

# Trentham Parish Church, Diocese of Lichfield

## Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

### Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Updated January 2024

#### Introduction

The PCC of Trentham Parish Church will take all reasonable care to ensure the safety of the children, young people and vulnerable adults for whom it bears responsibility. Those with responsibility include...

Parish Lead: Reverend Adrian Stone

Safeguarding Officer: Sue Thomas

Safeguarding Advisory Team: Reverend Joe Palfreyman, Carly Prescott, Steve Prescott, Iris Barcroft and Ann George.

**Sue Thomas** is our approved Parish Safeguarding Officer for the calendar year 2022/2023 and she is the point of contact through which any safeguarding concerns will be channelled. She is responsible to the PCC for ensuring that these procedures are implemented. She is also supported by the Safeguarding Advisory Team who meet quarterly to discuss policy, practice and specific safeguarding concerns.

#### What are we safeguarding from?

As those in leadership amidst the vulnerable, we must be aware of the many kinds of abuse people can be subjected to. The most common forms of abuse we may encounter are as follows:

**Physical abuse:** Any form of hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. This also includes the cause or fabrication of symptoms of, or deliberately induction of an illness in another person.

**Emotional or Psychological abuse:** Persistent maltreatment that causes severe adverse effects on an individual emotional development. This can include, but is not limited to, conveying someone as worthless, unloved or inadequate. This includes developmentally inappropriate expectations, overprotection, limitation and the prevention of the individual experiencing normal social interactions. It can include hearing or seeing the abuse of another. It may involve bullying that intentionally causes fear, exploitation and corruption.

**Sexual abuse:** Any action that forces or entices a vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, whether the individual is aware of what is happening or not. This may involve physical contact (e.g., penetrative and non-penetrative sexual acts) or may include non-

contact activities (e.g., looking at or producing pornographic material or watching sexual activities).

**Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This can range from maternal substance abuse during pregnancy to the failure to provide necessary food, clothes and shelter. It includes failing to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical and emotional harm including the use of inadequate caretakers or the failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care.

**Spiritual abuse:** The misuse of position and power by a person in spiritual authority. This includes but is not limited to the misuse of scripture to coerce, using the concept of 'unity' to encourage secrecy or silence in the face of disagreement or concerns. It also includes the requirement of unquestioning obedience, using a sense of divine position to exert pressure to conformity, enforced accountability, exclusion as punishment for non-compliance, public shaming, threats of spiritual consequence and inappropriate mentoring relationships.

**Financial abuse:** The theft, fraud, scamming or coercion in relation to a vulnerable person's financial affairs or arrangements including the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits (including wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions).

**Domestic Abuse:** Where any of the above forms of abuse occur between those living together.

## **Who are we safeguarding?**

The PCC, Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Advisory Team are directly responsible for the safeguarding of any of the groups we engage with a particular focus on groups that would be considered vulnerable (e.g. children, young people, those with additional needs and the elderly).

## **Why we Safeguard: Our ethos.**

Safeguarding is about protecting all that attend our churches who are vulnerable regardless of age or the format of vulnerability. It is about all the sons and daughters of God who are due to their circumstances, at risk from those who would take advantage of them. It is everyone's responsibility, and it goes beyond child protection: ***"Defend the poor and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked. They do not know, nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are unstable". (Psalm 82:3-5).***

The Parish Safeguarding Officer, the Safeguarding Advisory Team and The PCC will work towards adopting the recommendations of the House of Bishops as published in the Policy for Safeguarding Children *Protecting All God's Children (2010)* and *Promoting a Safer Church (2017)* and the *Diocese of Lichfield; Safeguarding Policy and Guidance (2017) as Amended (2021)*.

## **How we Safeguard: In practice**

### **At the ministry level**

**Leadership:** Leaders must be aged 18 or over working with children and young people, under 18s may assist with leadership roles but must always be supervised. A minimum of two persons should be present when directly undertaking work with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Members of our pastoral care teams may make exceptions to the 'minimum of two' rule if a risk assessment has been put in place that concludes the risk of meeting one-to-one is low (e.g., if both parties have a long-standing pre-existing working relationship or pre-established friendship). If an exception to the 'minimum of two' rule is desired, it would be best practice for the team member to run this by The Safeguarding Advisory Team. **The risk assessments that determine the safety of meeting one-to-one should be reviewed on a sixth monthly basis or if the person being visited has a change in mental, emotional or physical capability (e.g., if they have a bereavement, suffer an injury from a fall or develop signs of dementia).**

**Administration:** Regular team briefings should occur to record the leadership teams observations of any potential safeguarding concerns. These observations should be recorded by key leaders after each session and stored responsibly in line with the Diocese record keeping policy. If a concern of abuse is noted, the leaders should follow the referral process included at the end of this document. Risk assessments are required for all regular and irregular activities both on and off site, once completed these are to be submitted to the Health and Safety Officer and the Safeguarding Officer for review. Parental/Carer consent forms are required for all off-site activities.

**Reporting Concerns:** A clear process of how to report concerns must be on display in the church and those on the PCC and Safeguarding Team must be aware of this process. A poster highlighting the process must be easily visible within the church and a perpetual notice about reporting concerns must be present in the church's weekly news sheet.

**Confidentiality in reporting concerns:** Concerns must be reported but only on a need-to-know basis. Safeguarding policy is designed to keep everyone safe, the vulnerable person, the church members who serve, the Safeguarding team and the PCC. Concerns should be reported to The **Safeguarding Officer** (Sue Thomas) or the **Parish lead** (Rev. Adrian Stone) only. Concerns should not be discussed in any broader context and those aware of a concern should not break confidentiality amongst themselves, with their families or their peers. When a concern arises the less people who know the better, this means the location and manner of reporting a concern is of great importance. Concerns should not be discussed in public or in the hearing of anyone other than **Sue or Adrian**, if the concerns is reported over the phone, you must ensure you are alone before doing so.

**Social Media:** When engaging vulnerable groups via social media, we must follow the Social Media Policy which falls in line with the Diocese Social Media Policy (2017).

### **At the Clergy/Leadership level**

**The Vicarage:** Clergy should not utilise vicarages for residency or shelter of vulnerable persons without informing the rural dean, archdeacon or Bishop. The diocese safeguarding

team should be aware if this occurs. A risk assessment must be undertaken before a vicarage can be used in this way. (This does not include friends or family of the Vicar).

**Whistleblowing:** A clear whistle blowing procedure must be available to all. This should include a strategy for feeding concerns through to the diocese level. The perpetual notice, in the weekly church news sheet, about reporting concerns is a cornerstone of this procedure.

### **At the PCC level**

**Safer Recruitment:** The PCC will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with the principles of *Safer Recruitment 2017*.

**DBS Checks:** We will only allow people to have responsibility for the care, supervision, or teaching of children, young people or vulnerable adults on behalf of Trentham Parish Church if they have been Safely Recruited, completed the enhanced Disclosure and barring service (DBS) disclosure form; *and* the applicant has evidenced their clearance to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. It is now a requirement for DBS checks to be done every 3 years, When a DBS check returns a blemish, an individual must allow the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor sight of the certificate who will then risk assess the application to assist in making a decision on recruitment. Until this decision is made the person must not work with children, young persons or vulnerable adults. All PCC members are now required to have a DBS check in order to serve.

**Clear expectations:** The PCC require groups that are working with children, young people and vulnerable adults:

- To agree clear roles for leaders
- Set up structures to train and support their leaders in their roles
- Agree statements of working practice

**Training:** The PCC will provide all those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults access to guidance and training in understanding of child/vulnerable adult abuse.

**Best Practice:** The PCC will ensure full compliance with Health and Safety Guidelines. The PCC will carry public liability insurance and will insure all leaders and staff for personal accident. A registration form will be filled in for all children and young people attending church activities and a register of attendance kept. Any group who hires the Church Hall will satisfy the PCC that they have a Safeguarding policy and Risk Assessment, if they do not have their own policy, the PCC will present their own Safeguarding policy and Risk Assessment for the group to adopt and implement.

**Review:** The PCC will annually review the implementation of the *Policy on the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults*. This policy, and its procedures will be monitored by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator who will report to the PCC annually.

**Independent Audit:** In pursuit of best practice The PCC could occasionally organise an independent safeguarding audit.

**Record keeping:** Records relating to safeguarding concerns or issues should be retained for 75 years. Arrangements should be made in all Parishes to have secure storage with restricted access on the basis of a 'need to know'.

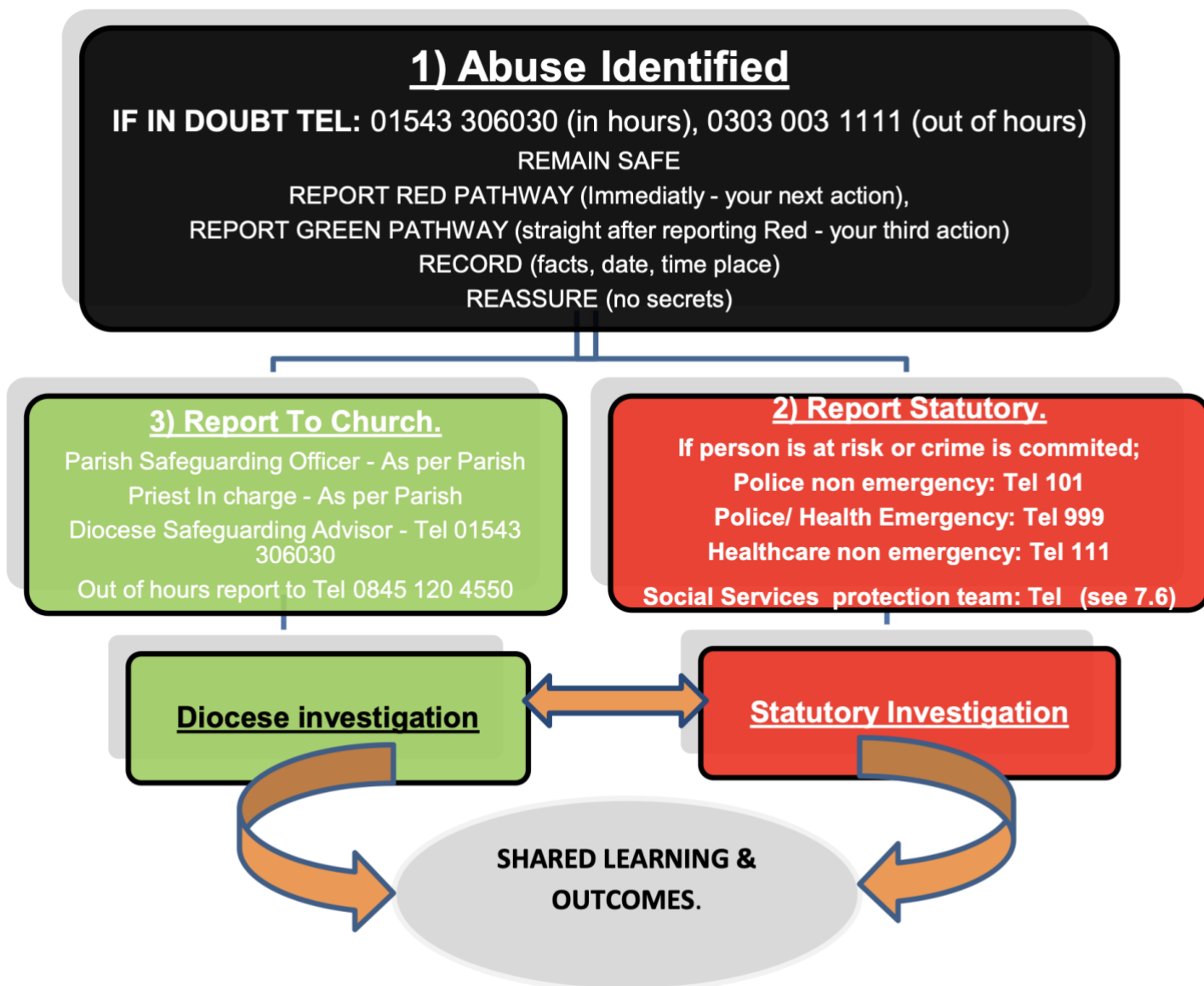
**Sign-posting:** The following items will be displayed in all church buildings:

- Diocesan Safe Guarding Flow Chart.
- Contact details of Safeguarding Co-ordinator & Children's Advocate.
- Childline number (0800 1111).
- Parentline (0808 800 2222).
- Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children Board [www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk](http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk)
- Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board.  
[www.staffsscb.org.uk](http://www.staffsscb.org.uk)
- Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Partnership Board  
[www.ssaspb.org.uk](http://www.ssaspb.org.uk)

### **At Diocesan level**

If deemed necessary, the diocese Safeguarding team maybe contacted Monday – Friday (9AM – 5PM) on 01543 306030. Out of hours help can be found through contacting **Thirty-One-Eight** on 0303 003 1111. More information and resources can be found at <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/safeguarding-resources/>

Reporting a concern



**Fig. 2 – Process 1 referral (Follow red pathway first if crime committed or person at ongoing risk)**