

Church of Ascension Safeguarding Policy



Contents

Church Policy Statement: 1
Our Commitment to Children and Young People..... 2
Recruitment of Children and Youth Leaders, including DBS Disclosure:..... 3
Child Protection – Definitions of Abuse 4
Child Protection – Procedures for Referrals:..... 5
Policy Adoption..... 7

Safeguarding Representative

The PCC has appointed the following person to be the Safeguarding Representative to whom any allegation or concerns about abuse should be directed. The nominated person is NOT normally one of those directly working with children and young people. They will follow the guidelines and procedures for responding to any allegations of abuse.

Parish SP Representative: Julie Popplewell

Email: julie.popplewell@ntlworld.com

Church Policy Statement:

CHURCH OF ASCENSION CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This church recognises and values children and young people (anyone under the age of 18) as equal partners in the life and ministry of the church, and desires to encourage them to explore, discover and live out the Christian Gospel. The Parochial Church Council (hereafter PCC) takes seriously its obligations and responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of any child or young person (i.e. under the age of 18 years) entrusted to the church's care.

Therefore in the church's provision and ministry, the PCC

1. Accepts responsibility for the activities of the children's and youth groups operating under its auspices.
2. Will actively seek to protect and safeguard the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare of children and young people while in the care of the church.
3. Will have clear procedures for responding to suspicions or allegations about abuse, or inappropriate behaviours towards children and young people by any member of the church, and procedures for working with known offenders attending the church
4. Will ensure that both employed and volunteer children's and youth workers and all other persons working within the church who may have contact with children or young people through this work are properly and appropriately selected and appointed as set out in the Diocese of York document: "York Diocesan Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy"
5. Will ensure that children's/youth workers and volunteers are given adequate support and training.
6. Will annually appoint a Parish / Benefice Child Protection Representative.
7. Will annually review the Parish Child Protection Policy and procedures.
8. Will maintain appropriate Third Party Liability insurance for the church work among children and young people.

Our Commitment to Children and Young People

In accepting the Church Child Protection Policy Statement, the PCC as agent of the whole church family in this Parish and within the Diocese of York is also committed:

A: To the children by:

- Listening to and valuing children and young people.
- Relating to children and young people effectively and appropriately.
- Ensuring their protection and minimizing risk of harm by their involvement in any church or related activities, both at the normal meeting place and when away from the normal meeting place.
- Encouraging and supporting children, parents and carers.
- To provide safe, relevant and engaging children's and youth work of the highest quality possible and with adequate resources, (bearing in mind the limitations of plant and human resources).

B: To workers, volunteers and the Child Protection Representative by:

- Giving and enabling appropriate support and training.
- Providing clear systems and procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations about abuse.
- Providing clear systems and procedures for the recruitment of workers and volunteers, including an Allegations of Child Abuse or Unsuitability to Work with Children Policy.
- Maintaining good links with Diocesan and statutory childcare authorities as necessary.

Recruitment of Children and Youth Leaders, including DBS Disclosure:

Great care will be exercised in the appointment of suitable workers and volunteers to the church's work with young people. The PCC has adopted the use of "Diocese of York Guide to Disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service". Where access to children is regular, expected or significant (i.e. a key part of their role even if they are not in regularly contact with children), the Diocesan policy and procedures will be strictly adhered to.

In Brief: (see Guide to Disclosure)

Anyone involved in the church's work with children and young people in this parish/benefice must:

1. Provide proof of their identity. (e.g.: Passport, Birth Certificate)
2. Provide 2 referees (who have known the applicant for at least 3 years)
3. Complete a 'Declaration Form' in accordance with The Children Act 1989 and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974/5
4. Obtain an up to date and satisfactory 'Enhanced Disclosure' check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

NOTE: Where a person has only occasional contact with young people, such as a supervised steward or helper at occasional events, the volunteer only need provide proof of identity, 2 referees and complete the Confidential Declaration Form. Any increased involvement will necessitate a DBS Enhanced Disclosure to be carried out.

Refer to the Diocese of York guide to Disclosure through Disclosure and Barring Service document issued 2008.

Child Protection – Definitions of Abuse

The PCC recognises the following categories of abuse used by every local authority in England and Wales.

Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Organised Abuse:

Organised abuse is defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of children. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse).

People who Pose a Risk to Children

- If there is good reason to believe that someone attending the church may pose a risk to children, either as a result of a criminal conviction or for any other reason, the first concern will be a commitment to the protection of all children and young people. Whilst extending appropriate pastoral care to an individual, the Incumbent and Church Wardens (or authorised agent such as the Rural Dean), will discuss with the Diocese Child Protection Officer then meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep. A written agreement will be appropriate in such cases, and the PCC Child Protection Representative and Diocese Child Protection Officer informed and supplied with a copy of the written agreement.

Child Protection – Procedures for Referrals:

The role of Church members and nominated PCC Child Protection Representative in the event of an allegation or suspicion of abuse:

- Church members, including children's and youth work leaders and volunteers, may have concerns about possible or actual inappropriate conduct or abuse which may have occurred within a church setting or within another context, but which is drawn to their attention in a church setting; in either event the following procedures should be observed.
- The role of a church member is not to investigate beyond establishing the basic facts so that a decision can be made about what further action, if any, needs to be taken (such as a referral to the investigating agencies).
- Allow the child to speak, but be very careful not to say anything that may suggest or prompt a particular answer. Anything said by the child should be recorded, using the actual words used by the child.
- Reassure the child that you are listening carefully to them, but refrain from promising to 'keep a secret'. Make it clear that you may have to tell someone else who can help to sort things out.
- Concerns or an allegation must be shared with the nominated PCC Child Protection Representative as soon as possible, or in their absence, with either the Incumbent or Church Warden or another trusted adult, or with the Archdeacon. If the concern or allegation is about any of these people DO NOT share the concern with them. The concerns MUST be recorded, as must decisions of how to proceed, including rationale for those decisions and consultation with any other persons.
- If both are satisfied that the concerns are unfounded you need take no further action. However, the aforementioned record MUST be kept, and a copy should be forwarded to the Archdeacon.
- If the concern is a childcare issue (i.e. not thought to be abuse related, but where the parents/carer or child may need support from relevant agencies), the nominated PCC Child Protection Representative should make a referral to Social Services. However to do this will require parental permission. Seek further advice from Social Services or the Archdeacon
- If concerns remain the nominated PCC Child Protection Representative should contact the Archdeacon
- If there are concerns that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm or is in immediate danger of harm, then a referral to Social Services or the Police should be made at once by the Church member or the Child Protection Representative. Clearly state that you are making a "Child Protection Referral". Identify yourself and the Church you are representing. You must also advise the Archdeacon.
- Any concerns in relation to child protection issues should be logged and retained securely by the Diocesan Secretary.
- Additional role of the PCC Child Protection Representative:
- The PCC Child Protection Representative should support any church member raising or reporting a concern or allegation and make sure that the above procedures have been carried out appropriately.
- Unless it is inappropriate in view of the nature of the allegation, the incumbent or Church Wardens should be informed of any referral being made as well as the Archdeacon. Do not discuss with anyone else.
- Careful consideration should also be given as to whether the Parish's insurers should be contacted and advised of the incident or allegation.
- If the PCC Representative is unsure, or feels they need to take further advice, they should contact the Archdeacon in the first instance, Social Services or alternatively the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service Help line.
- In the event of the Archdeacon being unavailable within a reasonable time, another of the Archdeacons should be contacted. Alternatively telephone the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service Help Line. (See useful telephone numbers)

Safeguarding

We are committed to ensuring the welfare of all our congregation and anyone who uses our church by:

- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of young people and adults with additional needs' and the promotion of a safe environment for all within the church and related environments
- Following appropriate procedures to ensure we respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding and child protection concerns.
- Identifying young people and adults who have additional needs' and are at risk of significant harm and providing procedures for reporting concerns;
- Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse
- Providing suitable systems to ensure the safety of visitors and all who visit our church
- Providing an environments where everyone feels valued, safe and respected and where individuals are encouraged to talk and are listened to.

Policy Adoption

This policy is adopted and will be reviewed annually by the PCC of The Church of Ascension

Signed:

Print Name:

Date:

A SIGNED AND DATED COPY OF THIS POLICY MUST BE SENT ANNUALLY TO THE YORK DIOCESAN SECRETARY.

See CP2: Checklist for implementing or reviewing the child protection policy, procedures and good practice in the parish (or church, or benefice).