

Safeguarding Policy

St Alban's Church, Wednesfield Team Ministry

This statement was adopted by the DCC of St Alban's Church on 16th July 2020.

All reference to 'the PCC' should be read as also including both DCCs.

1. This policy will be reviewed each year to monitor the progress which has been achieved. We recognize that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.

- We recognise that a position of power in relation to another creates a risk of vulnerability. As a consequence we strive to ensure that we consider power when working and leading with people.
- We recognise that children by virtue of legal status and dependency on adults for their emotional and physical needs will always be vulnerable and at a disadvantage. We commit to considering this in our children's activities– undertaking supervision of staff working with them and risk assessing activities and groups as a check and balance in our work.
- We understand that illness, disability, race, mental health and other issues can put adults in a position of vulnerability. We accept that these can be long term (ongoing), or temporary. We commit to considering this in our adults' activities and events – undertaking supervision of staff and risk assessing activities and groups as a check and balance in our work.
- We recognise that those in positions of structural authority and power have a particular responsibility to be aware of the vulnerability of others, but also that they themselves may at times be considered as vulnerable people.
- We commit to transparency in our actions and accountability for our work.

2. As members of this parish we commit ourselves to respectful pastoral care for all adults and children to whom we minister.

- We will consider issues relating to spiritual care in prayer activity, ensuring that members of any prayer team consider power, control and spiritual abuse issues in their ministry.
- We will ensure that leaders of our Sunday children's groups, weekday children's and families' groups, house groups as well as other ministries that involve working with vulnerable persons have appropriate enhanced DBS checks obtained through church and noted in a register to be retained securely by the safeguarding co-ordinator and clergy.
- We will ensure that those who care for people in our parish undertake appropriate safeguarding training.
- We commit to discuss safeguarding and support to of safeguarding as a standing PCC agenda item. Any report will balance the need for the PCC to know enough to exercise due oversight with the need for appropriate confidentiality in any safeguarding situation.

3. We commit ourselves to the safeguarding of people who may be vulnerable, ensuring their well-being in the life of our churches.

- We recognise that all activities of the churches, including our regular public worship and social events, involve people who are vulnerable and commit to consider safeguarding issues in relation to these.
- A list of groups and organisations considered by the PCC to serve people who are vulnerable or to pose potential safeguarding issues is included as Appendix 1. This list will be updated as needed and reviewed annually.
- Each group or church organisation listed in Appendix 1 will provide a short statement of how they will ensure safeguarding in their work. This will be prepared with and approved by the Team Vicar or Rector and their safeguarding officer, and a copy kept in Appendix 2 of the copy of this policy to be kept in the Parish Office. The contents of this appendix will be reviewed by the safeguarding officer annually.

4. We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.

- We commit to discuss safeguarding and support of safeguarding as a standing PCC agenda item. This policy will be reviewed at the first ordinary meeting of the PCC after each APCM. We agree that while we have named co-ordinators in each church, safeguarding remains the responsibility of the whole PCC and we accept collective responsibility for our policy and practice.
- We will ensure that those in positions of trust (such as wardens), and those with remits or leadership of groups involving vulnerable children etc have appropriate enhanced DBS checks and that these are updated every 5 years.
- We will engage with appropriate training and seek to develop relationships with other agencies and the diocese on safeguarding.

5. The parish commits itself to promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be vulnerable.

- We will consider the impact of power, disadvantage, inclusion, disability, age and race on how we provide and plan for our ministry.
- We will actively (but appropriately), challenge each other in our work in order to ensure we consider a wide range of perspectives and views– ensuring that we do not oppressively impose our own values or views to another's detriment.
- Where a person struggles with an activity due to disadvantage, disability or illness we will assist them as much as is practical so they can participate and contribute as a full part of the church.

6. It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of vulnerable people and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.

- We will work with appropriate confidentiality but will follow the referral flowchart provided by the diocese, included as Appendix 3 and to be displayed in both churches.
- We will report without bias to our personal view. We will report and not investigate.
- We will record concerns factually in diocese-suggested formats (as per recording with care policy 2017)
- We are open to scrutiny and encourage this in others.
- We have zero tolerance to abuse and put the welfare of vulnerable children and adults first.
- We take will encourage and resource training and activities relating to the safeguarding of Children and seek to make this part of our congregational culture.

7. We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with people who may be vulnerable.

- In appointing to roles relating or potentially relating to children and vulnerable adults, we will work within the Diocese's Safer Recruitment guidelines, whether those posts are paid or voluntary. Please see the current diocesan documentation for current details. In summary
- We will seek to make the process a positive one of clarifying expectations and supporting the applicant in offering their service in a particular role, as well as fulfilling appropriate safeguarding checks.
- Applicants will be provided with a role description which includes the level of safeguarding training required.
- Applicants will be required to submit a written application of appropriate depth, with the completion of which help will be offered if necessary, and to be interviewed by an appropriate leader or officer of the PCC.
- Applicants will be required to provide two appropriate referees in support of their offering for a role, who will be contacted before an appointment is made. They will also be required to obtain appropriate DBS clearance through church and to undertake appropriate training in safeguarding before taking up their role.
- In all cases the safety of children and vulnerable adults receiving ministry will be given priority in considering whether someone should be appointed to a position.

8. The parish is committed to supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable.

- We will ensure that those in positions of trust (such as wardens), and those with remits or leadership of groups involving vulnerable children etc have appropriate enhanced DBS checks and that these are updated every 5 year.
- We will engage with appropriate training and seek to develop relationships with other agencies and the diocese on safeguarding.
- Safeguarding including revision of policy will be a regular PCC agenda item and we agree that whilst we have a named co-ordinator in each DCC we will accept collective ownership for this important issue.
- Our Team Rector and Team Vicar undertake to ensure that to the best of their knowledge all PCC members, wardens and ministry leaders are of good standing.
- The PCC undertakes to appoint and resource a dedicated Safeguarding co-ordinator in each church.
- Our safeguarding co-ordinators undertake to maintain a relationship with the diocesan level safeguarding team and ensure that this policy is followed.

9. The parish adopts the guidelines of the Church of England and the Diocese.

- The Parish will report and record in line with the policies of the diocese of Lichfield and comply with local guidance for implementing national policies as defined in diocesan policies. These include the diocesan safeguarding policy, recording with care policy, social media policy and safer recruitment policy.

10. Each person who works with vulnerable people will agree to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this church.

- Those working with vulnerable adults or children will sign a declaration to state that they have read and agree to abide by the points outlined in this policy.

This church appoints Margaret Shelley (St Thomas') and Deb Dale (St Alban's) jointly to represent the concerns and views of vulnerable people at our meetings and to outside bodies as Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

Appendix 1

Groups and activities covered by this policy

1. St Alban's Church

- a) Regular public worship – including online services
- b) Kids' Church – including virtual teaching
- c) TLC - including online contact
- d) Who let the dads out?
- e) Pop-in
- f) Pastoral Visiting and phone calling, Bereavement Visiting and Home Communions
- g) Social media prayer networks – Praying Women, Holy Hands
- h) Facebook page
- i) Bible Study Group
- j) Foodbank

2. St Thomas' Church

- a) Regular public worship
- b) Junior Church
- c) Tom's Tots
- d) School visits
- e) Hands of Friendship
- f) Pastoral Visiting, Bereavement Visiting and Home Communions
- g) Study Groups

3. Joint activities

- a) Children's holiday clubs
- b) Messy Church

Appendix 2

Group/activity information and procedures

For each group or activity listed in Appendix 1, a short statement to be prepared in consultation with clergy and/or safeguarding co-ordinators to cover the following (and other relevant) information.

- Name or group/activity
- Aim of group/activity
- Time and place
- Names of key leaders
- Names and roles of helpers, noting whether those roles require DBS checks
- Brief statement of safeguarding issues and how those issues are addressed
- Signed by group/activity leader and clergy or safeguarding officer

Appendix 3

Referral flowcharts

Appendix 4 – Plain-language summary

1. St Thomas' and St Alban's churches are committed to safeguard anyone who is vulnerable in all they have to do with us – whether members, visitors or people who receive our ministry.
 - a. This is a short summary of how we make sure we do that – for more details ask to see a copy of the PCC's policy on safeguarding, which is available in church and is reviewed each year.
 - b. It's important to realise that at different times and in different situations any of us may be 'vulnerable'; children are vulnerable because of their age and position in society; some adults are considered particularly vulnerable because of age, disability, isolation or other reasons.
2. We will treat everyone with respect and with care for their safety.
 - a. We will make sure that those leading church activities with vulnerable people have been checked with the DBS (which discloses relevant police records) and have been trained in safeguarding to an appropriate level.
 - b. We will remember that spiritual care must always be respectful and offered without pressure or coercion.
3. We keep a register of groups and activities in church working with vulnerable people, and of how they ensure the safety of those taking part.
4. The church councils have overall responsibility for safeguarding.
 - a. At every meeting this is on the agenda, even if there is nothing to report, to make sure we always remember how important it is and don't miss anything.
 - b. Each church has a named co-ordinator, whose name and telephone number are on the noticeboard. Any non-emergency concerns about safeguarding in church should go to them or the Rector or Vicar.
5. Beyond keeping one another safe, we are committed to making our church life open and welcome to everyone regardless of ability. If you need help to take part in church activities, please ask!
6. Where we become aware of a concern over safeguarding, we will always act sensitively but will pass on information to the right people – we won't try to investigate ourselves. A flowchart is available on each church's noticeboard showing how we decide to pass on information and to whom.
7. We value the work done by many people, mostly as volunteers, in our church life. If you take part in ministry with vulnerable people, we have to exercise particular care in helping you to do that safely and in a way which helps you to do so confidently.
 - a. We will provide role descriptions to help you understand what you are offering to do!
 - b. We will ask you to fill in a short application for the role – we'll help if you like.
 - c. We will ask you to put us in touch with two people who we will ask to give a short reference for you, and to apply for a disclosure from the DBS. Again we will help with this if you like. Only the safeguarding co-ordinator will see the disclosure, and all we record is its reference number and the date it's issued.
 - d. We will link you to any safeguarding training you need to have before you start the role.
 - e. We will name someone who will help you to become confident in your role, and hope that in turn you will be able to help others.
8. We encourage church members to undertake appropriate safeguarding training if they are involved, or would like to be involved, in work with vulnerable people. Please ask the clergy what is available.
9. We work within guidelines from the Diocese of Lichfield and the Church of England nationally. As these guidelines develop, our policies will develop to keep in step.
10. Everyone who works with vulnerable people on behalf of the churches will sign to say that they have read and will work within our safeguarding policy.