

# St John the Evangelist Church, Old Moulsham Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Policies and Implementation Plan 2023/4



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## 1. Safeguarding Policy 2023/4

St John's has adopted the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy Statement'. The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held 19 July 2022. 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.
- 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 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 Adviser (DSA) 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 that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

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

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## 2. Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse 2023/4

All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. We are committed to promoting and supporting environments which:

- ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse
- protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse from actual or potential harm
- recognise equality amongst people and within relationships
- enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to appropriately and consistently.

We recognise that:

- all forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship
- all survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- domestic abuse can occur in all communities
- domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency
- domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour
- working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse in our activities, publicity and care, by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse in all our activities
  - raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise in all our publicity, through providing information in public and women-only areas of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse
  - ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help when concerns are raised
  - working with the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.
  - ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;
  - identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

If you have any concerns or need to talk to someone please contact Nanette Wright, Safeguarding Officer.

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## 3. Implementation Plan

### 3.1 Introduction

At St John's we take safeguarding very seriously and have adopted the suite of Policy and Practice Guidance provided by the National Safeguarding Team for the Church of England (available at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/policy-and-practice-guidance>)

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the incumbent are responsible for ensuring that all church officers are aware of the safeguarding policy/guidance and are trained appropriately for their roles, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid.

The PCC and the incumbent are responsible for ensuring that all church members who work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, undertake (in person or online) diocesan safeguarding training at least every 3 years, and always **within 3 months of their appointment**.

In the light of the policy adopted by the church, this policy sets out the PCC and incumbent's position on training and DBS certificates below. Training and DBS applications are only part of the safer recruitment process which, for new recruits, includes confidential declarations and references.

### **3.2 Code of practice for all working with children, young people and adults on St John's behalf:**

#### **All employees and volunteers MUST:**

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity
- Respect people's rights to personal privacy
- Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful
- Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern
- Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or the Parish Safeguarding Officer, signing and dating all such records
- Obtain written consent for any photographs or videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.

#### **In addition, those working with children and young people MUST:**

- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult
- Ensure that another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure that there are other adults around
- Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact, and of its nature, before the activity takes place.

#### **Those working with children, young people and adults MUST NOT:**

- Use any form of physical punishment
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group
- Permit abusive peer activities eg initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying
- Show favouritism to any one individual or group
- Allow an individual to involve them in excessive attention seeking
- Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person
- Allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group
- Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media
- Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

#### **In addition, those working with children and young people MUST NOT:**

- Give lifts to children you are supervising on your own, other than in exceptional circumstances eg in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. (in these circumstances, the circumstances and

decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person (the activity leader, incumbent or PSO) at the earliest opportunity

- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people, except when this is a social situation with family members/carers present (eg a church party)
- Arrange social occasions with children and young people outside organised group occasions (other than events which also include family members/carers).

### Acceptable touch:

Sympathetic attention, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, can be wholly appropriate. However, abusers can use touch that appears safe to 'normalise' physical contact which then becomes abusive. As a general rule, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility and those with whom they are working or volunteering should be initiated by the person themselves, and kept to a minimum. In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

- Ask permission before you touch someone
- Allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (eg when they need medical attention)
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive
- Keep everything public – a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
- Touch should be in response to a person's needs and not related to the worker's needs
- Touch should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker or helper.

### 3.3 Training available:

The Diocese of Chelmsford currently provides these levels of training:

Course	Who is required to complete them
Basic Awareness (online)	Required for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All church Officers</li> <li>• Anyone going on to complete any other CoE safeguarding course</li> </ul> Recommended for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anyone wanting or needing a basic awareness of safeguarding</li> </ul>
Foundation (online)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone in a role which involves work (paid or unpaid) with children and/or vulnerable adults</li> <li>• Pre-ordination or license students, prior to BAP or selection Panel</li> <li>• Vergers</li> <li>• PCC Members/Lay Chapter Members</li> <li>• Staff at Theological Education Institutions with student facing roles</li> <li>• Members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel</li> <li>• Anyone going on to complete any other Church of England safeguarding course</li> </ul>
Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse (online)	Required for people holding a pastoral role within the church: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anyone holding the Bishop's licence, commission, authorisation, or permission (clergy, PtO, Readers, LLMs)</li> <li>• Bishops' Visitors/Pastoral Visitors</li> <li>• Safeguarding Officers</li> <li>• Ordinands during IME 1.</li> <li>• PCC Members/Lay Chapter Members.</li> <li>• Staff at Theological Education Institutions with student facing roles.</li> <li>• Members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Panel.</li> </ul>
Safer Recruitment and People Management	Required for Line Managers and those involved in recruitment of Church Officers (employees, elected members and volunteers), including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those with responsibility for administering DBS</li> </ul>

Course	Who is required to complete them
(online)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding Officers</li> <li>Ordinands during IME1</li> </ul>
Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse (online)	Required for people holding a pastoral role including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anyone holding the Bishop's licence, commission, authorisation, or permission (clergy, PtO, Readers, LLMs)</li> <li>Bishops' Visitors/Pastoral Visitors</li> <li>Safeguarding Officers</li> <li>Ordinands during IME 1.</li> <li>PCC Members/Lay Chapter Members.</li> <li>Staff at Theological Education Institutions with student facing roles.</li> <li>Members of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Pane</li> </ul>
Leadership (compressed pathway) (virtual viz Zoom)	Required for anyone who has safeguarding responsibilities/is leading activities/groups involving children and/or vulnerable adults, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parish Safeguarding Officer</li> <li>Churchwardens</li> <li>Those with Permission to Officiate whose role involves a very low level of work, irregularly, and where this pathway was officially approved by their Bishop and the DSA</li> </ul>
Leadership (virtual via Zoom)	Required for those holding a Bishop's Licence, Commission or Authorisation, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Honorary/Assistant Bishops and Chaplains</li> <li>Authorised Pastoral Assistants</li> <li>Authorised Lay Preachers</li> <li>Those with Permission to Officiate whose roles involve a high level of work, regularly</li> </ul>
Parish Safeguarding Officer Induction (virtual via Zoom)	Recommended for existing Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) Required for people taking on the role of PSO

The schedule in 3.5 below shows for which roles at St John's people need to complete which training courses.

### 3.4 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks:

The schedule in 3.5 below shows for which roles at St John's where people are required to have a DBS check. Those checks will be at the enhanced level with or without barring. Eligibility criteria are set nationally and it should be noted that:

- The Charity Commission recommends that all Trustees (thus all PCC members and churchwardens) should be DBS checked
- All Clergy will have DBS check as a condition of their licence/permission
- All new roles, whether ordained, lay, paid or unpaid, to be added as required by the Parish Safeguarding Officer in consultation with the incumbent

The Parish Safeguarding Officer will confirm which level is required for your role. We strongly advise DBS holders to apply to the Update Service to automatically keep their certificate up to date, meaning neither the individual nor their employer has to apply for a new DBS. This **must be done within 30 days of receiving your certificate**, and with the update service it becomes a 'portable DBS', allowing any new employer to check a DBS certificate online.

### 3.5 Schedule of Training and DBS Requirements for St John's Church:

**Note** DBS required if the activity involves 4+ contacts in 30 days, or if at any time providing personal care or handling a person's money is required (ideally home visits should be done in pairs)

Role	Basic	Found-ation	Safer Re-cruitment	Domestic Abuse	Com-pressed Leader-ship	Leader-ship	PSO	DBS
<i>Pre-requisite</i>	n/a	Basic	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	n/a
Incumbent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Priests holding licence or PTOs	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
PTOs with very little & irregular work	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Churchwardens	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Community engage't officer	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Safeguarding Officer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Lead recruiter/DBS administrator	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Junior & Messy Church session leaders	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Regular junior & Messy Church helpers	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Licensed Lay Worship Leaders	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Authorised Lay Preachers	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Other regular lay worship leaders	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Choir leader	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Sacristan	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Altar servers	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Prayer & Past'l Contact Leader	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
Pastoral contacts	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Prayer Ministry team members	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
PCC members	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓
Sides people	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
JubiLatte manager	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
JubiLatte Session leaders	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
JubiLatte volunteers	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Tots & Tinies Manager	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Tots & Tinies Session Leaders	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

Role	Basic	Found-ation	Safer Re-cruitment	Domestic Abuse	Com-pressed Leader-ship	Leader-ship	PSO	DBS
Tots & Tinies volunteers	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Refreshment helpers	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
<i>Pre-requisite</i>	n/a	Basic	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	Foundat'n	n/a

### 3.6 Assistance for people who find technology very challenging:

The church will provide assistance to people who find difficulty with the technology, either individually or in small groups. However, where people are unable to understand the training or cannot answer the test questions, they can only fill the roles in the schedule appended where there will always be another lead volunteer with responsibility for safeguarding.

### 3.7 Risk assessments:

All risk assessments should always include a safeguarding risk assessment and, if not written by the person with lead responsibility for an activity or event, must always be shared with them in advance.

### 3.8 Record keeping and retention:

#### 3.8.1 Managing safeguarding records:

Safeguarding case files, whether electronic or paper, must be stored securely by the incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), in line with the Parish Safeguarding Handbook (2018).

#### 3.8.2 What are good safeguarding records:

Good record keeping is an important part of the safeguarding task. Records should use clear, straightforward language, be concise, and accurate so that they can be understood by anyone not familiar with the case. They should clearly differentiate between facts, opinion, judgements and hypothesis.

Why? Church safeguarding records are needed in order to:

- Ensure that what happened, and when it happened, are recorded
- Provide a history of events so that patterns can be identified
- Record and justify the action/s of advisers and church workers
- Promote the exercise of accountability
- Provide a basis of evidence for future safeguarding activity
- Allow for continuity when there is a change of personnel.

What? Records should always be written, using the following guidance:

- **Written record** - record an event or conversation, and be made as soon as practicable, and always within 24 hours
- **Who** it is about (names of all key people, including any actual / potential witnesses)?
- **What** happened (use exact quotes where possible, in quotation marks)?
- **How** did it happen?
- **Where** did it take place?
- **When** did it take place?
- **Why** did it happen (record any explanations offered by the people involved. This is not the place for analysis)

The remainder should always be recorded by the Parish Safeguarding Officer:

- **What should happen next** (what action will follow – what are you or anyone else going to do next, and when)?
- **What did happen next** including any checks made to ensure effective follow up – did you or anyone else do what they were going to do)? This should also include a record of all conversations and correspondence with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team



- **Analysis** of all the information gathered to decide the nature of the child/adult's needs given what they are experiencing, the risk of abuse or neglect and the level of risk they may be facing, if any, clearly differentiating between facts and personal judgement

### 3.8.3 Retention of safeguarding records:

All safeguarding records must be retained and then destroyed in line with the Church of England's Records Management Guides ('Keep or Bin, The Care of Your Parish Records' last revised 2009):

Basic record description	To be kept in the Parish	Final action
A clear DBS certificate or disclosure letter of confirmation	Within 6 months of the recruitment decision	Destroy
Risk assessment recommendations and management plan in the event of an unclear or blemished DBS disclosure	50 years after appointment/employment ceases	Destroy
Records of other safeguarding adult or child protection incidents either within the parish or within a family / by an individual where the Parish was the reporting body or involved in care or monitoring plans. That is, any sex offender risk assessments and monitoring agreements	50 years after the conclusion of the matter	Destroy
Records of any children's activities, Sunday school / junior church / youth club registers and related general safety risk assessments. Any communication from parents or other parties in relation to the above	50 years after the activity ceases	Destroy
HR records relating to lay employees not working with children and vulnerable adults: including annual performance assessments, disciplinary matters, job descriptions, training and termination documentation	6 years after employment ceases	Destroy
HR records with contact with children and vulnerable adults including all documentation concerning any allegations and investigation regardless of the findings	50 years after the conclusion of the matter	Destroy
Parish agreement with the diocese on Obtaining DBS Disclosures	Last action + 5 years	Permanent (deposit)

### 3.9 Future review of the Safeguarding Policy, Domestic Abuse Policy and Safeguarding Implementation Plan:

This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually by the third meeting of a newly elected PCC at the latest, or will be updated with any new guidance from the Diocese. Monthly PCC updates to the PCC are required under the policy and should cover a breakdown of completed and outstanding training and DBS certificates by role, as well as other updating information required by the PCC.