

Diocese of Bristol

Parish of Christ Church with St Mary's, Old Town, Swindon

25/11/24

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults: Policy and Procedure

“Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from their creation in God’s own image and likeness. Christians have a duty to value, understand and respect the rights of children and adults as people of faith in the life of the church.”
Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Policy, 2023

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I. Policy Context

In developing this policy the parish of Christ Church with St Mary's commits to following the safeguarding policies of the Church of England, safeguarding policy and guidance as issued by the Diocese of Bristol and commits to working within legislation and statutory guidance as related to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults.

The main relevant policies and guidance documents are:

Church of England:

Protecting all God's Children, 2010
Promoting a Safe Church, 2006
Promoting a Safer Church – Policy Statement, 2017
Safer Recruitment and People Management: Practice Guidance, 2021
Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework, 2021
Responding Well to Domestic Abuse, 2017
Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse, 2021
Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers, 2017
Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies, 2017
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults, 2021
Safer Environment and Activities, 2019
The Code of Safer Working Practice, 2019
Safeguarding Records Joint Practice Guidance, 2015
Safeguarding Records Retention Tool Kit, 2015
General Statement on Safeguarding Children in Towers, 2015

Further information can be found via the Church of England Safeguarding e-manual and Policies and Practice Guidance pages:

[Safeguarding e-manual | The Church of England](#)

[Policy and Practice Guidance | The Church of England](#)

Diocese of Bristol:

Safeguarding Policy, 2023
Allegations Management Procedure, 2023
Ministering to those who may present a risk, 2023

These documents can all be found on the Diocese of Bristol website:

<https://www.bristol.anglican.org/aboutus/safeguarding/safeguardingresources/> and descriptions are given where these policies are referenced in this policy document.

Statutory Guidance:

Working Together 2018: This guidance from the Department for Education describes safeguarding processes and the safeguards that every organisation must have in place, including faith organisations, when safeguarding children. Read or download a PDF version of the guidance at [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) or view it online at www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk

Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2016: This is guidance from the Department of Health which describes safeguarding processes for adults and the responsibilities of different organisations:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

2. Policy Statement

It is the responsibility of all members of the parish of Christ Church with St Mary's to give paramount importance to the nurture and care of children, young people and vulnerable adults, in a safe and secure environment. It is about preventing harm to children and adults wherever possible.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount.
- Everyone has different levels of vulnerability and each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives
- All children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable (regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse which can occur in all families and communities.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

We will develop a culture in our church that:

- Enables a safe and caring community to provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.
- Enables and encourages concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently and protects children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable from actual or potential harm.
- Ensures all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
- Values, listens to and respects children, young people 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.

When concerns are raised we will:

- Respond without delay to every concern raised that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm, through abuse or neglect.
- Work with police, local authority and other partners in any investigation, including where 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:

- 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.
- Supervision is provided for any member of the Church Community known to pose a risk of harm to others.
- Appropriate pastoral care is provided to any member of our church against whom an allegation is made.

In all recruitment we will:

- Carefully select those with any responsibility within the Church (including voluntary workers) in line with the [Church of England Safer Recruitment and people management Practice Guidance, 2021](#)¹ (See parish of Christ Church with St Mary's Safer Recruitment Guidelines) and provide ongoing supervision, support and training.

In our publicity we will:

- Share information about good safeguarding practice with children, young people and vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and all those working and worshipping with them.
- Where the Parish has a website we will ensure there is clear information available regarding our safeguarding arrangements, including a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy and other relevant information.

3. Who is a child, young person, adult who may be vulnerable?

Children and young people: for the purposes of this policy, means anyone under the age of 18 years. Children and young people may be abused by an adult or child, male or female. It is far more common for a child or young person to be abused by a person known to them than by a stranger. This could be a parent, family member, friend, teacher, minister or anyone else. Children may be abused in person or via

¹ [Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance | The Church of England](#)

electronic media, they may experience harm as a result of seeing or hearing the abuse of others.

Where conflicts of interest arise between the welfare of the child and that of adults, the child's wellbeing must always be of paramount importance and priority.

Adults who may be vulnerable: The Care Act 2014 defines an adult to whom statutory safeguarding duties apply as an adult who:

- *Has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of these needs)*
- *Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect*
- *As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect.*

(Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2016)

The definition may apply to anyone 18 years old and over who may not be able to protect themselves from abuse, harm or exploitation, which may be by reason of illness, physical, sensory or learning disability or impairment, mental illness, use of drugs or alcohol. Increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible.

An adult may be abused or neglected by family (including spouses, parents and children), friends, carers (paid and unpaid), strangers and professionals and members of the community. Those at risk may live alone or may live with family or in a care setting e.g. residential home.

4. What is abuse and neglect?

Please see the table attached as **Appendix 2** This outlines the forms of abuse noted in legislation related to safeguarding children, young people and adults alongside some examples and potential indicators that abuse or neglect may be occurring.

5. What to do if you are concerned that abuse or neglect may be happening

You may see or hear something of concern or someone may tell you something of concern (a disclosure). If a child, young person or adult tells you that they have experienced abuse, are experiencing abuse or are concerned that they may be at risk:

Do	Don't
Listen. Try to move to a quiet space if possible	Tell them to speak to someone else

Do	Don't
Let the person talk at their own pace and say what they want to say. If you need to clarify points ask open questions like: Tell me.. what happened, Explain ... about the incident Describe ...where it was , what happened	Investigate. Ask leading questions e.g. why did they do that, was it 'name', did it hurt you?
Take it seriously	Try not to react as though unbelieving or shocked
Reassure. Confirm they are doing the right thing by telling you.	Tell them not to tell stories
Tell them you need to share the concern with the right people e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer, police, social care	Promise to keep a secret or tell people who don't need to know.
Record what was said and the facts as accurately as possible as soon as possible	Try to just remember it
	Contact the person the allegation is about

Whether a child, young person or adult has shared a concern with you or you have seen or heard something of concern...

If the situation is urgent i.e. there is an imminent risk of harm: contact the police on 101 or 999 as appropriate or contact the Local Authority Children or Adults safeguarding Teams:

Your Swindon Borough Council: Children's Safeguarding Team

Telephone number - 01793 464646 option 2 Monday to Friday

Telephone number - 01793 436699 Out of hours/Weekends

Your Swindon Borough Council: Adult Safeguarding Team

Telephone Number - 01793 463555 Monday to Friday

Telephone number - 01793 436699 Out of hours/Weekends

Once you have sought advice from police or the Local Authority and the situation is made safe, inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible of the concern and actions taken; provide a written record of this. If the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Officer.

If the situation is of concern but is not urgent: Contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer to report the concern and provide a written record (if the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Officer). They will decide with you whether to discuss with the child, their parents or carers or the adult and any carers and whether a referral to the Local Authority Children or Adults Safeguarding Team is needed or any other action.

Note: Anyone can report a concern directly to police or the Local Authority at anytime.

The Parish of Christ Church with St Mary's hopes that all will follow this policy but where there is any concern that an issue has not been reported and should be or any reluctance to inform the church of an incident the parish of Christ Church with St Mary's wishes to make clear that the most important point is that those concerns are reported to the appropriate authority so that they can be acted upon where needed.

If there is an allegation that a person in a position of trust (minister, PCC member, staff member or volunteer) has abused or neglected a child or adult or that such a person may present a risk to a child or adult: The Diocese of Bristol 'Allegations Management Procedure²' will be followed (copies of this procedure can be found on the Diocesan website and copies are held by the Parish Safeguarding Officers, Clergy and in the Parish Office). In brief this procedure requires that:

- The concern should be reported as above; report should reach police and Local Authority within 1 working day.
- The concern should not be made known to the person against whom the allegation is raised without agreement with police and or the Local Authority.
- Next steps will be decided in conjunction with police, Local Authority representatives (including Local Authority Designated Officer where there is a concern for the welfare of a child), the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and parish representatives (usually PSO, Incumbent and Churchwardens).

If a person is identified who has a caution or conviction for abuse of children and or adults who may pose a risk to others: (usually those with convictions for sexual or violent offences) the Diocese of Bristol guidance 'Ministering to those who may present a risk³' (Copies of this guidance can be found on the Diocesan website and copies are held by the Parish Safeguarding Officers, Clergy and in the Parish

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<http://www.bristol.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/63f867984a2096dde307eac2e2187b1959740568.pdf>

3

<http://www.bristol.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/59f69dcc0f98e48336828e56a14ded8890ed6c4d.docx>

Office) will be followed. In brief this guidance advises that that Parish Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Safeguarding Officer are made aware and that the individual is informed that:

- To support their being part of the congregation as safely as possible, contact will be made with police, probation and other agencies connected with their case.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and Church leaders will need to know of their circumstances.
- That a risk assessment will need to be completed
- And that a written agreement will be needed between the individual and the Church which agrees when the individual will or will not be involved in church services and activities, boundaries of behaviour and support offered.

6. Confidentiality and consent

Confidentiality: The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's accepts the principle that only those with a need to know should be made aware of safeguarding concerns or other confidential information. All staff, ministers and volunteers are expected to share confidential information appropriately and to ensure that written records and verbal information is shared responsibly and stored securely.

Consent: The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's accepts that all people have a right to make their own views and wishes known and that these wishes should be followed wherever possible.

Children: Where there is a concern that a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect they may ask those that know not to tell anyone. The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's accepts that we can not do this; these concerns must be reported to the appropriate authorities to enable the child or young person to receive appropriate help and support. The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's asks all staff, ministers and volunteers to explain this to children in their care when appropriate. Where there is concern that a child is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect. The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's expects that parents and carers will be communicated with and will have their consent sought for information to be shared with the Local Authority or other agencies. This should happen except where there is concern that to do so would place a child at increased risk or where a parent or carer may be involved in the sexual abuse of the child. In those circumstances advice of the Local Authority or police should be sought before informing the parents or carers of the concern. Where the allegation is against an individual who may have access to other children or vulnerable adults the referral should be made without seeking consent from parents or carers - how they are made aware of the concerns will be decided alongside statutory agencies.

Adults: Adults have the right to make their own decisions about their lives. Consent should be sought from an adult before information is shared about them. However, where an adult withholds consent for a safeguarding concern to be shared with statutory authorities (police and local authority), this should be accepted except where there may be others at risk (e.g. is the abuse or neglect is happening in a care home or hospital or the abuser has access to other vulnerable adults or children) or where there is reason to doubt that the individual has capacity to make that decision or where there is imminent risk of serious harm. Advice should be sought from statutory services (Adult social care or police) or the Diocesan Safeguarding **Officer** where there is any doubt as to whether a concern should be referred.

7. Record Keeping

Records of all safeguarding concerns will be kept by the Parish Safeguarding Officers. They will keep a record of the initial concern and all actions taken. The records will be securely held at either the Parish office or 17 Corby Avenue location. All those involved with any safeguarding concern must ensure that they provide to the Safeguarding Officer any records related to that case for secure storage.

Records will be retained as per Church of England guidance 'Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church' 2015⁴.

The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's does not have access to secure email systems. Therefore great care should be taken where email is used to ensure that confidential information is not open to being accessed by unauthorised individuals. Individual's confidential information should not be communicated via email (e.g. any information should not make the individual identifiable by name, address etc.).

Records must be maintained of staff and volunteer training and DBS checks. These will be maintained by the Parish Safeguarding Officers.

8. Safer Recruitment and ongoing support and supervision

All recruitment of staff and volunteers will be undertaken in line with Church of England policy 'Safer Recruitment and People Management, 2021'⁵.

Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken by those delegated such responsibility from PCC.

⁴ <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20joint%20practice%20guidance%20-%20safeguarding%20records.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-guidance>

Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken according to agreed process.

All recruited staff and volunteers will be made known to PCC.

No one who has not been safely recruited will be permitted to work unsupervised with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable.

In brief: All staff and volunteers will:

- Have all recruitment checks completed and approved prior to starting in role.
- All eligible staff and volunteers will have a repeat DBS disclosure **every 3 years**. Any lapsed DBS check will require the post holder to stand down until the check has been completed.
- Attend safeguarding training as required by the Church of England
- Attend any other training as decided by the PCC
- Have a named supervisor

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Responsibilities
Parochial Church Council (PCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree, implement, monitor and review annually this safeguarding policy and all associated policies• Ensure all staff and volunteers are recruited safely• Agree and implement supporting good practice guidance and processes• Ensure adequate insurance for all activities• Recruit and provide adequate support to Parish Safeguarding Officers• Ensure all staff and volunteers are adequately trained and supervised
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond to all safeguarding allegations and concerns according to policy and guidance• Monitor and report to PCC regarding adherence to policy and practice• Arrange safeguarding training and maintain records• Process DBS disclosures for the church and maintain records• PSO cannot be the incumbent/Priest-in-charge

Name	Responsibilities
Incumbent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a point of contact should there be any safeguarding allegation or concern regarding a PSO
Church Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in the allegations management procedure when required • Take part in an 'agreement' as per 'ministering to those that may present a risk'
Activity Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the Safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance • Ensure that activities are run according to good practice guidance • Report any safeguarding concerns as per policy • Ensure all volunteers are safely recruited • Ensure all volunteers have in date training and DBS check as required • Ensure all new volunteers receive agreed induction • Supervise agreed volunteers
Staff and Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance • Report any safeguarding concern as per policy
Church members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the safeguarding and associated policies • Report any concerns as per policy

10. Additional Related Policies

Photographs and videos

It is the policy of The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's that no one should take photographs of children or young people without the written consent of that child's parent or carer and the consent of that child where they are old enough to give consent.

Where photographs are to be taken consent will be gained from parents and carers in advance, using the agreed form. This will stipulate: who will take photos, for what purpose they may be used, how they will be stored and after what period they will be destroyed.

All photos and videos taken for The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's should be stored securely on devices belonging to PCC. No photo or video should be left stored on personal photography or videography equipment.

No photo will be taken, shared or used for any purpose which shows a child in any state of undress.

Children will not be named in publicity related to photographs or video.

Where an event may be photographed and is open to the public; signs will be displayed noting that photographs and or video may be taken and inviting anyone not wishing to be in any photos or video used to make this known to a named person. The photographer/ videographer will be named on these signs and will wear ID.

Only those delegated with that responsibility by PCC may ask for parental consent and arrange the taking of any photo or video.

Communications and Social Media

It is the policy of The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's that no one employed on a paid or voluntary basis, serving as a PCC member or as a licenced minister will contact children or young people directly via social media, email, phone or text without the knowledge and consent of that child or young persons parent or carer.

Where such contact needs to be made (for example a text to advise of a change of time for an activity) the child's parent or carer will be asked for consent in advance and the parent or carer will be copied into that communication.

Very rarely contact may be made with a child or young person without the knowledge of the child's parents or carers (for example where there are serious safeguarding concerns for a child and it would increase the risk to the child to contact the parent). In this case the person making contact with the child must agree in advance with the Parish Safeguarding Officer that this is appropriate, a second adult should be copied into all communications e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer or Incumbent and must keep a record of all communications and provide these to the Parish Safeguarding Officer for the case record.

Where a group wishes to have a social media account to publicise or communicate regarding their group or activity the following will apply:

- The account shall not be a personal account belonging to any group member or leader; it will be a separate group account.
- More than one adult will be administrator for the account so that all content and messages can be seen by more than one adult.
- All users will be made aware that bullying, harassment or other anti social behaviour will not be tolerated. Information will be available to all users about how to raise a concern about the conduct of others and who with.
- Steps must be taken to prevent people outside the group having access to the names or personal details of anyone who is part of the group e.g. if a group

Facebook page is used, the account settings should prevent group members being identified and any message sent to anyone other than the administrator.

- All those in a leadership role will ensure that their language is professional and appropriate e.g. not adding 'xx' to messages, not using nicknames that are not what the leader is called by everyone else, avoiding addressing others by endearments which would be ambiguous, such as 'love'.
- Further advice and information regarding online safety is available from the Diocese Safeguarding Team.

Hire of Church Premises for non Church events and activities (whether a fee is chargeable or not)

Organisations and individual users meeting at 'The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's' will be expected to adhere to this safeguarding policy or where they work regularly with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable, to have their own safeguarding policy.

'The parish of Christ Church with St Mary's' is responsible for overseeing users and ensuring that the agreed hire process and forms are in use. This will include obtaining a copy of the hirers safeguarding policy where relevant and providing a copy of this policy.

II. Policy implementation and Review

This policy is agreed by the Parish of Christ Church with St Mary's PCC on 25/11/24.
DATE.

All staff, volunteers and ministers are required to abide by this policy and associated good practice guidance.

This policy will be made available on the Church website; a copy will be available in each church building.

This policy will be monitored via annual audit and annual report to PCC

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

Next Review Due: November 2025

Appendix I: Useful Contact numbers

- Our Parish Safeguarding Officers are:
- Ailsa Palmer 01793 436220, Norma McKemey 01793 845917s
- Our Diocesan Safeguarding **Officer** can be contacted on 0117 906 0100.

Policy Date: 25/11/24

Version Number: 1

Due for review: November 2025

- If advice is needed on a safeguarding issue and the PSO or DSA are not available, Thirtyone:eight provides a helpline that can be contacted on 0303 003 11 11. Please state that you are calling from a Diocese of Bristol church and contact your PSO as soon as possible to report that you sought advice from Thirtyone:eight and action taken.
- Swindon Borough Council: Children's Safeguarding Team
Telephone number - 01793 464646 option 2 Monday to Friday
Telephone number - 01793 436699 Out of hours/Weekend
- Swindon Borough Council: Adult Safeguarding Team
Telephone Number - 01793 463555 Monday to Friday
Telephone number - 01793 436699 Out of hours/Weekends
- Police: 999 (emergency) or 101 (non emergency)

Appendix 2: Categories of Abuse and additional information

Categories, Definitions and Indicators of Harm (Last Updated April 2017 v4)

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
Physical Adults and Children	Non-accidental harm to the body. From careless rough handling to direct physical violence. Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions.	Hitting, slapping, pinching, shaking, pushing, scalding, burning, dragging, kicking, physical restraint, locking an individual in a room or a car.	History of unexplained falls or minor injuries, bruising which is characteristic of non-accidental injury – hand slap marks, pinch marks, grip marks, bite marks, scalds, flinching, reluctant to undress.
Sexual Adults and Children	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without capacity and/or consent. Individual did not fully understand or was pressured into consenting. Note: A child under 16 years old can never consent to any sexual act	Coercion to be involved in the making or watching of pornographic material. Coercion to touch e.g. of breasts, genitals, anus, mouth, masturbation of either self or others, penetration or attempted penetration of vagina, anus, mouth with or by penis, fingers and or other objects	Pregnancy in a women unable to give consent, difficulty in walking or sitting with no apparent explanation, torn, stained or bloody underclothes or bedding, Bleeding, bruising to the rectal and/or vaginal area, bruising. Behavioural changes, sexually explicit behaviour, explicit language, self harm, obsession with washing, fear of pregnancy may be exaggerated
Emotional Adults and Children	Behaviour which has a harmful effect on an individual's emotional well being or development, causing mental distress undermining their self-esteem and affecting individual's quality of life.	Shouting, coercion, bullying, blaming, insulting, ignoring, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, depriving an individual of the right to choice	Loss of interest, withdrawn, anxious or depressed, frightened, avoiding eye contact, irritable, aggressive or challenging behaviour, unexplained sleep disturbance, self harm, refusing to

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
	Wilful infliction of mental suffering by a person in a position of trust and power.	and their privacy, dignity, self - expression, deprivation of contact, undermining self-esteem, isolation and over-dependence. Failure to provide a loving environment for a child.	eat, deliberate soiling, unusual weight gain or loss
Neglect Adults and Children	Failure of any person who has responsibility for the charge, care or custody of an adult at risk or child to provide the amount and type of care or treatment that a responsible person could be expected to provide.	Fail to meet basic needs including food, environment, access to health care and education, failure to provide for social needs.	Unwashed/ dirty appearance, clothes too small/big, untreated sores or infections, isolation.
Financial Adults	The unauthorised taking (theft), deprivation or misuse of any money, income, assets, funds, personal belongings or property or any resources of an adult at risk without their informed consent or authorisation.	Misuse of power of attorney or appointeeship. Money and possessions stolen, misuse or misappropriating money, valuables or property, possessions or benefits, undue pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, denying the adult at risk the right to access funds, unauthorised disposal of property or possessions, being asked to part with money on false pretences,	Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, Power of Attorney obtained and misused when a person lacks or does not lack mental capacity to understand, unexplained withdrawal of money with no benefits, person lacking goods or services that they can afford, extortionate demands for payments for services

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
Organisational Adults	<p>Involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide safe, appropriate and acceptable standards of service to adults at risk.</p> <p>Mainly relates to health and social care provision but aspects may be relevant to Church settings</p>	Lack of individualised care, inappropriate confinement or restriction, sensory deprivation, inappropriate use of rules, custom and practice	<p>Whistle blowing policy not in place and accessible, insufficient employees training and development.</p> <p>Organisational standards not meeting those laid down by regulatory bodies, service users not treated with dignity and respect, diverse needs not recognized and valued in terms of age, gender, disability, ethnic origin, race or sexual orientation, services not flexible</p>
Discriminatory Adults	Exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals.	Verbal abuse, harassment or similar treatment, unequal treatment, deliberate exclusion from services such as education, health, justice and access to services and protection, harmful or derisive attitudes, inappropriate use of language	Repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment and criminal justice
Modern Slavery	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.	<p>Adult or Child trafficked into UK or between places in UK for purpose of sexual abuse or labour.</p> <p>Adult or Child forced to work as domestic servant.</p> <p>Adult or child forced to work as sex worker, farm labourer, car cleaner.</p>	<p>Individual may not have their passport or Identity documents. They may not have access to or contact with friends and family.</p> <p>May never be left alone, live in poor conditions, not be able to leave of own free will. May have no access to funds.</p>

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
			May not know where they are or who they are with.
Self Neglect	A wide range of behaviour involving neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.	May not react to or appropriately fulfil needs for health care, food, warmth. May live in an environment that is an environmental or fire risk and not take any measure to reduce risk or inadequate measures.	Environment which is poorly maintained, dirty, animal infested, cramped to the degree that it places the individuals wellbeing at risk. May have untreated or inadequately treated physical health issues.
Domestic Violence	Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. Age range 16+	Includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence; Female Genital Mutilation; forced marriage.	Appears to be afraid of partner / of making own choices, behaves as though she/he deserves to be hurt or mistreated, low self-esteem or appear to be withdrawn, appears unable or unwilling to leave perpetrator, makes excuses for or condones the behaviour of the person alleged to have caused harm, blames abuse on themselves
Spiritual Abuse ⁶⁷ (not defined in Statutory Guidance)	Inappropriate use of religious belief or practice	The misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing or deliverance ministries which may result in various types of harm.	Could be any of the above.

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf

⁷ <https://thirtyoneeight.org/media/gbsj1haw/spiritualabusesummarydocument.pdf>

Some Additional Information:

Child Sexual Exploitation: All children and young people can be at risk of sexual exportation. This includes boys and girls of any age. This is a form of sexual abuse. Whilst young people can give consent to sexual acts from the age of 16 (so long as they have the capacity to do so) they continue to be a risk of sexual exploitation beyond their 16th birthday. **Any concern that a child or young person may be at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation must be reported immediately to Children's Social Care or the police.** Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Female Genital Mutilation: Female genital mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. It has been estimated that over 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the UK each year, and that 66,000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM. However, the true extent is unknown, due to the "hidden" nature of the crime. The girls may be taken to their countries of origin so that FGM can be carried out during the summer holidays, allowing them time to "heal" before they return to school. There are also worries that some girls may have FGM performed in the UK. Any concern that a child of adult who may be vulnerable may be at risk of FGM must be reported immediately to the relevant Local Authority or directly to police.

Terrorism and Extremism: Any person may become drawn into extremism or sympathy with such views and into terrorism. This will often happen through contacts made via the internet but a culture that supports this can develop in any community, group, school or faith organisation. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places duties on certain bodies, not including Faith Organisations (excepting where such an organisation runs a school or other relevant premises) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Everybody should be alert to any indication that a person or group may be developing or has developed an interest or ideology that may include harm to others. **Any concern related to this whether for a child or adult must be reported to the police without delay.**

Position of Trust: The Sexual Offences Act 2003 has been amended to clarify the meaning of a person in a “position of trust”. Under the new law, A has a position of trust in relation to B if they actually and knowingly coach, teach, train, supervise, or instruct B on a regular basis in a sport or a religion.

The age of consent for sexual activity in the UK rises from 16 years to 18 years where one person in a position of trust is involved. The implications of this change in law is to make it illegal for religious leaders and sports coaches to engage in sexual activity with those aged 16 and 17 years.



POLICY STATEMENT

Safeguarding Children and Young People and Adults

The Parish of Christ Church with St Mary's: (hereinafter referred to as 'the church' in the Policy Statement)

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; and
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have named Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) to work with the incumbent Revd Canon Simon Stevenette and the Parochial Church Council (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 in line with the Church of England Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance, 2021 and provide ongoing supervision, support and training.
- 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 Officer (DSO) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.

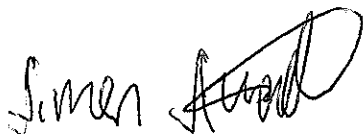
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- 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.

Policy and procedures

- A copy of this policy statement will be displayed permanently within the church and be available on the Parish website.
- Each worker with children and young people whether paid or voluntary will be given access to a full copy of the parish policy and procedure and associated Good Practice Guidance and will be expected to follow them.
- A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child or young person from the church or any other person associated with the church or community. It is also available on the Parish website.
- The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually by the PCC.

This policy must be read alongside the Good Practice Guidance relevant to the group a worker is involved with and with the Code of Conduct for church members.

Vicar



Revd Canon Simon Stevenette Date: 25/11/24

Churchwarden(s)

Sheila Wright

Simon Giles.

Code of Conduct for Church Members

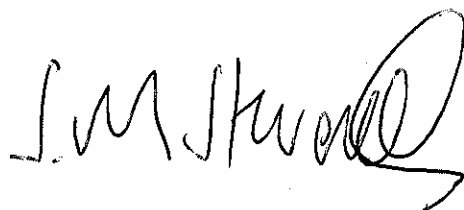
This code of behaviour should not only be seen as an important safeguarding measure but should also be about modelling positive patterns of Christian behaviour.

The following guidelines should be followed at all times, irrespective of circumstance:

- Follow the Church Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and associated Good Practice Guidelines at all times.
- Treat all children, young people and adults with respect and dignity. Acts of aggression, bullying or harassment are not acceptable.
- **Physical Contact:** Remember that not all children and adults will receive or express friendship in the same way. Encourage handshaking rather than hugging as a greeting with children, any physical contact with children should be child led. Be careful about what physical contact you have with adults and check whether they are happy with the contact.
- All control and discipline of children should only be given by parents and carers and without the use of physical punishment or any form of aggression. Unless the child's parents or carers have requested assistance with this. Speak to the Churchwarden if you are concerned about a child's behaviour. The Churchwarden, and/ or member of the Ministry Team or Parish Safeguarding Officer will speak with a parent to agree how a child can be supported with their behaviour if needed.
- A child's own parent or carer should undertake any personal care that a child needs.
- Do not respond to or encourage excessive attention seeking from children, but do inform your Parish Safeguarding Officer if you are concerned about a child's behaviour towards you.
- Children and young people are expected to be accompanied to church by their parents and carers. The exception being designated youth activities.
- Where children and young people attend church or church events without a parent or carer they will need to be made known to the relevant children and young people's workers who will follow the Good Practice guidance for working with children and young people and also follow the Policy for Unaccompanied Children.
- Adults who have not been authorised to work with children and young people should not approach lone children except in the case of emergency, instead going to find a children's or young people's worker.

- We do not engage in any of the following:
 - Invading the privacy of children, young people or adults when they are using the toilet.
 - Rough games involving physical contact between an adult and a child.
 - Discriminatory activities or games focused on sexual behaviour, body image or sexuality.
 - Making any comment which could be sexually suggestive about or to another person.
 - Scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing or rejecting a child or adult.
 - Giving personal gifts directly to children or young people.
 - Inappropriate use of social media, text or mobile devices. Please do not contact children and young people using these methods unless their parents/ carers are aware of this and the reason for it. This includes becoming 'friends' with children on Facebook.
 - Taking photographs of children or young people at church events unless you have been authorised to do so and have parental/ carer consent or the picture is of your own child only.
 - Drink alcohol (other than communion wine) or otherwise be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when responsible for children or young people on church premises.
 - Arrange to see a child outside of church unless this is with their parents/ carers express permission and, if you are a church volunteer, officer, staff member or minister, where this is in line with the Good Practice guidance.
 - Enter the space in which a children's or youth group is happening. Only authorised staff and volunteers should be involved.

Signed:



Date:

19th Dec
2024

Parish of Christ Church with St Mary's,
Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. We are committed to promoting and supporting environments which:

- ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse;
- protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse from actual or potential harm;
- recognise equality amongst people and within relationships;
- enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to appropriately and consistently.

We recognise that:

- all forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship;
- all survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- domestic abuse can occur in all communities;
- domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency;
- domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour;
- working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by:

In all our activities –

- valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

In our publicity –

- raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public and women-only areas of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

When concerns are raised –

- ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help;
- working with the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

In our care –

- ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;
- identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

If you have any concerns or need to talk to anyone, please contact

Revd Norma McKemey – norma@christchurchswindon.co.uk

Ailsa Palmer – ailsa@christchurchswindon.co.uk

Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse

Parish of Christ Church with St Mary's

Date adopted: 29th November 2021

Date reviewed 25th November 2024

Statutory guidance

Domestic Abuse: statutory guidance (accessible version)

Updated 13 April 2024

Box 2.1: Domestic Abuse Act 2021 – Part 1 – Definition of domestic abuse

Section 1: Definition of “domestic abuse”

- (1) This section defines “domestic abuse” for the purposes of this Act.
- (2) Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—
 - (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are “personally connected” to each other, and
 - (b) the behaviour is abusive.
- (3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—
 - (a) physical or sexual abuse
 - (b) violent or threatening behaviour
 - (c) controlling or coercive behaviour
 - (d) economic abuse (see subsection (4))
 - (e) psychological, emotional or other abuseand it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.
- (4) “Economic abuse” means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B’s ability to —
 - (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
 - (b) obtain goods or services
- (5) For the purposes of this Act, A’s behaviour may be behaviour “towards” B despite the fact that it consists of conduct directed at another person (for example, B’s child).
- (6) References in this Act to being abusive towards another person are to be read in accordance with this section.

Diocese of Bristol

The PCC of the Parish of Christ Church with St Mary's

Review Date 25th November 2024

Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders

- The PCC is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background. The PCC actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. It selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), [Parish Name] undertakes to comply fully with the code of practice¹ and to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
- The PCC undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- The PCC can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions about which it is legally entitled to know, that is, where a DBS certificate at standard or enhanced level can legally be requested. (i.e. where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended)
- The PCC can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process. The PCC also makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice and makes a copy available on request.
- An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- The PCC ensures that all those in Christ Church with St Mary's who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences; and also that they have received

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

Policy Date: 25/11/24

Version Number:2

Due for review: November 2025

appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

- At interview, or in a separate discussion, the PCC will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- The PCC undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Document Title	Social Media Policy
Document Number	11a
Author	Steve Cox
Reviewed by	Norma McKemey, Ailsa Palmer (Safeguarding Officers)
Approved by	Chris Smith, CC Site Operations Manager
Date of issue	19/01/2024
Version and Date revised	Issue 1 – 19/01/2024
Revisions made	Creation of the Social Media Policy – Issue 1

1.0 Definitions

2.0 Purpose and Scope

Social media use is governed by a number of laws. Equally, we want to maintain a positive reputation, and this is extremely important in delivering our work and engaging with the local community. The policy will help you understand how to use social media effectively and well; and avoid problems.

This policy relates to all social media channels and websites operated by Christ Church and the Community Centre, and all groups who represent Christ Church.

3.0 Requirements for a Social Media Policy

3.1 The Law

Use of social media is covered by a number of UK laws and social media has no national boundaries, so your posts may well be read in other countries. As a very simple guide, you may be breaking the law, if you post (or potentially repost) anything that may fall into any of the following categories:

- Harassment – not leaving someone alone.
- Menacing behaviour – writing something that may scare someone.
- Threatening behaviour – making someone believe that you were going to hurt them.
- Grossly offensive comments – making deeply unpleasant comments about a sensitive issue.
- Libel - a post is potentially libellous, if it is a false statement and may damage someone's reputation.
- Defamation - users may be sued for defamation if they post an unsubstantiated rumour about someone.

- Data protection – breaching an individual's right to privacy.
- Copyright – posting material without permission that is owned by another person or organisation.

3.2 Church of England Safeguarding Policies

We also have an obligation to employ a social media policy which includes the safeguarding principles detailed in the Church of England Safeguarding policies.

The following is from section 12 – Use of Social Media, from the Parish Safeguarding Handbook and forms the basis of our social media policy:

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 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.*

The role of the PCC

The PCC must approve the use of social media and mobile phones by the church. Where there are Facebook or similar online groups set up on the church's behalf, the PCC must ensure there is a named person to whom all workers are accountable. The named person must be a church officer and should be aware of the account name and password so that they can at any time log on to the account and monitor the communications. The named person should be proactive in fulfilling this role.

Communications must be shared with the named person. Church officers remain bound by professional rules of confidentiality. Where there is concern that a young person or adult is at risk of abuse, or they themselves pose a risk of abuse to others, safeguarding procedures must always be followed.

4.0 Guidance

4.1 Guidance for church officers

The Church of England Safeguarding policies offer the following guidelines on the use of social media and online interactions:

Do:

- *Have your eyes open and be vigilant.*
- *Maintain the upmost integrity – honesty, transparency, consistency and accountability are key. Treat online communication with children, young people and adults as you would communication that is face-to-face. Always maintain the same level of confidentiality.*
- *Report any safeguarding concerns that arise on social media to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSA).*
- *Always assume that everything you write is permanent and may be viewed by anyone at any time; and that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues or the church. Always think before you post.*
- *Draw clear boundaries around your social media usage associated with your private life and your use of different social media for public ministry. Keep church account/s and profiles separate from your personal social media account/s e.g. only use a Facebook page, Twitter or blogs for public ministry, while keeping a separate Facebook profile for private life.*
- *Always ask parents/carers for written consent to:*
 - *Use and store photographs of children/young people from activities or events in official church publications, or on the church's social media, website and displays.*
 - *Use telephone, text message, email and other messaging services to communicate with young people.*
 - *Allow young people to connect to the church's social media pages.*
- *Only use an approved church/ministry account to communicate with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. The named person should be able to access this and review conversations, and the account should be visible to young people and their parents. Young people must be made aware that any communication will be viewed by all users. Save any messages and threads through social networking sites, so that you can provide evidence to the named person of your exchange when required.*
- *Avoid one-to-one communication with a child or young person.*
- *Use clear and unambiguous language in all communications and avoid abbreviations that could be misinterpreted.*
- *Save and download to hard copy any inappropriate material received through social networking sites or other electronic means and show immediately to the named person, PSO, incumbent or,*

if appropriate, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

- *Use passwords and log off promptly after use to ensure that nobody else can use social media pretending to be you.*

Do not:

- *Use a personal Facebook or any other social media account in your work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.*
- *Add children, young people or vulnerable adults as friends on your personal accounts.*
- *Facebook stalk (i.e. dig through people's Facebook pages to find out about them).*
- *Say anything on social media that you would not be happy saying in a public meeting, to someone's face, writing in a local newspaper or on headed notepaper.*
- *Comment on photos or posts, or share content, unless appropriate to your church role.*
- *Use visual media (e.g. Skype, Facetime) for one-to-one conversations with young people – use only in group settings.*

In particular, do not allow content to contain or share links to other sites that contain:

- *Libellous, defamatory, bullying or harassing statements.*
- *Breaches of copyright and data protection.*
- *Material of an illegal nature.*
- *Offensive sexual or abusive references.*
- *Inappropriate language.*
- *Anything which may be harmful to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or which may bring the church into disrepute or compromise its reputation.*

Mobile phones

Wherever possible, church officers should be supplied with a mobile phone dedicated for work purposes. This allows for the phone to be switched off outside working hours, and for usage to be accountable. This means that the work phone number is the only number that young people or adults are given, and the church officer's personal number can remain private. Texts or conversations that raise concerns should be saved and passed on to the named person or the PSO/incumbent (or if unavailable the DSA).

Taken from <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf> pages 47-51, accessed 20/11/2023.

4.2 The Church of England Social Media Community Guidelines

The Church of England has published social media community guidelines, which should form the overarching culture of our online presence and have been adapted and form part of this social media policy. The guidelines are as follows:

Our social media community guidelines

Our community guidelines have been created to encourage conversations that reflect our values. They apply to all content posted on the social media accounts run by Christ Church and the Community Centre.

Social media is a very public way of enabling us as Christians to live out our calling to share the good news of Jesus Christ. One of its many joys is that it is immediate, interactive, conversational and open-ended. This opportunity comes with a number of downsides if users do not apply the same common sense, kindness and sound judgment that we would use in a face-to-face encounter.

While written specifically for all users who engage with the Church of England's and Archbishops' national social media channels, these guidelines are built on universal principles. They are a resource for Christians, people of other faiths and people of no faith. Dioceses and local churches across the Church of England are welcome and encouraged to adopt them.

By engaging with the Christ Church and Community Centre's social media accounts, you agree to:

Be safe. The safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults must be maintained. If you have any concerns, ask a diocesan safeguarding adviser.

Be respectful. Do not post or share content that is sexually explicit, inflammatory, hateful, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful.

Be kind. Treat others how you would wish to be treated and assume the best in people. If you have a criticism or critique to make, consider not just whether you would say it in person, but the tone you would use.

Be honest. Don't mislead people about who you are.

Take responsibility. You are accountable for the things you do, say and write. Text and images shared can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place. If you're not sure, don't post it.

Be a good ambassador. Personal and professional life can easily become blurred online so think before you post.

Disagree well. Some conversations can be places of robust disagreement and it's important we apply our values in the way we express them.

Credit others. Acknowledge the work of others. Respect copyright and always credit where it is due. Be careful not to release sensitive or confidential information and always question the source of any content you are considering amplifying.

Follow the rules. Abide by the terms and conditions of the various social media platforms themselves. If you see a comment that you believe breaks their policies, then please report it to the respective company.

How will we respond to people who breach our social media community guidelines?

The Christ Church's and Community Centre' Communications teams may take action if they receive complaints or spot inappropriate, unsuitable or offensive material posted to the social media accounts. This may include deleting comments, blocking users or reporting comments as appropriate.

Taken from <https://www.churchofengland.org/terms-and-conditions/our-social-media-community-guidelines>, accessed 20/11/2023.

4.3 The Church of England's Digital Charter

As well as the Social Media Community Guidelines, the Church of England has also published a Digital Charter. This is a voluntary pledge that the Church is encouraging individual Christians as well as churches to sign to help make social media and the web more widely positive places for conversations to happen. Christ Church signed up for this pledge on 18/01/2024 and the pledge forms part of this social media policy.

The Digital Charter is outlined below:

The digital landscape has changed so much in the last few years and will continue to do so as technology develops. It's important to think about how the conversations we're having can help change someone's newsfeed for the better.

What does it look like to be a Christian online? Everyone's engagement is different. Whether you're a member of clergy using Twitter or a churchgoer replying to the comments on a blog, we all have different views, histories and areas of interest that will affect how we perceive things, and our responses to those events. The comments we make can reach thousands and even millions of people both in this country and around the world very quickly.

However, there are a number of ways we can make the digital world as loving and generous as we would when speaking face to face:

Truth - *we should hold ourselves to high ideals of checking that what we post online is fair and factual.*

Kindness - *we are all different and that makes the world an interesting place – and at times a challenging one. Think the best of people, whether they share our views or are speaking against them and aim to be constructive in the way we engage.*

Welcome - *in the language we use and the way we interact. It's easy for Christians to speak in another language using words that those outside the Church might not relate to.*

Inspiration - *we are called to be witnesses of our faith and to use social media in a way that genuinely engages others.*

Togetherness - *we are one Church and other members of this Church are our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is crucial we treat those around us in this way.*

Safeguarding - *if you have any concerns about the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults, please contact the relevant diocesan safeguarding adviser.*

Agree to the Church's and Archbishops' social media guidelines.

The above was taken from <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-charter>, accessed 20/11/2023.

4.4 Meaning

Remember that the majority of our communication is through body language and voice tone/loudness etc, and the amount of written text in social media can be limited, so meaning can easily be lost. What may appear light-hearted and funny to you, may potentially come across very differently on social media.

Take into account potential social and/or cultural differences in your audience who may be more sensitive to particular issues or subjects than the wider population.

4.5 Abusive Posts

A troll is someone who intentionally causes upset, harm, or offence by provoking people online. Be careful not to confuse a troll with someone who is critical and/or upset. There will be people who have valid concerns or have a genuine complaint that may come across as angry and irate. Look at their

social media to see what they post and how they reply. Trolls often have a profile picture that is an object, rather than a person, or no profile image at all.

People who are abusive are usually trying to provoke a reaction from you, so don't give them what they want. Besides, you are unlikely to convince them they are wrong. Tweet or post separately to address the issue. You can also adjust your settings to not allow replies, use the relevant abuse reporting system, block them and, if you think they are committing a crime, report them to the police. Here's a [useful flow chart](#) on how to respond to different types of posts.

4.6 Moderation of Posts on Our Social Media

Open and honest debate can help to address divisions and just because we don't agree with something, doesn't necessarily mean that we would remove it. For example, critical comments about our work are rare but, whilst we always respond in a balanced and measured way, we do not remove these, even when we do not necessarily agree with them, subject to the guidelines below.

The community has a diversity of views, some strongly held. There is nothing wrong in holding strong views, but that does not automatically make alternative views offensive. In general, as long as a post does not break the law, is a genuine contribution to a debate and is not offensive, we would not usually remove it. Specifically, we will take down any post that falls into the categories below:

- Anything we believe may fall into any of the categories in the section above titled 'The Law'.
- We would remove any post that contained views that we feel the majority of reasonable people would consider to be offensive, including the use of 'swear words' normally considered offensive, and derogatory comments about an individual or organisation.

We may also block those posting such material and/or report the issue to the relevant authorities.

4.7 Take Down Process

Authority to remove posts has been delegated, as follows:

- Immediate take-down of posts that are obviously unacceptable – the Church Officer (a PCC member) responsible for continuous monitoring of all social media accounts, the Site Operations Manager, the Communications Assistant, or another member of staff with social media account access.
- Takedown of posts that may be unacceptable – the Church Officer (a PCC member) responsible for continuous monitoring of all social media accounts, the Site Operations Manager, or the Communications Assistant.

Any request to take down a post is to be managed using our complaints (or other) policy.

Before a post is taken down, screenshot or otherwise record the post to keep a record in case it is needed for evidence.

5.0 Other relevant documentation

Christ Church has existing documentation in place that deals with safeguarding and consent in relation to filming and photography in the church and the community centre, and site. These should be complied with when posting photographs and films to social media and website blog posts. The relevant documents include, but are not limited to the list below:

- Social Media Register
- 11 – Safeguarding Policy
- Media Consent Form
- Photography and Filming in Church Privacy Notice

6.0 Distribution

This policy is to be brought to the attention of staff and volunteers on appointment, and relevant elements are included in group moderation statements, editorial policies, and staff handbook, as appropriate.

7.0 Review

This policy should be reviewed annually, or sooner if new guidance is given by the Church of England, to keep it up to date with all relevant legislation and best practices, and changes in the Social Media Register as detailed in Appendix A.

Appendix A: Social Media Register

The following is a complete list of all social media channels and websites used for communications for Christ Church and the Community Centre as at 18/01/2024. The document can be accessed at: "C:\Users\Christ Church\Christ Church Swindon(1)\CC@CC Management - General\Communications\Social Media Register.pdf"

Social Media and Website Channels to be monitored by Church Officer for Christ Church's Social Media Policy

Social Media Platform	Area	Address	Handle @	hashtag #	Intended Audience	Intended Content
Christ Church						
Facebook	Christ Church	https://www.facebook.com/Christchurchswindon	Christchurchswindon	#ChristChurchSwindon	Church congregation, other churches, local community	Religious, Church, Events, Notices
Twitter	Christ Church	https://twitter.com/CCNewsdesk	CCNewsdesk	#ChristChurchSwindon	Church congregation, other churches, local community	Church news and events
Twitter	Christ Church	https://twitter.com/pray_for_me	pray_for_me	#ChristChurchSwindon	Anybody	Prayer requests
Instagram	Christ Church	https://www.instagram.com/christchurchswindon/	christchurchswindon	#ChristChurchSwindon	Church congregation, local community, younger reach	Church news and events
LinkedIn	Christ Church	https://www.linkedin.com/company/christchurchswindon	christchurch-swindon	#ChristChurchSwindon	Local and business communities	Church news and events, jobs
Youtube	Christ Church	https://www.youtube.com/@Christchurchswindon1	Christchurchswindon1	#ChristChurchSwindon	Church congregation, homebound, curious	Livestream services, weekly update videos
A Church Near You Website	Christ Church	https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11861/		#ChristChurchSwindon	Church congregation	Church news and events
Christ Church Website	Christ Church	https://www.christchurchswindon.co.uk/blog/			Church congregation, local community, general public	Everything about Christ Church
Christ Church Link Tree	Christ Church	https://linktr.ee/christchurchswindon	christchurchswindon		Church congregation, local community, general public	Website links for easy navigation from social media channels
Support Us Link Tree	Christ Church	https://linktr.ee/supportchristchurchswindon	supportchristchurchswindon		Church congregation, local community, general public	A list of all the different ways that people can support us
Email List (MailChimp)	Christ Church	https://www.christchurchswindon.co.uk/blog/communicate/			Church congregation, subscribers	Church news and events
Community Centre						
Facebook	Community Centre	https://www.facebook.com/CCCCSwindon/	CCCCSwindon	#CCCCSwindon	Local community, church congregation, general public	Community Centre news and events
Twitter	Community Centre	https://twitter.com/CCCCSwindon	CCCCSwindon	#CCCCSwindon	Local community, church congregation, general public	Community Centre news and events
Instagram	Community Centre	https://www.instagram.com/	ccccswindon	#CCCCSwindon	Local community, church congregation, general public	Community Centre news and events
Website	Community Centre	https://ccccswindon.co.uk/		#CCCCSwindon	Local community, church congregation, general public	Info, bookings, news, events, tickets
Community Centre Link Tree	Community Centre	https://linktr.ee/communitycentrechristchurch	communitycentrechristchurch		Local community, church congregation, general public	Website links for easy navigation from social media channels
Old Town Beer Festival						
Facebook	Old Town Beer Festival	https://www.facebook.com/OldTownBeerFestival/	OldTownBeerFestival	#OldTownBeerFestival	Local community, beer lovers, sponsors, church friends	Beer festival news and other church events
Instagram	Old Town Beer Festival	https://www.instagram.com/	oldtownbeerfestival	#OldTownBeerFestival	Local community, beer lovers, sponsors, church friends	Beer festival news and other church events
Website	Old Town Beer Festival	https://oldtownbeerfestival.com			Local community, beer lovers, sponsors, church friends	Info, news, sponsorship, ticket funnel
Beer Festival Link Tree	Old Town Beer Festival	https://linktr.ee/oldtownbeerfestival.com	oldtownbeerfestival		Local community, beer lovers, sponsors, church friends	Website links for easy navigation from social media channels
Email List (MailChimp)	Old Town Beer Festival	https://oldtownbeerfestival.us12.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=31b40f4c6891f727bc86d6eae&id=44797507d7			Local community, beer lovers, sponsors, church friends	Beer festival news, competition results, feedback surveys
Autumn Fayre						
Facebook	Autumn Fayre	https://www.facebook.com/oldtownautumnfayre/	oldtownautumnfayre	#oldtownautumnfayre	Local community, charities, church friends	Autumn Fayre news and other church events
Autumn Fayre Link Tree	Autumn Fayre	https://linktr.ee/oldtownautumnfayre	oldtownautumnfayre		Local community, charities, church friends	Website links for easy navigation from social media channels
Administration Only						
Facebook	Social Media Admin	https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090977882117	Christ Church Comms	NA	None	For access and management only, not used for posting
Instagram	Social Media Admin	https://www.instagram.com/christchurchcomms/	Christ Church Comms	NA	None	For access and management only, not used for posting

Appendix B: Resources

7.1 Online Safeguarding

[Charity Commission](#): Managing online risk.

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

[NCVO](#): Online safeguarding resources.

[Digi Safe](#): Step-by-step digital safeguarding guide.

7.2 Young People

[Facebook](#): Your child's online safety.

[National Youth Agency](#): Safeguarding & Risk Management Hub.

[NCPCC Learning](#): Protecting children from online abuse.

[NSPCC Learning](#): Social media and online safety.

7.3 Church of England Resources

Parish Safeguarding Handbook:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

Social Media Community Guidelines:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/terms-and-conditions/our-social-media-community-guidelines>

Digital Charter:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-charter>

7.4 A Guide to Answering People on Social Media

Responding to posts and questions on social media:

<https://commscreatives.com/2014/05/29/a-quick-guide-to-answering-people-who-use-social-media-to-talk-to-your-organisation/>

7.5 Social Media Policy Examples

<https://www.charityexcellence.co.uk/Home/ResourceHub>