

Safeguarding Policy for Promoting a Safer Church 2023

**The Parish of
All Saints'
Thurcaston with
Cropston**



The Parish of All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston

SAFEGUARDING POLICY PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on January 16th 2023.

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parish will:

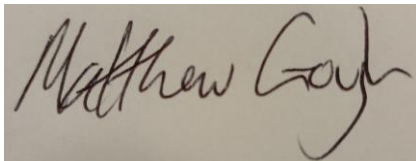
- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including

notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.


- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints **Jane Westby** as the Parish Safeguarding Officer

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Matthew Gough".

Incumbent

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Douglas Gilmour".

Churchwarden Douglas Gilmour

Date: January 16th 2023

Parish Roles and Responsibilities

At All Saints' Thurcaston with Cropston we recognise that the few who are determined to harm children or adults, deliberately seek out groups or organisations where they can meet children or other vulnerable people. The Church is particularly vulnerable to these people. Creating and maintaining a safeguarding culture will discourage them from becoming involved for the wrong reasons and make it difficult for them to harm or abuse children or adults if they do.

Key messages

- **The welfare of the child, young person and vulnerable adult is at all times paramount, and takes precedence over all other considerations.**
- **The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) must be consulted whenever a safeguarding concern of any kind arises in your parish.**
- **Safeguarding is part of our core faith and an integral feature of Christian life in our parish churches.**

To assist with the creation of a safeguarding culture the PCC will appoint:

At least one appropriately experienced designated Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and PCC. This PSO should be a lay person. The PSO may also be the DBS administrator for church officers who work with children or vulnerable adults but if not, the PCC should appoint another individual. The PSO should be supported, trained and given a copy of the parish safeguarding policy and procedures.

Parish Contacts: Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) & DBS administrator

Jane Westby 40, Leicester Road, Thurstaston LE7 7JG

Tel: 0116 2352226 email: mowestby@virginmedia.com

Children's Advocate

Elizabeth Williams 2, Forge End, Rothley LE7 7NY

Tel: 0116 2375613 email: lizziewilliams54@gmail.com

Contact details for the main leader of each children's/youth group

Name of Group	Leader's Name	Address & Email	Tel no:
Family Service Team	Mrs Rebecca Davis	46 Anstey Lane, Thurstaston, LE77JA rebdavis@gmail.com	0116 2210923
Choir	Mrs Jane Westby	40 Leicester Road, Thurstaston LE7 7JG mowestby@virginmedia.com	0116 235 2226
Bell Ringers	Mr Peter Hunt	141 Station Road, Cropston LE7 7HH peterandjudy1@btinternet.com	0116 235 9601

Church Groups

Church groups that involve children need to ensure good practice standards across a wide range of areas including: recruitment of activity leaders; DBS checking; staffing ratios; suitability of premises; health and safety arrangements; and facilities for children with special needs. The minimum staffing levels for groups should be as follows: 0 – 2 years 1 adult to 3 children 1:3

- 2 – 3 years 1 adult to 4 children 1:4
 - 4 – 8 years 1 adult to 6 children 1:6
 - 9 – 12 years 1 adult to 8 children 1:8
 - 13 – 18 years 1 adult to 10 children 1:10
- Each group should have at least two workers, even for smaller groups, and if possible one male and one female. Staff ratios for all groups should always be based on a risk assessment. For example, staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered higher risk, potentially dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved. P43
- A registration form will be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities which should include up-to-date information on parents' contact numbers, medical information (e.g. allergies) & any special needs.

Safer Recruitment, support and training

Ensure that all church officers who work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults are:

- a. recruited following the House of Bishops' Safer Recruitment practice guidance;

- b. aware of and work to House of Bishops' safeguarding guidance (includes both policies and practice guidance);
- c. attend diocesan safeguarding training at least every three years;

Provide appropriate insurance to cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the PCC which involve children and vulnerable adults.

Every person who works with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults will be given a copy of the Pocket Guide to Safeguarding and this policy. They will also be given information about how to access on the internet the House of Bishops Parish Safeguarding Handbook and other national Church of England documents including Protecting All God's Children. Paper copies of these documents will be provided to those workers who request them.

Respond: We will:

- Create an environment, which is welcoming and respectful and enables safeguarding concerns to be raised and responded to openly, promptly and consistently;
- Have a procedure in place to deal promptly with safeguarding allegations or suspicions of abuse in accordance with the relevant policy and practice guidance and in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser;
- Report all safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser;
- To ensure that known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser;
- Comply with all data protection legislation especially in regard to storing information about the 'church workforce', including volunteers and any safeguarding records;
- Ensure that an "activity risk assessment" is completed and reviewed regularly for each activity, which is associated with either children or vulnerable adults, and run in the name of the Church.

Code of Safer Working Practice

All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.
- Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer. Sign and date the record.
- Obtain written consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored
- Administer any First Aid with others around.

In addition, for children and young people must:

- Always aim to work with or 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.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and its nature before the activity takes place.

For all groups and activities:

- Undertake a health and safety risk assessment
- A registration form must be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities which should include up-to- date information on parents' contact numbers, medical information (e.g. allergies) and any special needs

- An attendance register must be kept and be available at all group meetings.
 - A First Aid kit must be available on any premises that are used by children.
 - An accident and incident logbook must be available, and all accidents recorded. The logbook should be stored in a secure place. Any significant incidents must be recorded (e.g. a fight between children).
 - There should be access to a telephone, if possible.
 - In premises where children's groups meet, the Childline and Family Lives telephone numbers should be displayed (see section 13).
 - Parents must sign a consent form before children are transported in a private car, and before any photography or images are taken
- In addition, when taking children offsite:
- The church leadership must be informed and agree to the activity.
 - Details of the activity and any itinerary must be given in advance to parent/s and consent forms received in advance of the activity taking place.
 - Details of the activity and a list of contacts must be left with someone in the church.
 - Details of the activity and arrangements must be given to the incumbent and/or PSO.
 - A risk assessment must be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the activity is covered by PCC insurance.
 - A leader must be designated to take responsibility for First Aid.
- Many of these items are equally applicable to groups involving vulnerable adults.

All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not:

- Invade an individual's privacy whilst washing and toileting.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.

- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.

- Show favouritism to any one individual or group.

- Allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking.

Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person.

- Allow strangers to give children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group, lifts.

- Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media.

- Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means That images are stored on personal devices.

In addition, for children and young people, must not:

- Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).

- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people.

- Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include adult family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

Guidelines for responding to a person disclosing abuse – Respond, Record, Report.

Respond - Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously

- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'.)
- Remain calm
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding
- Check if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader/Parish Safeguarding Officer/DSA and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information)
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination

Record

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, & write them up in detail as soon as possible
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the DSA or the statutory authorities.

- Record the date, time, place and actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

Report

- If there is immediate danger to a child or adult contact the police.
- Otherwise report to your activity leader / Parish Safeguarding Officer / incumbent immediately
- Within 24 hours the PSO/incumbent reports concerns to the DSA
- The DSA will advise regarding reporting to statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt seek advice from Children's/Adult's Social Care or the police

Non-recent abuse

Safeguarding concerns or allegations may be about something that is going on now and/or something that may happen in the future (recent) or something that happened in the past (non-recent). Non-recent allegations of abuse must be treated as seriously as recent allegations.

Research evidences that it may take up to 25 years or longer for an adult to disclose sexual abuse that happened to him/her either as a child or younger adult.

A victim/survivor needs to be aware that if a respondent is known to be currently working with children/vulnerable adults in either a paid or voluntary capacity a referral to the statutory services will be made.

The DSA will make this referral.

Responding to those who may present a known risk to children, young people or vulnerable adults within a Christian Congregation

Where people may pose a risk to others, their position in a congregation will need to be carefully and sensitively assessed to

decide whether they pose a present risk to others and to put in place arrangements to ensure that these risks are mitigated.

In these circumstances it is not only about monitoring individuals but offering support to lead a fulfilled life. As such, the Church has an important role in contributing to the prevention of future abuse.

Support following alleged abuse by a church officer

All concerns or allegations of abuse by a church officer must be reported to the DSA (see section 7.2). The DSA will arrange for a Support Person to be offered to all alleged adult victims/survivors. The role of the Support Person is set out in the House of Bishops' guidance.

Most parishes are likely to have amongst their congregation children and young people who have been abused and/or adults who have experienced abuse, either as adults or when they themselves were children. Some may have been abused in the Church.

Caring Pastorally for Church Officers who are the Subject of Concerns or Allegations of Abuse and Affected Others

Support for the respondent is provided by a Link Person. All church officers who are the subject of a concern will be offered a Link Person.

Hire out church premises

- Where hire is specifically for young people or vulnerable adults a risk assessment by the hirer needs to be provided and if such hire is by a constituted group/ organisation then their safeguarding policy must also be provided prior to hire commencing
- The hire agreement should also contain a provision whereby all those hiring church premises are required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, relevant staff have had appropriate DBS checks and that all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring.

- Ensure that all those hiring church premises carry full public liability insurance for this or are covered through the church insurance (e.g. hire for a children's party).

Health & Safety and First Aid

Health and Safety will be managed as part of all activities. All buildings where activities with children and young people take place will be inspected by an appropriate person at least annually and the results will be noted and reported in writing to the PCC or other appropriate church organisation. Health and Safety issues observed by those working with children and young people should be reported to the Child Protection Coordinator or the person with responsibility for Health and Safety within the church.

A First Aid kit will be available on site and will be checked monthly and updated as necessary. An accident book is maintained at all places where activities with children and young people take place.

If there is an emergency involving injury to a child or young person:

- Stay calm
- Provide immediate first aid when needed
- Alert others to the need for help
- Ensure that somebody is supervising the other children or young people
- Call an ambulance if needed
- Contact the parents/guardians of the child or young person
- Provide an appropriate handover and information about the situation to the parents/guardians
- Complete the accident book
- Consider whether there are implications for the Health & Safety policy and/or practices and report these to the PSO.

Use of Social Media, email and texting

Social media sites enable users to create and share content and keep in touch with other users. They include maintaining a profile on a networking site such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat; writing or commenting on a blog, whether it is your own or the blog of another person; and taking part in discussions on web forums or message boards. For many, especially young people, using social media is an extension of physical face-to-face relationships. It is therefore important that churches also engage with their community and worshippers through these platforms. However, this must be done safely to avoid the risk of:

- Forming inappropriate relationships.
- Saying things that you should not, such as offensive, sexual or suggestive comments.
- Blurring the boundaries between public work/ministry and your private life.
- Grooming and impersonation.
- Bullying and harassment.

All those involved in working with children and young people will exercise care in the use of social media and respect the principles set out below. Communication by electronic means or by texting will not be used with children under the age of 11.

All communication in these forms will be via their parents. The rest of the principles relate to communication with children and young people aged 11 and over. The key point is that communication should be in a context of transparency and accountability.

- Electronic communication and texting should only be used for reasons relating to work and not for general socialising purposes.
- Other leaders should be aware of the situations in which these means of communication are being used.
- Leaders, workers and volunteers should not invite children or young people from church activities to their personal social networking page but may respond to requests where appropriate, as long as the child or young person is 13 or over.
- Where possible, group pages should be used on social media for

communicating.

- Care should be exercised in posting to Facebook, twitter etc. as comments made on the spur of the moment may not always come out as intended and can be passed on extremely quickly around a large audience.
- Communication by electronic means or texting with children or young people should never take place during school hours and should be kept within the hours of 9am – 9pm.
- Where possible, email and messaging should take place to and within groups rather than individuals.
- Leaders, workers and volunteers should give very careful consideration as to whether it is necessary to give personal mobile phone numbers to children and young people.
- Webcams will not be used where internet chat or Skype is used for one-to-one conversations.
- Records of communications will be kept just as they would be for written communication. If a worker's mobile phone does not allow text messages to be saved then a written record should be kept.
- The principles for the use of social media will be communicated to children and young people.

The church does not have a dedicated mobile phone number for children's / youth work.

Guidance for church officers is detailed in full in the House of Bishops Parish Safeguarding handbook.

<https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f3ffd8a9f6aa/content/pages/documents/1583166763.pdf>

Implementation of the Policy

The Parish Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for monitoring the policy to see that it is being put into practice. He/she will be supported by the PCC members, who have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding.

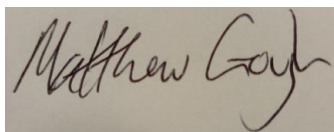
Review & report progress to the PCC

The PSO should regularly report on safeguarding in the parish. Safeguarding should be a standing agenda item at each PCC meeting. At the APCM the PCC should provide an annual report in relation to safeguarding. In the PCC's annual report will be a statement which reports on progress and a statement as to whether or not the PCC has complied with the duty to have "due regard" to the House of Bishops' guidance in relation to safeguarding.

The procedures and guidelines were last reviewed and agreed by the PCC on:

Date: 16th January 2023

Signed:



(Incumbent)

Signed:



(Vice-Chair of
PCC/Churchwarden)

Date for policy review January 2024

Please keep a copy for your parish records, give a copy to everybody involved in work with children, young people and adults and send one to:

Safeguarding Administrator
St Martins House
7 Peacock Lane
Leicester
LE1 5PZ.
julie.safeguarding@leccofe.org