

Behaviour Code for Adults Working with Children

This Code outlines the expectations of the Parish of St Mary's Church Felpham for all those who work or volunteer with children. It reflects our desire to follow Jesus in all we do, reflecting his love to those we minister to. It follows from our determination to ensure that our church is a place where children can not only be safe, but feel safe. And, it reflects our unwavering commitment to the highest possible standards of safeguarding practice.

Following this code will help to protect children from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will help them learn how safe adults behave around them - thus equipping them to better recognise if an adult is behaving unsafely around them, and to know that this behaviour is wrong. It will also help staff and volunteers maintain the standards of behaviour expected of them, and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

Upholding the Code

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to Mrs Joan Bull under the parish whistle-blowing procedure, or, if necessary, under the parish safeguarding policy.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to disciplinary procedures or asked to leave their role. Serious breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police or the local authority children's social care department.

Responsibility of Staff and Volunteers

When working with children and young people for the Parish of St Mary's Felpham, all staff and volunteers are acting in a position of trust. It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and young people, and by their parents. They therefore must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

When working with children and young people, it is important to:

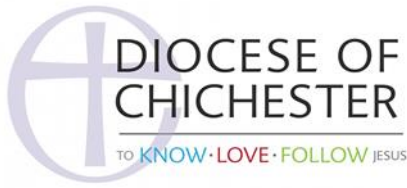
- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
- Value the contribution of children and young people, and take their views seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.

- Always aim to work within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet; toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around.
- If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and it's nature beforehand.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed.
- Record any concerning incidents and give the information to your group leader. Sign and date the record.
- Always share concerns about a children or the behaviour of another worker within your group leader and/or the parish safeguarding coordinator.

When working with children and young people, you should not:

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. For comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child.
- Play rough physical games with children, or allow games with a potentially physical element (such as 'British Bulldog') to be played between children without careful thought, planning, and prior notification to parents and children.
- Act, speak, or conduct yourself in a sexually provocative or suggestive way, either directly towards children, or with other adults when you are with children, or engage in any sexual behaviour at all with children or young people. It is your responsibility to do everything you can do to avoid any hint of sexually inappropriate behaviour, language, or styles of relating with children or young people.
- Encourage children to behave in sexually provocative or suggestive ways with each other.
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Invade a child's privacy while washing or going to the toilet.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult.
- Permit abuse peer activities, e.g. Initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one child or group.

- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking, including that which is overtly physical or sexual in nature. It is always your responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries in your work with children and young people.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own.
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children.
- Drink alcohol when responsible for young children, or offer to give or buy them alcohol.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children.
- Invite a child to your home alone.
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members or close family friends) outside organised group occasions.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.
- Allow strangers to give children lifts.



Parish E-Safety Policy

This policy should be read alongside the Parish of St Mary's church policies on Safeguarding, Whistleblowing, Anti-Bullying, and Reporting Concerns about a Child. This policy applies to all staff, including clergy, PCC members, paid staff, volunteers including children's and youth workers, those involving in leading or coordinating music and worship, and anyone else involved in working or volunteering on behalf of St Mary's church.

Purpose of Policy

- To protect children and young people who are ministered to by St Mary's Church and who make use of information technology (such as mobile phones/devices, games consoles and the Internet) as part of their involvement with the parish.
- To provide our staff, volunteers, and parents with the overarching principles that guide our approach to e-safety.
- To ensure that, as a Christian community, we minister in line with our values, and also within the law, in terms of how we use information technology and behave online.
- To guide us as we seek to equip the children and young people with whom we minister to be safe, discerning and wise users of information and communication technology.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the children and young people to whom we minister and with whom we come into contact is paramount, and should govern our approach to the use and management of electronic communications technologies and online behaviour;
- All children, 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;
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, careers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare, and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to e-safety;
- The use of information technology is an essential part of all our lives; it is involved in how we as a church gather and store information, as well as how we communicate with each other. It is an intrinsic part of the experience of children and young people, and is greatly beneficial to all. However, it can present challenges in terms of how we use it responsibly, and, if misused either by an adult or a young person, can be actually or potentially harmful.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Treating any child protection concern arising from the online world in the same way, taking it just as seriously, as concerns arising from the offline world.
- Ensuring that our parish safeguarding officer has access to up-to-date information and training regarding online safety, assisting them as appropriate to access this training.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers at St Mary's church avoid using private forms of electronic communication (text message, email, direct messaging including on social media) to communicate with the children and young people they are responsible for.
- Taking the use of such private communication between staff or volunteers and young

people as seriously as one-on-one contact between adults and children without another responsible adult present. It is always the responsibility of the adult staff member or volunteer to put appropriate boundaries in place in their relationships with the young people with whom they minister, in both the offline and online worlds.

- Using open online forums to communicate with children, such as Facebook youth group pages to notify young people of events etc.
- Avoiding any form of inappropriate content in what we, our staff and our volunteers post online, including (but not limited to) sexual content, racist, sexist or otherwise bigoted content, or content promoting illegal activity.
- Maintaining electronic versions of sensitive personal data securely, according to the principles of the Data Protection Act.
- Providing age-appropriate awareness material, including training, to children and young people with regards to online safety. In particular, we will make them aware of the Thinkuknow website, and about Childline.
- Providing awareness material to parents with regards to online safety. In particular, we will make them aware of the Thinkuknow, Parents Protect, and UK Safer Internet Centre websites.



Responding to Safeguarding Allegations in the Parish: Parish Policy and Guidance

St Mary's church recognise that in all matters that involve allegations that someone has, or may have, caused harm to another person, whether child or adult, the welfare of the alleged victim is paramount and is our primary concern. No other consideration, however legitimate or important, can outweigh this primary responsibility.

St Mary's church recognise that all allegations that someone may have harmed a child or adult must be taken seriously. In all but the most exceptional circumstances, this will mean letting a safeguarding specialist know about the allegation.

St Mary's recognise that it is not our responsibility to investigate allegations, nor would it be appropriate for us to do so. Our responsibility is to pass allegations on to the person/people who can respond appropriately.

In the first instance, this will normally involve informing the incumbent and the parish safeguarding officer (unless the allegation is about them).

St Mary's church will inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team upon becoming aware of any allegation that someone in our church community has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult (this will normally be done by the incumbent and/or the parish safeguarding officer)

St Mary's church recognise that any allegation that a person in a position of responsibility for children (paid or voluntary) has behaved in such a way that indicates they may present a risk to children, will be referred by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). If the alleged behaviour is of a criminal nature, the police will always be involved.

St Mary's church recognise that any allegation that a person in a position of responsibility for adults (paid or voluntary) has behaved in such a way that indicates they may present a risk to adults, will be referred by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team with the local Adults Services team manager. If the alleged behaviour is of a criminal nature, the police will always be involved. (The issue of consent is more complex with harm to adults: this will be discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in individual cases).

St Mary's church recognise that human behaviour is complex and many-layered, and that any individual may have motives or intentions that are not apparent, even to those who believe they know them well. Practically speaking, this means that we will commit to ensuring that any allegation that a person has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult will be taken seriously as per the above points, even when that person is a highly respected individual whose integrity appears to be without question.

St Mary's church recognise that the best way to identify any false or malicious allegation is to treat all allegations the same. A transparent, fair and accountable process that is consistently applied is best for all involved, including those against whom allegations are made.

St Mary's church recognise that all involved in situations where allegations are made require pastoral support. In particular, the person making the allegation and their family, and the person against whom the allegation is made and their family, will require skilled and careful pastoral support. Providing that support may be complex, and we recognise and commit to working with the wider Diocese should this situation arise.

St Mary's church commit to implementing the advice received or any outcome arising from the above process.



Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Felpham, West Sussex

As members of this PCC we are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of all our members.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We are committed to implementing all safeguarding policies and practice guidance issued by the House of Bishops.

We will carefully select and train all those who work or volunteer in positions of trust. We will use the Disclosure and Barring Service, amongst other tools, to check the background of each person.

We will respond, without delay, to every concern made that a person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.

We will co-operate fully with statutory agencies during any investigation concerning a member of the church community.

We will seek to ensure that anyone for whom we have pastoral responsibility who has suffered abuse is offered support that meets their needs.

We will respond appropriately to those who have committed sexual offences who wish to join our fellowship, following House of Bishop's guidance and the advice of the Safeguarding Team.

We will review this policy annually and as part of this process will ensure that all our procedures, particularly in relation to the Disclosure and Barring Service, are up to date.

Our Safeguarding Representative is:

Name: Mrs Joan Bull

Address: 26a Felpham Way, Felpham, West Sussex PO22 8QT

Telephone: 01243 920822 07938 854670 Email address: joanbull95@gmail.com



Signed on behalf of the PCC:

Name/signed Incumbent

Name/signed Churchwarden

Name/signed Churchwarden Date:

A copy of this statement is to be displayed in the church and a copy sent to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.



Expressing Concerns and ‘Whistleblowing’: Policy and Guidance

Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility: given this, encouraging people to express concerns appropriately and in a timely fashion is an important aspect of a strong safeguarding culture. Additionally, ‘whistleblowing’ has been recognised as having an important place in developing a strong safeguarding culture within organisations. At the simplest level, anyone can spot a genuine concern and it is important that everyone who does so feels safe to raise that concern. At a more fundamental level, organisations – including the church – can become hierarchical and opaque, and a strong whistleblowing policy recognises the importance of empowering those who may not hold positions of structural influence within the organisation to feel confident enough to speak out, should they believe poor practice to be present.

The aim of this policy and associated guidance is to provide a clear and transparent way for anyone involved in the St Mary’s parish to raise genuine concerns regarding poor practice that impacts upon the safety or wellbeing of children or adults to whom the Parish of St Mary’s ministers. It also aims to ensure that any concerns are dealt with effectively and in a timely fashion.

This policy and guidance provides a simple set of steps to deal with concerns, ensuring that people are not penalised for raising genuine concerns, even if those concerns appear to be unfounded.

This policy and guidance applies to everyone involved in the St Mary’s parish, including all workers who are involved on either a paid or voluntary basis. **Like all parish safeguarding policies, this policy should be easily available for all – for instance at the back of church and on the church website. It should not be necessary for someone who wants to see this policy to ask a leader within the church to provide it.**

Our Commitment:

St Mary’s church recognises that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility

St Mary’s church recognises that no other concern or responsibility, however genuine, outweighs the need to prioritise the welfare of children and adults at all times

St Mary’s church welcomes, encourages and urges anyone who is concerned about any aspect of our safeguarding practice or provision to raise those concerns, as outlined in the Guidance below.

St Mary's church welcomes, encourages and urges anyone who is concerned about any the safety and welfare of a child or adult to report those concerns as outlined in the Guidance below, and in accordance with the Guidance found in the section of the Diocesan Safeguarding Website, entitled 'What Do I Do If?'

St Mary's church undertakes to treat all such concerns seriously, as outlined in the Guidance below

St Mary's church guarantees that no-one who raises any concern in good faith, even if those concerns are ultimately found to be unfounded, will face any adverse consequences whatsoever.

Guidance:

What to do if you have a concern:

In the first instance, speak to the leader of the area of church about which you have a concern (for instance, if your concern is about Sunday School, speak to the Sunday School leader). A good principle is that concerns should be dealt with at the lowest level necessary, and only escalated beyond that if those concerns remain, having been expressed. However, if your concern is about the behaviour of a leader in the church (lay or ordained), you may feel that you need to escalate it to someone in authority over them; you would be perfectly justified in doing this.

Try to be as specific as possible: what or whom are you concerned about exactly? Can you give specific dates or examples of what has caused your concern? Vague concerns are difficult to investigate. If you only have an impression, or cannot give specific examples, you may still wish to express concerns but be open about the limited details you have.

Try and avoid language that is either accusatory or emotive: your aim is to improve an area of church life, not to put the recipient of your concern on the defensive.

It is very helpful to quote policy, if you can (although if you cannot, this is not a reason to avoid expressing your concern). This helps the person receiving your concern to see very quickly that you are simply holding the church to account to its own policies, or to Diocesan policies.

Face-to-face is usually best, but follow up the conversation in writing. "Last Sunday after church I expressed a concern about X, you replied by saying Y, and you said you would get back to me by Z. Please could you reply by confirming my understanding of our conversation is correct": a simple written communication such as this can assist greatly in providing clarification to all concerned about what was said (although see below guidance for the person receiving the concern along similar lines).

If you are satisfied that your concern has been resolved, you can leave the matter there. If you are not, it is important that you escalate it. We suggest that a suitable 'order of escalation' would be:

1. Lay Leader in Church – Safeguarding Officer

2. Incumbent (and/or churchwarden in a vacancy)

3. Diocesan Safeguarding Team

4. Bishop

5. National Safeguarding Team

In escalating your concern, you are acting in an entirely appropriate way. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; there may be the rare occasion where you just have to raise your concern outside of your local parish context, in order to ensure that the children and adults your church ministers to are safe.

If you feel that the concern has great urgency and cannot be escalated in this manner (for instance if you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child or adult), then you must raise those concerns without delay with the appropriate statutory authority. Please follow the guidance on the Diocesan Safeguarding Website, under the section entitled 'What Do I Do If?'. Use the appropriate sub-heading to find out how best to report these concerns.

What to do if you receive a concern

- If someone tells you that they have a concern, you should arrange to meet him/her as soon as possible.
- Approach the situation sensitively, recognising the discomfort that the person may feel. Offer to meet him/her away from the church if they wish, and allow them to bring a friend if that would help.
- Do not promise confidentiality: you do not know what they are going to share, but if they share an immediate safeguarding concern you will have no choice other than to break that promise.
- However, be prepared to discuss the possibility of anonymity for the person sharing the concern. People may have reasons to want to stay anonymous, even if they know they have to say something, and closing this option off may mean that the concern never gets aired.
- Reassure the person that there will be no negative repercussions for any concern shared in good faith – even if it turns out to be unfounded or mistaken. 'Concerns' shared out of malice or divisiveness are a different matter but at this stage, assume the person to be acting in good faith.
- You may wish to suggest sources of support for the person – especially if they are on their own without the support of a friend or family member. Sharing concerns in an institutional context can be very intimidating – even in church – and the concern may have been a source of great anxiety for a long time. The person may be sharing the concern with you because this anxiety has reached the point where they feel compelled to act, and in coming to you they are expressing a great measure of faith that they will be well-received, and not have their intentions misinterpreted. They may wish to speak to someone outside of the immediate context to receive some pastoral support (for instance from a neighbouring parish), or they may wish to speak to someone in the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

- Recognise that not everyone expressed genuine concerns appropriately. Someone can say something in the wrong manner, at the wrong time and with the wrong language – but still be right. Don't be too quick to dismiss what someone says because of how they say it.
- Make notes of the conversation, ideally at the time or immediately afterwards.
- Follow-up your conversation in writing, as soon as you can. "On date X, you expressed your concerns about Y. I replied by saying I would look into what you said, and would get back to you by date Z". This helps provide clarity for all involved.
- Make sure you are clear about what you will do with the concern, by when you will do it, and when you will let the person know. Give the person a clear indication of when they can expect to hear back from you, and keep to this promise if you have made no progress – hearing from you with no news is better than not hearing from you.
- Unless the concern is easily resolved, we suggest that you seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. If the concern is about the behaviour of an adult in the church, you must follow the policy 'Managing Allegations in the Church'. If the concern is about the safety and welfare of a child or adult, you must follow the guidance provided in the 'What Do I Do If?' section of the Diocesan Safeguarding Website.
- The crucial principle for any adequate Whistleblowing policy is that anyone raising any concern in good faith – whether or not that concern is ultimately justified – should suffer no adverse consequences whatsoever. Further guidance regarding this can be found in the web links in this section of SQP.



Behaviour Code for those people working with Vulnerable Adults

This Code outlines the expectations of St Mary's parish for all those who work or volunteer with adults. It reflects our desire to follow Jesus in all we do reflecting His love to those we minister to. It follows from our determination to ensure that our church is a place where vulnerable adults can not only be safe, but feel safe. It reflects our unwavering commitment to the highest possible standards of safeguarding practice.

Following this code will help to protect vulnerable adults from abuse and inappropriate behaviour, will help volunteers to know what is expected of them, and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

Upholding the Code

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report breaches of this code to Mrs Joan Bull under the parish whistle-blowing procedure, or, if necessary, under the parish safeguarding policy.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to disciplinary procedures or asked to leave their role. Serious breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police or the local authority.

Responsibility of Staff and Volunteers

When working with vulnerable adults, all staff and volunteers are acting in a position of trust, and it is important that they are aware that they may be seen as role models. They therefore must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

When working with vulnerable adults, it is important to:

- Treat them with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
- Value their contribution, and take their views seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible.
- Encourage them to participate in and contribute to all aspects of church life.
- Respect the vulnerable adults right to personal privacy.

Always aim to work within sight of another adult.

- Ensure that they know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.

- If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and it's nature beforehand.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.

We advise that you should not engage in:

Speaking, or conducting yourself in a sexually provocative or suggestive way, either directly towards other adults, or engage in any sexual behaviour at all. It is your responsibility to do everything you can do to avoid any hint of sexually inappropriate behaviour, language or styles.

Use any form of physical punishment.

Scapegoat, ridicule anyone.

Permit abuse peer activities, e.g Initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.



DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVE POLICY

1. Background

We welcome all who visit our church irrespective of their background. We acknowledge that each person comes from a different culture, nationality, faith, and background. As a Christian church we are an inclusive community. Our diversity policy reflects this. We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities, fairness of treatment, dignity, work-life balance and the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the workplace for all employees and job applicants. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.

We have this policy as a means of helping to achieve these aims.

Overall responsibility for this policy and equal opportunities training lies with the Parochial Church Council

2. Policy

2.1 Whoever we are, wherever we come from, whatever our age, our gender or any other difference that defines us, each of us has been made in the image of God and is unique. We seek to respect and value each person.

2.2 No person approaching the church for help or services will receive less favourable treatment on any grounds or be disadvantaged by any other conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable. As Christians our faith shape the way we do things.

2.3 For employees or prospective employee everyone will be given equal opportunity whatever his or her personal status subject to the statutory requirements relating to criminal record history and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

2.4 There are a number of employed roles where there is an occupation requirement for the individual to be a professing and practicing Christian under the Equality Act. In other roles where being a Christian is not requirement sympathy with the Christian faith will be sought.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and members of the congregation.

4. Principles

4.1 In recognizing each person's uniqueness, we are committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment, volunteering, promotion, access to training and access to our services. Each person must be treated fairly irrespective of their sex, marital status, civil partnership status, transgender status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, national origin, culture, religion, age, or disability ('protected characteristics' as per the Equality Act 2010).

4.2 This position is rooted in the principles we espouse about how God has made humanity - equal as recipients of His love and in need of rescue from the troubles we find ourselves in.

4.3 Our equality before the law of the land and before our loving God in no way assumes that we are all the same. He has made us all unique and our experiences of this imperfect world add to shaping the given different gifts, strengths, talents, abilities, personalities, aptitudes and preferences to express which we have been given. We have the potential and even obligation to explore them to the full. The appropriate choice between these differences is the basis for making selections.

4.4 Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally. Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics. Direct discrimination may occur even when unintentional. It may also, in some cases, occur by association – i.e. where a person is put at a disadvantage due to a characteristic of another person. Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same Protected Characteristic at a particular disadvantage.

4.5 Harassment related to any of the Protected Characteristics is also prohibited as is Victimisation. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else's complaint.

4.5 The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which we treat all who come to, or who are members of the church. All employees and volunteers have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat others with dignity at all times, and not to discriminate against or harass others regardless of their status.

5. Procedures

5.1 Those responsible for the selection, management and promotion of employees will be given information and, or, training to enable them to minimise the risk of discrimination.

5.2 For employees, appropriate training will be given to help them perform their jobs effectively.

5.3 When employees are recruited no communication information will imply that there is a preference for one group of applicants against another unless there is an occupational requirement which will be clearly stated.

5.4 Applicants for roles will be given clear, accurate and sufficient information through advertisements, job descriptions and interviews.

5.5 Any complaints of discrimination and harassment by employees will be dealt through the grievance procedure.

5.6 We will review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives and as part of this process will monitor the composition of job applicants and the benefits and career progression of staff.

5.7 Employees are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the Parochial Church Council Secretary.