- Complete updates at the APCM
- Update parish dashboard when actions complete

Patti Seabright

Parish Safeguarding Officer

March 2021

Appendix 1 -Policy

THE PARISH OF ST PETER'S, ST ALBANS POLICY STATEMENT ON THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS

This Policy Statement was adopted by the Parish Church Council of St Peter's Church, St Albans at a PCC meeting on 8 March 2018 and reviewed on 27 February 2019. The Parish Policy on the Safeguarding of Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults and this Policy Statement will be reviewed by the PCC on an annual basis.

1. The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of this Parish Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all. We recognise that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.
2. The PCC formally adopts the House of Bishops' *Promoting a Safer Church; safeguarding policy statement 2017*; the House of Bishops' 2006 Policy on Safeguarding Adults (*Promoting a Safer Church*); and the House of Bishops' and diocesan safeguarding policies and practice guidance, while also committing to being responsive to our local parish requirements.
3. The PCC is committed to following **the safeguarding policy of the Church of England**:
 - a. This PCC, its incumbent, officers and congregation are committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of this Parish Church.
 - b. Safeguarding means the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, work to prevent abuse from occurring, seek to 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.
 - c. We affirm the 'Whole Church' approach to safeguarding. This approach encompasses a commitment to consistent policy and practice across all Parish Church bodies and Church Officers and that everyone associated with this Parish Church, who comes into contact with children, young people and adults, has a role to play.
 - d. The PCC will take appropriate steps to maintain a safer environment for all and to practise fully and positively Christ's Ministry towards children, young people and adults; to respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm.
4. The PCC makes the following **6 overarching policy commitments** to:
 - a. Promote a Safer environment and culture.
 - b. Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church.
 - c. Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
 - d. Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
 - e. Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons; and
 - f. Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others.
5. The PCC adopts a Parish Policy for the Safeguarding of Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults which sets out in detail the steps that will be taken to follow and comply with the guidance, policy and commitment to safeguarding of the Church of England. All those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults shall follow the Parish Policy.
6. The PCC has appointed Ms Patricia Seabright as Parish Safeguarding Officer, in line with the Parish Policy.

Adopted by the PCC of St Peter's Church, St Albans on 27 February 2019:

.....*Revd Mark Dearnley*.....
Reverend Mark Dearnley
(Incumbent)

.....*Lisa McCurdy*

Ms Lisa McCurdy
(Churchwarden)

.....*Mark Waller*.....
Mr Mark Waller
(Churchwarden)

Appendix 2

Who should be DBS checked?

As with training, the answer depends on the level of responsibility for children and/or vulnerable adults held by the individual in question.

It is a Charity Commission requirement that all PCC members should be DBS checked, where their parish church undertakes work with children and/or vulnerable adults. This obviously includes PCC members at St Peter's.

Where an individual supervises children and/or vulnerable adults, or may find themselves in a situation where they are the sole person overseeing a group of children, then they also should be subject to a DBS check. This will include: Sunday School leaders, leaders of youth groups, Director of Music, Assistant Organist, and pastoral staff (who are likely to be approached by children and/or vulnerable adults on a personal basis).

What level of DBS check is appropriate?

An Enhanced check is required for those with the supervisory roles above or those who carry out regulated activity (health or social care) for vulnerable adults.

As regards music groups and choirs: those individuals who are responsible for teaching, training, supervising or caring for any children who are on tour, will be eligible for a DBS check. If the tour is overnight, this will mean that the relevant individuals (i.e. those in charge of supervising/caring for the children) will be eligible for an enhanced check together with a barred list check. Adult choir members will not be eligible for a DBS check (unless the role includes responsibility for teaching, training, caring for or supervising vulnerable groups (children or adults)).

How often should DBS checks and training be renewed?

- *DBS checks should be renewed/repeated **every 5 years**.*
- *Training should be renewed/repeated **every 3 years**.*
- *The Church Office should maintain a register to ensure that checks/training are kept up-to-date and individuals reminded on a timely basis.*

Who should undergo which training?

The level of training required by those working with children and/or vulnerable adults again depends on the level of responsibility that an individual has for those children and/or vulnerable adults.

The National Church Safeguarding Team has helpfully designed various levels of safeguarding training for each level of responsibility as follows:

C0 - Basic Safeguarding Awareness Training (1 hour, online training module)

This module is designed for those within church communities who need to have a basic awareness of safeguarding, and who do not fall into any other category with greater responsibility. This training should be undertaken by:

- *PCC members*
- *Vergers*
- *Servers*
- *Welcomers*
- *Sidespersons*
- *Refreshments servers*
- *Bell ringers*
- *Choir members*
- *Church employees/workers (without specific responsibility for children/vulnerable adults)*

This is a one-hour, online awareness course and is not onerous.

C1 - Training for those involved in activities with children/vulnerable adults, but without leadership responsibility (90 minutes, online training module)

This module is designed for those who hold positions of responsibility in relation to children and vulnerable adults, but who do not have leadership or supervisory role. This training should be undertaken by:

- Servers
- Church admin staff
- Helpers/volunteers at activities with children and/or vulnerable adults
- Pastoral/home visitors
- Ordinands prior to placement
- Readers in training

This is a 90-minute online course, which goes into more depth than C0, but is again not an onerous undertaking. The online training is easily accessible at: <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

C2 - Training for those with leadership/supervisory roles in church activities with children/vulnerable adults (classroom-based training)

This module is designed for all those who lead activities with children and/or vulnerable adults, and requires attendance at a training session held within the diocese (usually on a weekday evening). This training should be undertaken by:

- Churchwardens
- Parish Safeguarding Officers
- PCC officers with safeguarding responsibilities
- Director of Music
- Leaders of music groups
- Bell Tower Captains and any ringers who train children/vulnerable adults
- Ordinand prior to placement

It is expected that those attending C2 will already have completed C0. It may be a good idea to look into hosting a training session at St Peter's to ensure that all relevant individuals have received this training.

C3 - Training for clergy, readers, and those with permission to officiate, including all clergy with a bishop's licence

This is specific safeguarding mandatory training for those in ministry positions, organised by the Diocese. Details of the classroom-based training are available here:

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/deanerysafeguarding/>