



# Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of Coventry

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Safeguarding Policy has been prepared in accordance with the national policies of the Church of England as approved by the House of Bishops. It is in line with legislation, statutory guidance and national/local safeguarding procedures regarding the needs of adults at risk and children. It replaces all previous policies issued by the Diocese of Coventry relating to child protection and safeguarding.
- 1.2. Every child or adult can be hurt, put at risk of harm or abused in other ways. The actions we must take to promote their welfare, and protect them from harm, are the responsibility of us all. Everyone who comes into contact with adults at risk or children has a role to play.
- 1.3. 'Looking the other way' is not an option. Adopting and putting this policy into practice is essential for all of our parishes and church-related communities at every level.

### **Purpose and scope of this policy**

- 1.4. The purpose of this policy is to set out the expectations placed on those working and volunteering in the Diocese of Coventry and to provide information that promotes the safeguarding of all children and adults.
- 1.5. This policy applies to every parish, even those that don't provide any activities for children.

### **Definition of terms**

- 1.6. This document uses the following definition of terms:
  - **Abuse** - the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. This includes physical abuse, emotional/psychological abuse, institutional abuse, financial or material abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and acts of omission.
  - **Child** - anyone under the age of 18 years.
  - **Adult at risk** - a person aged 18 years or over who is experiencing or at risk of abuse (including neglect). The term 'vulnerable adult' is also used in some legislation.

### **Where to find this policy and other safeguarding resources**

- 1.7. The latest version of this policy and other resources (including how to respond to safeguarding allegations) are available on the diocesan website at: [www.dioceseofcoventry.org/SafeguardingResources](http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/SafeguardingResources)

### **Approval and review**

- 1.8. This policy has been approved by the Bishop's Core Staff for immediate use. It will be presented to Diocesan Synod for ratification at their next meeting, and it will be reviewed annually by Bishop's Council.

## 2. Statement of Commitment

- 2.1. As part of the Christian Church living in the spirit of the Gospel, we are committed to protect and care for everyone in the church community, but especially adults at risk and children.
- 2.2. **We are committed to:**
- The care of, the nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all children and adults.
  - The safeguarding and protection of all children and adults.
  - The establishing of a safe, caring community which provides a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse.
- 2.3. **To this end we will:**
- Carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the church, in line with the Church of England's *Practice Guidance for Safer Recruitment*.
  - Respond without delay to every complaint made that a child or adult may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
  - Seek to offer informed pastoral care and support to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry that recognises the importance of understanding the needs of those who have been abused, including their feelings of alienation and/or isolation.
  - Seek to protect survivors of abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse.
  - Seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of respect and responsibility, where they are trusted by others.
  - Seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or adult.
- 2.4. **In all of the above:**
- We will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.
  - We will monitor and regularly review our safeguarding procedures.

## 3. Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

- 3.1. The Diocesan Board of Finance will appoint a suitably qualified Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA), directly accountable to the Bishop of Coventry, and will provide appropriate financial, organizational and management support. The DSA will be line managed by the Diocesan Secretary.

### Resources

- 3.2. The DSA will provide and maintain a set of safeguarding resources for use by parishes. Such resources will comply with safeguarding policies and practice guidance published by the Church of England, including:
- *Protecting All God's Children* – a policy for safeguarding children, the 4th Edition published in 2010;
  - *Promoting a Safe Church* – a policy for safeguarding adults, published in 2006;
  - *Safer Recruitment* – published in 2015;
  - *Responding to Domestic Abuse* – published in 2006;
  - *Responding Well* – to those who have been sexually abused, published in 2011;
  - *Responding to Serious Safeguarding Situations relating to Church Officers* – published 2015

### Communication

- 3.3. The DSA will ensure that up-to-date safeguarding resources are available on the diocesan website.
- 3.4. The DSA will notify all Incumbents, Priests-in-Charge and Parish Safeguarding Officers of any significant changes to this policy or to other safeguarding resources. This will usually be done by email.
- 3.5. The DSA will also communicate such changes more widely via the diocesan eBulletin. Anyone can receive the diocesan eBulletin by registering at [www.dioceseofcoventry.org/register](http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/register)

### Training and advice

- 3.6. The DSA will provide appropriate safeguarding training for all Clergy, Readers, Licensed Lay Workers, Parish Safeguarding Officers and all those who work with adults at risk or children. The aim of such training is to equip people with the skills and knowledge needed to ensure effective safeguarding within parishes.
- 3.7. The DSA will provide support and advice to parishes regarding the implementation of this policy and also with any safeguarding situations which might arise.

### DBS checks

- 3.8. The DSA will provide information and advice about the requirements for DBS checks (at parish, deanery and diocesan levels). Information can be found in the diocesan document entitled *DBS Checks for Volunteers and Paid Staff* which is available on the diocesan website.

### Managing safeguarding situations

- 3.9. The DSA will take the lead in managing safeguarding situations which arise at parish, deanery or diocesan level. Where appropriate, this will include liaising with the Incumbent (or Priest-in-Charge), Parish Safeguarding Officer, Archdeacon, Diocesan Secretary, Director of Communications and representatives from statutory authorities.

## 4. Responsibilities of the Parish

- 4.1. The Incumbent (or Priest-in-Charge) and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are together responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented within the parish.

### **PCC responsibilities**

- 4.2. The Parochial Church Council must:

- Formally adopt this policy and file a copy with their PCC minutes.
- Formally adopt the diocesan *Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders*.
- Display a *Parish Safeguarding Statement* and a *Childline Poster* in every church.
- Appoint people to all the roles in the diocesan paper entitled *Safeguarding Roles within a Parish*.
- Ensure that all those authorised to work with adults at risk or children are:
  - Recruited in accordance with the two diocesan papers entitled *Safer Recruitment of Volunteers and Paid Staff* and *DBS Checks for Volunteers and Paid Staff*;
  - Adequately supported and have access to all relevant policies and safeguarding resources;
  - Trained appropriately for their roles (including relevant diocesan safeguarding training).
- Ensure that all activities (sponsored by the PCC) involving adults at risk or children, have:
  - Appropriate insurance cover;
  - An Activity Plan and Risk Assessment which is reviewed at least once a year.
- Comply with Data Protection Principles – specifically with reference to storing information about the ‘church workforce’, including volunteers who have completed a confidential declaration and/or undergone DBS checks.
- Receive and discuss an annual Safeguarding Report from the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- Review the implementation of this policy annually.

### **Parish Safeguarding Officer**

- 4.3. Working under the authority of the PCC, the Parish Safeguarding Officer takes the lead role for safeguarding within the parish.
- 4.4. The PCC must appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer who:
- Is a lay person on the Electoral Roll of a parish within the benefice; and
  - Is not related to the Incumbent (or Priest-in-Charge); and
  - Has an email address which they regularly monitor. Among other things, this is required to receive notifications regarding online DBS checks.
- 4.5. The responsibilities of the Parish Safeguarding Officer are outlined in the diocesan paper entitled *Safeguarding Roles within a Parish*.

### **Any questions?**

- 4.6. If in doubt about any aspect of this policy, please do not hesitate to contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Contact details are available on the diocesan website at [www.dioceseofcoventry.org/safeguarding](http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/safeguarding)