

St Mary the Virgin, Amersham with All Saints' Coleshill

Safeguarding Policy & Procedures - 2025

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This Policy and Procedures applies to all who have received the Bishop's Licence or Permission to work and all others who work with children, young people, and vulnerable adults in our Parish. The term 'Parish' is used to denote the PCC and Incumbent who are together responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented.

The PCC will:

- Appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and Child Advocate (can be the same person) to work with the Incumbent on safeguarding matters
- Follow the Diocesan Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures as set out in the Diocesan Safeguarding Handbook and on the safeguarding pages of the Diocese of Oxford website.
- Report any abuse or suspected abuse if discovered.
- Have adequate insurance cover in place
- Ensure all those whose work brings them into regular contact with children and vulnerable adults are safely recruited, complete a Confidential Declaration Form and are subject to a criminal records disclosure (DBS)
- Keep accurate, confidential and secure records available only to those authorised within the parish.

As a church we are committed to:

- the care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children and all adults to whom we minister
- the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church
- the establishment of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.

We will develop a safeguarding culture in our church that:

- enables and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently and protects children and adults who may be vulnerable from actual or potential harm
- is child-friendly and ensures that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse
- values, listens to and respects children and adults who may be vulnerable, encouraging them to be active contributors to the church community
- encourages adults who may be vulnerable to lead as independent a life as possible.

In all recruitment and selection, we will:

- ensure careful selection of ordained and lay ministers, voluntary and paid workers with children and young people and adults in line with safer recruitment principles and DBS checks
- provide supervision, support and training after appointment commit ourselves to support, resource train and regularly review those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable
- advise the Diocese which Registered Body we use to process applications for Disclosure and Barring Service criminal records checks
- advise the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) if we receive a Disclosure which is 'blemished' or 'positive'.

When concerns are raised we will:

- respond without delay to every concern raised that a child, or adult who may be vulnerable may have been harmed, or may be at risk from harm, through abuse, harassment or bullying; or about the behaviour of an adult or child
- work with the DSA and the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community
- challenge any abuse of power especially by anyone in a position of trust.

If abuse has occurred, we will ensure in partnership with the DSA and other agencies that:

- informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse, including support to make a complaint if so desired
- we offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- appropriate pastoral care is offered to any member of our church community against whom an allegation is made

Child and Adult Protection Procedure

All concerns regarding a child or vulnerable adult being at risk of harm should be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and/or Incumbent as soon as practicable, and the person with concerns should make an accurate record (writing exact words used) of what was said or happened. The Incumbent or DSP will then take advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or Local Authority Social Care. **If the incumbent is implicated, inform the DSA.**

We will follow the procedure below where there is concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been harmed as a result of abuse and urgent action is needed.

1. If there is concern that a child or vulnerable adult has been harmed, immediately inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) or Incumbent or DSA and agree who will make the referral to Local Authority Social Care team. If no-one is available contact the Local Authority Social Care Team or Police directly.

2. Make an immediate telephone referral to the Local Authority Social Care. Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child or adult protection referral.
3. 3. Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family or adult for example the child/adult's name, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP if known.
4. 4. Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form (sometimes available on the Local Authority web site) or letter. This should be acknowledged. If it is not, chase it up.
5. Remember that the child and family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this would put the welfare of the child or vital interests of the adult who may be vulnerable, or another person at further risk. If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The Duty Social Worker will give you advice over this if necessary.
6. Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team. Say if you do not want your details disclosed to the family.
7. For out of hours referrals, call the Emergency Social Work Team or where urgent, the Police.
8. Consult with the DSA at any point in this process but in any case, always ensure the DSA is informed of the concern and actions taken.

Do not delay the referral. Clergy and Diocesan Advisers are NOT authorised to investigate any allegations and must never attempt to do so. Only the Police, the Local Authorities, and the NSPCC are granted such powers in law.

Most situations are not emergencies.

However: If a child or adult who may be vulnerable needs immediate medical help, call emergency services, and ensure that ambulance and hospital staff are informed of any protection concerns. If it would be dangerous for the child or adult who may be vulnerable to return home, or he or she does not want to return home and you are sufficiently concerned for their safety, contact the emergency social care service or the police. If you observe a child or adult who may be vulnerable being harmed by someone other than a family member, or you believe they are at risk of harm from someone other than a family member, you should inform the parents or carers immediately, so that an appropriate referral to the police or social care can be made.

In all these principal policies and procedures, we will follow statute, guidance and recognised good practice as detailed in the Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Handbook, which also contains the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy.

We will review this policy annually, check that our policies are up to date, and supply a copy of the updated policy statement to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Our Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) are:

Clare Samuels	07966 425206	clarenoinclare.co.uk
Melissa Jackson	07388026976	mgiddings@rocketmail.com

Correspondence Address: Church Office, St. Mary's Church, Church Street, Amersham, Bucks HP7 0DB

Who to contact within Buckinghamshire County Council's First Response Team:

CHILDREN & Families Social Care –First Response Team	0845 4600001
CFSC –out of hours EMERGENCY Duty Team	08009997677
Local Authority Designated Officer for South Bucks –Maria Thompson	01296 383070
Safeguarding ADULT team (MASH)–first Response Team	0800 137915
MASH–out of hours EMERGENCY DUTY Team	0800 9997677
Police	101
Tsungai Muchegwa - Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	01865 208220

Useful websites: Safeguarding Children's Board: <http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/>

Bucks CC Safeguarding Board:

<http://www.bucksc.gov.uk/social-care/children-and-families/child-protection-and-safeguarding/>

<http://www.bucksc.gov.uk/services/care-for-adults/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash/>

<http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.co.uk/safeguarding-adults-board/>



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Reporting A Safeguarding Concern

Please use the standard form to report a worrying incident or to record any safeguarding concerns you have,
Especially any involving children or vulnerable adults.

Copies of the report should be available in this pack,
With a copy of our Parish Safeguarding Policy.
(Please email one of the PSOs if either is missing.)

This Safeguarding Information is displayed on both churches' noticeboards.

Alternatively, you can download a copy of the report form via the Safeguarding link on the St Mary's or Coleshill Village websites. Save the copy onto your device, complete the form and send it, or print it and give it, to one of the Parish Safeguarding Officers.

Having done that, and received confirmation from the PSO, please then delete your file and do not discuss what you have written with anyone.

You can also report a concern by speaking directly to one of the Parish Safeguarding Officers.

Safeguarding information is always stored securely, in line with safeguarding requirements and the GDPR.

The Parish Privacy Policy is available on the Parish website.

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Record of a Safeguarding Concern

Name of person about whom you have a concern:	Date of birth or approximate age
Name and position of person completing this form (please print)	
Time and date of particular incident or general nature of your concern:	
<p>Further details of a particular incident and the nature of your concern (who, what, where, when).</p> <p>If the subject is under the age of 18 and might be at risk in any way, please record the actual words used, as much as you can.</p>	
Please use reverse or a second sheet if needed.	

Use this space to continue from first side, if necessary.

Any other relevant information
(who else is aware of the information; witnesses: immediate action taken?)

Any action taken by you, other than this report of your concern.

Your signature (if not emailing):

Date

Please also print your name here:

Passed/sent to PSO: time and date

Indicate to which of the PSOs you sent the report: Steve or Clare (underline or tick)

Please note:

1. This record should exist in one form only and in one place only, so if you have written or sent the information using a computer, please make sure the original file or email is deleted once a Parish Safeguarding Officer has confirmed receipt of your report.
2. Please do not discuss the information with anyone other than – at the time – with those directly involved, or with the Parish Safeguarding Officer to whom you sent the report form.

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Title: Safeguarding Policy & Procedures - St Mary the Virgin, Amersham with All Saints' Coleshill		
Summary: As per title		
Date: 16/09/25	Review: 16/09/26	Version: 1.0
Author: Mrs Susan Pounce		
Validated by: The Revd Jonny Rapson		
Signed:		