

## Benefice of Whitchurch with Tufton and Litchfield



### CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

***\*\* Anyone coming into regular contact with children and young people at All Hallows, other than as a member of the congregation, should read this Policy and the relevant procedures and guidelines in the appendices \*\****

All Hallows Church  
Church Street  
Whitchurch  
Hampshire RG28 7AS

Vicar: Revd David Roche

#### • INTRODUCTION

##### Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this Child Protection Policy, all references to:

*“child”, “children”, “young person”, “young people”* – whether singular or plural – are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to those under 18 years of age.

*“workers”, “staff”, “volunteers”, “helpers”, “adults working with children” etc.* are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to anyone interacting with children on behalf of the Church, including but not limited to its priests, YCB and WAAG leaders, the choir master and parents volunteering on an ad hoc basis.

*“child abuse”* refers to any of the recognised forms of abuse – physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect.

*“the Church”* refers to All Hallows Church, Whitchurch.

*“the PCC”* refers to the Church’s parochial church council.

- **WHY WE HAVE A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

*A Child Protection Policy will help protect **children**.*

A child protection policy helps to create a safe and positive environment for children. Although no procedures or processes can offer complete protection for children, following these procedures and implementing a policy minimises the risk to children from abuse and exploitation.

- *A Child Protection Policy will help protect **workers and volunteers**.*

A child protection policy clarifies what the Church requires in relation to the protection of children. It sets out standards of behaviour for staff and volunteers when they are working with children and what to do if they notice, or are told about, inappropriate behaviour in others.

- *A Child Protection Policy will help protect **the Church**.*

A child protection policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates the Church's commitment to safeguarding children from harm. A child protection policy will help move the Church towards best practice in this area and deter those who would wish to abuse children from seeking to work with children on behalf of the Church.

- **MISSION STATEMENT**

The PCC recognises the importance of its ministry with children and young people and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the Church's care. The welfare of the child is always paramount.

As part of its mission, the Church is committed to:

- The safeguarding, care and nurture of children and young people within the Church community and those who participate in any activity of the Church;
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all adults who work with children on behalf of the Church;
- Responding without delay to every report or cause for concern indicating that a child or young person for whom it is responsible may be, or may have been, harmed in any way;
- Full cooperation with statutory agencies during any investigation into allegations concerning abuse of a child or young person in the Church community;
- Providing informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;
- The management and supervision of any member of the Church community known or thought to pose a threat to children or young people.

- **CHURCH POLICY**

The PCC recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also recognises that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The PCC has therefore adopted the procedures and guidelines referred to in this Policy and set out in the appendices.

The PCC is committed to ensuring that all adults working with children are made aware, when beginning their role, of the procedures that must be followed in responding to allegations of abuse. Everyone will be asked to sign a form confirming that they have read and understood all key safeguarding documents.

It will ensure that those adults are also kept aware of all other child protection issues as detailed in the appendix of this Policy.

The PCC will review the Policy and procedures annually.

- **DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

#### 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 be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

#### EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects of the child's emotional development and may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- 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.
- Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, e.g. witnessing domestic violence and abuse.
- Serious bullying causing a child to feel frightened or in danger.
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

## 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 such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching the outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking online or on mobile phones at pornographic material, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. It will also include involving children in the production of pornographic material.

Sexual abuse can be committed by women, other children as well as adult males.

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

### • **RECOGNISING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE**

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

### PHYSICAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Neglect, under-nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care etc.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.

- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse.

#### INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SEXUAL ABUSE

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia. \*

\* These signs may indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming, mostly by cutting, burning, self-poisoning. Approximately 20,000 people are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

#### EMOTIONAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Also, depression, aggression or extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

#### • **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

Under no circumstances should a child/youth worker carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse.

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse *must follow the detailed procedure set out in Appendix 1 "Responding to allegations of abuse"*, which will include:

- Complying with guidelines on what to say and what not to say as detailed in the procedure.
- Notifying the Parish Safeguarding Officer(s) and discussing concerns with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding and Inclusion (as identified at the end of this Policy).

- Notifying Social Services or the Police if the child concerned is deemed to be at immediate serious risk of further abuse.
- Refraining from discussing suspicions with anyone other than the above.
- Producing a written record of the concerns and keeping it in a secure place in accordance with the Church's procedures.

The PCC will support the Officer(s) in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

[Appendix 1. Responding to allegations of abuse.](#)

[Appendix 1a. Quick guide for responding to concerns and allegations.](#)

- **APPOINTMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION AND TRAINING OF LEADERS AND WORKERS**

The PCC will ensure that all adults working regularly with children are Disclosure and Barring Service checked. This will not include Summer Sunday School helpers, however they will be made aware of key safeguarding concerns by being required to read the document entitled "Child Protection Policy – A Summary" (Appendix 11).

Appointment of all workers within the Church will be done in accordance with the Diocesan Guidelines on Safer Recruitment which can be found at [www.winchester.anglican.org/resources](http://www.winchester.anglican.org/resources).

All workers will be provided with appropriate support and supervision within their roles and must ask for such support if they ever feel it is lacking.

- **SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

The PCC is committed to offering pastoral care and support to those attending the Church who have been affected by abuse.

[Appendix 2. Support to those affected by abuse.](#)

- **WORKING WITH OFFENDERS**

When someone attending the Church or wishing to join the Church is known to have abused children, the PCC will ensure an appropriate agreement is put in place (where possible, the Director for Safeguarding and Inclusion will work with statutory agencies to ensure known risks are identified and included) to supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. The agreement will detail the conditions under which the person may attend the Church.

- **GOOD PRACTICE**

The PCC is committed to ensuring that all adults working with children are aware of the standards of behaviour expected by the Church and that they in turn feel at ease in their interaction with the children.

### PHYSICAL CONTACT

- The PCC recognises that physical contact between adult and child is inevitable and entirely natural.
- However, this contact must be age, gender and context appropriate.
- The privacy and personal dignity of the child must be respected.
- See also “Administration” at the end of this section.

[Appendix 3. Guidelines for acceptable physical contact between adults and children.](#)

### GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

- The PCC expects a high standard of behaviour from all children when participating in activities within the Church.
- Self-discipline in children will be encouraged by teaching, encouragement, verbal rebuke, nurturing and instruction.
- Discipline is the education of a person’s character.
- Discipline brings security, produces character, prepares for life, is evidence of love and is God’s heart.

[Appendix 4. Guidelines for discipline and responding to inappropriate behaviour.](#)

### BULLYING

- Bullying of any sort, whether child to child or adult to child, will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Any such behaviour will be dealt with and those perpetrating the bullying will be made aware that such behaviour is not acceptable.
- Children experiencing bullying in any situation will be offered support to address the issues.

### CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Children with special needs will be welcomed into all activities of the Church wherever possible.
- Discussion between the leaders and the parents/guardians will take place to decide how best to meet the needs of the child. The suitability of premises and the number of leaders and helpers will need to be taken into consideration.

### CAMPS/RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES/OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES/TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

- From time to time, activities may be arranged which will take place away from the usual meeting place. These may include overnight stays.
- A comprehensive risk assessment of each activity will be undertaken and appropriate risk management measures put in place.

- Written permission will be sought from parents/guardians.
- Full details of all such activities will be given and clear behaviour guidance will be issued to children prior to attending.
- It may, on occasions, be necessary for children to be transported to or from events. Drivers transporting children on behalf of the Church must check that their insurance is appropriate. All drivers must be DBS checked.

**Appendix 5. Guidelines for off-site activities and for transporting children. Relevant forms.**

### STORAGE AND USE OF INFORMATION, AND IMAGES OF CHILDREN

Specific guidelines for the making, storage and use of images of children are available. No image will be taken, stored or used without the parent/carer's permission.

**Appendix 6. Guidelines on storage and use of information and images of children.**

### USE OF INTERNET AND E-MAIL

Modern communication technologies may be used as a means of communicating with children. The guidelines found in the appendix must be followed

**Appendix 7. Guidelines on the use of internet and email.**

### ADMINISTRATION

Whilst this should be kept to a minimum it is important that some personal details concerning each child engaged in activities will be kept. These details are confidential and, along with a record of attendance, must be kept in a secure place.

**Appendix 8. Keeping of records. Relevant forms**

The PCC recognises that the safety of children is very much dependent upon adequate adult supervision. It therefore recommends that the guidelines of adult-child ratios issued by Ofsted and endorsed by the Diocese are followed as far as possible

**Appendix 9 Supervision of children.**

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

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- Hampshire Children's Services  
0300 555 1384  
[childrens.services@hants.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@hants.gov.uk)
- Hampshire Adult Services  
0300 555 1386  
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- Adult and Children's Services out of hours  
0300 555 1373

This Policy was agreed by PCC on 17 September 2019

Date of next review - September 2020.

Signed  PCC Secretary Date 17 September 2019