

St George's Church, Fatfield

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

For Children, Young people and Vulnerable adults

Drawing from Promoting a Safer Church 2017 and Durham Diocesan model policy

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SECTION 1

CHURCH DETAILS:

Name of Church: St George's Church, Fatfield

Address: Vigo Lane, Harraton, Washington, NE38 9AH

Telephone No. 0191 415 4200

Email: office@stgeorgesfatfield.org.uk

Web Site: www.stgeorgesfatfield.org.uk

Denomination: Church of England

Charity No. 1190509

Insurance Company: Ecclesiastical

The Policy applies to all activities undertaken on behalf of the Church involving Children and vulnerable adults.

OUR COMMITMENT

St George's Church PCC (as trustees) recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

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

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

As a PCC, we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy work for the benefit and protection of children and vulnerable adults, those working with them and this Church Council in accordance with statutory guidance.

We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the Church of England Safeguarding guidelines and the safeguarding policy and guidance of Durham Diocese.

The PCC undertakes to:

- ï Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- ï Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its worker/volunteers and will annually review the operational guidelines attached.
- ï Ensure as far as possible that the premises hired meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- ï Support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and young people.
- ï Create a safe and caring place for all.
- ï Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- ï 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.

- ï Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- ï Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- ï Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- ï 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.
- ï Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- ï 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.
- ï Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed regularly.
- ï Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

SECTION 2

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should a worker/volunteer carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. The following procedures should be carried out:

- ï The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Doug Green (hereafter the "**Safeguarding Co-ordinator**") who is nominated by the PCC to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- ï In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to Leslie Stevens (hereafter the "**Deputy**"). If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Diocesan Safeguarding officer Beth Miller:
 - ï Mobile: 07968034075
 - ï Email: beth@bethmillerisw.co.uk
- ï the local Children's Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is tel. 0191 566 1500. The out of hours emergency number is tel. 0191 528 9110.
- ï Sunderland Children's Safeguarding Board telephone number (office hours) is tel. 0191 520 5560. The out of hours emergency number is tel. 0191 520 5552

- ï The Police Child Protection Team telephone number is tel. 101 ext 66264, 66265 or 66266
- ï Where required the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company and the Vicar/ Church Wardens.
- ï Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of concern must be completed, kept secure and confidential, and passed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- ï Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Diocese.
- ï The PCC will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- ï It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from the diocese or other agency such as CCPAS, although The PCC hope that members of the Church will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the PCC demonstrates its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/ Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

SECTION 3

PREVENTION

Safe recruitment

The PCC will ensure all workers/volunteers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- ï There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- ï Those applying have completed an application form
- ï Those short listed have been interviewed
- ï Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- ï Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate

- ī A criminal records disclosure has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
 - ī Qualifications where relevant have been verified
 - ī Training is provided for the successful applicant if necessary
 - ī The applicant completes a probationary period
 - ī The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy, and acknowledged receipt of, and knows how to report concerns.
- ī When a post is applied for the applicant has access to the following:
 - ī Statement of commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults
 - ī Safeguarding Policy
 - ī Safer Recruitment Policy
 - ī Whistleblowing Policy
 - ī Recruitment of Ex Offenders Policy
 - ī Role description and person specification
 - ī The selection procedure for the post
 - ī A privacy notice

Application Form

A standard application form is used that requires the following information:

- ī Personal details.
- ī Qualifications and training where appropriate.
- ī Personal statement from the applicant indicating the skills and attributes they believe they bring to the role.
- ī Confidential declaration form if role requires DBS check.
- ī Details of referees.
- ī Full history and description of work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults whether paid or voluntary with dates. With an explanation for any gaps. Full history and description of church involvement where it involves work with children, young people and vulnerable adults with dates. With an explanation for any gaps.

Shortlisting

- ī Will be completed by the responsible person and at least one other person
- ī Only people who meet all the essential criteria on the person specification should be interviewed even if there is only one candidate
- ī Any gaps in history will be noted and further explored

Interviews

- ī Are completed by the responsible person and at least one other person
- ī Only people who meet all the essential criteria on the person specification can be

interviewed even if there is only one candidate

- ï Any gaps in history will be noted and further explored

Pre-appointment Checks

- ï If the applicant has worked/volunteered with children, young people or vulnerable adults in the last two years a reference from that organisation **will be** requested

Appointment

- ï All volunteers will be issued with a volunteer agreement.
- ï All volunteers will receive written statements of the policies and procedures relating to safeguarding including the identity and responsibilities of those within the parish who have designated safeguarding responsibilities
- ï All volunteers will be given information regarding safe practice and standards of conduct and behaviour expected.
- ï All volunteers will be given any other procedures or documentation relevant to the appointment.
- ï All volunteers will be given must sign to say they have received the above, they have understood it and agree to adhere to it.

Induction

- ï All volunteers will be undergo an induction process appropriate to the role being undertaken (Induction Checklist proforma)

Settling in Period

- ï All volunteers will have a settling in period during which they meet regularly with the responsible person. Safeguarding (processes, understanding and behaviours) will form a core part of these meetings.

On -going support

- ï Regular meetings will continue with the responsible person (or someone to whom this task has been delegated). Safeguarding will form a core part of these meetings. (Volunteer Support Meeting Agenda template)

Record Keeping

- ï Records will be kept.

Management of Worker/Volunteers – Codes of Conduct

As a PCC we are committed to supporting all workers/volunteers and

ensuring they receive support and supervision. All worker/volunteers have been issued with a Good Practice Guide and this Safeguarding Policy. The PCC undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

SECTION 4

PASTORAL CARE

Supporting those Affected by Abuse

The PCC is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation.

Working with Offenders

When someone attending the Church is known to have abused someone, the PCC will ensure proper supervision is available for the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

SECTION 5

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

As a Church working with children and young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable

worker/volunteers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

As well as this Safeguarding Policy we also have specific guidelines for every activity we are involved in including Risk Assessments, First Aid, Adult to Child Ratios, Keeping Records, Accidents, Working with Disruptive children and Young People, Anti-Bullying Policy and Practice, Outings and Tobacco and Alcohol. Full diocesan Safe & Secure document is available online or in the church office.

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children and young people and vulnerable adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines regarding our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children, young people and vulnerable adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

APPENDIX 1

PCC Safeguarding Statement

The PCC recognises the importance of its ministry/work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The following statement was agreed by the PCC on:

The Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- ï We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people and vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- ï We believe every person should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children and vulnerable adults we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- ï All children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- ï We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

We are committed to:

- ï Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations.
- ï Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ï Implementing the requirements of legislation regarding people with disabilities.
- ï Maintain a register of children/youth leaders authorised by the Church Council and ensure that worker/volunteers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- ï Carefully select and train all leaders and helpers with access to children, young people and vulnerable adults, maintaining personal disclosures and necessary reference records.
- ï Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- ï Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- ï Supporting the safeguarding co-ordinator/s in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect those affected.

- ï Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by the Church.
- ï Supporting parents and families.
- ï Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults and provide them a welcoming environment in the life of the church.
- ï Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- ï Maintain records of Information and Permission forms, and Health and Parents' Consent forms and should authorise children's and youth programmes and activities carried out on behalf of the church Council on a regular basis.
- ï Supporting all in the Church affected by abuse.
- ï Adopting and following the CofE and Durham Diocesan safeguarding standards available from Durham Diocese.
- ï Ensure that groups who are not part of the Church but hire Church Halls for activities are asked if they have DBS Checks, adequate Insurance and a Safeguarding Policy and to see evidence of this. If the group does not have a Safeguarding Policy they would be asked to adopt the Diocesan policy.
- ï Create a safe and caring place for all.
- ï Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- ï 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.
- ï Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- ï Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- ï Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- ï 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.
- ï Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- ï 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.
- ï Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed regularly.
- ï Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

We recognise:

- ï Children's Social Services (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child.

- i Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- ii Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.

We will review this statement, policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult ,then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this place of worship/organisation.

Safeguarding Coordinator – Doug Green
 Contact number - 07919235623

Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator – Leslie Stevens

Diocesan Safeguarding officer Beth Miller: Mobile: 07968 034075
 Email: beth@bethmillerisw.co.uk

Local Children’s Social Services office (office hours) : 0191 566 1500.
 The out of hours emergency number is tel. 0191 528 9110.

Sunderland Children's Safeguarding Board telephone number (office hours) is tel. 0191 520 5560. The out of hours emergency number is tel. 0191 520 5552
 The Police Child Protection Team: 101 ext 66264, 66265 or 66266

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the Church Office

Signed

Name Douglas
 Green.....

Date28/06/25.....

Signed

Name

Date

Signed

Name

Date

.....

Appendix 2

Induction

Toolkit Template: Volunteer Induction Checklist

Activity	When	Who	Date completed
Initial meeting with person to whom individual is responsible			
Welcome and meet the team			
Location tour as appropriate			
Review of safeguarding policies, procedures and code of conduct			
Review of health & safety policy and procedures, including fire training			
Review of other relevant policies, procedures and guidelines for the body and/or role			
Safeguarding training identified and booked in			
Anything else specific to Church body and/or role			
Induction Completed			
Volunteer Signed:			
Responsible Person Signed:			

Appendix 3

Ongoing Support, Accountability, Oversight & Supervision

This is a simple agenda template that can be used for support meetings with volunteers.

Volunteer Support Meeting Agenda	
Name of Volunteer:	Name of Responsible Person:
1. Action points from last time	
2. What has the volunteer been doing since the last meeting?	
3. What's gone well? What hasn't gone so well? This is also a chance for the responsible person to talk about the volunteer's work, give positive feedback as well as an opportunity to raise any minor problems or issues if necessary.	
4. What help or support does the volunteer need?	
5. Safeguarding matters?	
6. Development/motivation Such meetings can be used to gauge whether the volunteer is still getting what they were looking for from the volunteer role; they may benefit from a minor change in their tasks or a fresh challenge	
7. Action points for next time	

Reviewed 4th June 2025 – approved by PCC

