



ST NICOLAS, GREAT BOOKHAM

Building Faith in the Community

St Nicolas Great Bookham

Policy or Procedure	Parish Safeguarding Procedure		
Effective Date	2024	Version Number	3.0
Approved by	St Nicolas PCC	Approval date	Nov 2024
Review Date	2025		

Introduction:

St Nicolas, Great Bookham is committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of people within our church community and aims to provide a safe, happy and supportive environment where everybody can grow in faith.

Our **Statement of Safeguarding Policy** confirms that we have adopted the national Church of England policy statement for Safeguarding (**Promoting a Safer Church - 2017**) and the supporting **Policy and Practice Guidance** which has been approved by the House of Bishops. The **Parish Safeguarding Handbook** (2018) details the specific requirements for parishes. Our local Parish Safeguarding documents and procedures as well as links to the national church documents are available on the Safeguarding pages of our church website. Copies of our Statement of Safeguarding Policy will be displayed in each church building.

This document details the local procedures and processes, implemented to comply with the national church guidance.

Purpose and scope:

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This procedure (and all related safeguarding policies and procedures) applies to all who are involved in church activities or work for our church, including clergy, employees and volunteers. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all, but particularly for the care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults (*see note*).

This procedure aims to establish a clear framework for the management of safeguarding in our church and in particular for those entrusted with the care of children and vulnerable adults. It should give confidence to those who act on behalf of the church when action needs to be taken.

This procedure also applies to organisations and groups which hire our buildings with written agreement to operate under the church safeguarding policy

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Note: The term “vulnerable adult” is defined in National Law (the Care Act 2014) and Church Law. National Law applies to those with a care and support need (which may be provided by a local authority). Church Law uses a wider definition, recognising that people may become vulnerable and unable to protect themselves at certain times and will also move in and out of being vulnerable at various points in their life.

Related Parish policies, procedures, and other documents (Diocese and Local Parish level):

- Parish Statement of Safeguarding Policy (National template, updated annually)
- Parish Safer Recruitment Procedure (and associated templates)
- St Nicolas (activity) Risk Assessment form
- Church letting policy (and associated booking forms)

Management of Safeguarding and Safeguarding Representatives

St Nicolas PCC will appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and a PCC Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where the PSO is not a member of the PCC. The PSO will ideally be supported by a Children’s Safeguarding Champion, who would work with the Family and Children team, and a DBS Facilitator.

Safeguarding governance and administration at St Nicolas will be supported by the use of an online administration and governance tool – the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard . The Dashboard database will be maintained by the PSO (with support from the DSL) and facilitate provision of compliance reports and safeguarding action plans to aid PCC oversight of Safeguarding.

Safeguarding Records including details of Safeguarding training and any incidents or concerns will be stored securely by the PSO on behalf of the Incumbent.

Safeguarding will be a standing agenda item for every PCC meeting.

The PCC, supported by the PSO and DSL, will promote and encourage understanding of and adherence to Safeguarding principles and practice within our church.

Roles and Role Descriptions (detailing safeguarding requirements) for Paid workers and Volunteers

- All church roles (paid or voluntary) will have a role description based on an approved template. Our Church’s commitment to safeguarding and safeguarding learning will be highlighted.
- New role descriptions will be created when the need for a new role is identified and these will be approved by the Standing Committee on behalf of the PCC, once a safeguarding assessment has been carried out by the PSO.
- Roles will not be created for specific people and will always be advertised, in line with the process detailed in our Parish Safer Recruitment Procedure.
- For all roles, there will be an indication of the person responsible for recruitment, appointment, support, and ongoing oversight of the role which will ensure that where safeguarding considerations are relevant, they are understood and discussed.

- For each role, an assessment will have been done to establish and define the level and nature of contact with children, young people, and vulnerable adults that the role has, so that there is clarity on the safeguarding dimensions, issues, and risks.
- Where a role is identified as one that engages in work with children or vulnerable adults on a regular basis, DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) and safeguarding training requirements will be highlighted
- Where a role does not engage in work with children or vulnerable adults on a regular basis, an awareness of safeguarding should be encouraged but no safeguarding checks or training will be specified. An exception to this rule applies to the role of a PCC members who also act as charity trustees. DBS checks will be undertaken as a requirement of being a charity trustee and not because PCC members roles require them to engage in regular activity with children or vulnerable adults. PCC members are also required to complete safeguarding training.
- All role descriptions will be reviewed every 3 years
- When a role changes, a revised role description should be produced and a new review of safeguarding considerations needs to be done.

Recruitment of Paid workers and Volunteers

All those who undertake work with children or vulnerable adults on a regular basis will be recruited according to **Parish Safeguarding Safer Recruitment Procedure (based on the national church Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance)** and will be required to complete the recruitment processes and paperwork defined in that procedure e.g., **Confidential Self declaration form** and **DBS checks**

The Parish Safer Recruitment processes apply to the following roles and activities:

Those regularly involved in Children's activities, groups, events	Those regularly involved in Vulnerable Adults activities, groups, events
<i>Active Clergy and Licenced Lay Ministers, including those serving under 'Permission to Officiate' (PTO)*</i>	<i>Active Clergy and Licenced Lay Ministers, including those serving under 'Permission to Officiate' (PTO)*</i>
<i>Other Worship leaders/ Occasional Preachers</i>	<i>Other Worship leaders/ Occasional Preachers</i>
<i>Youth workers</i>	<i>Senior Servers</i>
	<i>Support Group members or other individuals (who have responsibility for teaching, training, caring or supervising)</i>
<i>All Children's group workers</i>	<i>Pastoral Care workers (including Bereavement and Baptism teams)</i>
<i>School and youth organisation visitors</i>	<i>Home group or course leaders (who have responsibility for teaching, training, caring or supervising)</i>
<i>Leaders of Church Choir or Music Groups (who have responsibility for teaching, training, caring or supervising)</i>	<i>Leaders of Church Choir or Music Groups (who have responsibility for teaching, training, caring or supervising)</i>
	<i>Leaders of "Drop in" or "open house" coffee/social events</i>

<i>Parish Safeguarding Officer (due to their advisory/management role)</i>	<i>Parish Safeguarding Officer (due to their advisory/management role)</i>
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*Handled by Diocese on our behalf

Any new roles which are unsupervised roles and have responsibility for *teaching, training, caring or supervising* children or vulnerable adults (or those who supervise/train/guide the workers in those roles) on a regular basis are automatically added to this list.

Parents accompanying their own children and staying to help Children's group leaders at a one-off event are not working in a role and do not require safer recruitment or DBS checks.

All those appointed to the above roles will be made aware of Parish Safeguarding Procedure, the National Safeguarding Policies and the practice guidance contained in the **Parish Safeguarding Handbook**. They will be supported to receive the appropriate Diocesan safeguarding training.

Safeguarding Training

The Diocese provides a training matrix which identifies the training requirements for different church roles. Safeguarding training requirements will be identified in Role descriptions and all core training must be refreshed every 3 years at the highest level.

Those who require safeguarding training and fail to complete core training within a reasonable timeframe (3-6 months) will not be able to continue in their role.

DBS Checks

DBS checks will only be undertaken when they are relevant to a role. DBS checks are one of the key tools used prior to commencing a new role alongside safer recruitment checks. As a DBS check is only a "snapshot" of information at the time of the check, the training, education, and constant reinforcing of safeguarding standards are the stronger tools to prevent safeguarding incidents. The majority of clergy and volunteer posts working with children or vulnerable adults on a regular basis will require enhanced DBS checks as part of their recruitment and appointment process. PCC members will require enhanced checks in their role as a charity trustee. The DBS process is supported and facilitated by the Diocese. DBS checks will be repeated every 3 years for enhanced (or barred) or sooner if an individual moves to a new post. Completion of a new Confidential Declaration Form should be requested when DBS is renewed.

Visibility of Safeguarding

The Parish Statement of Safeguarding Policy and contact numbers for local and national helplines will be displayed in the church, church room and pastoral centre. Suitable safeguarding notices, news and updates will be added to the weekly notices sheet and church magazine to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities and arrangements remain visible to all.

Approval of Church activities, Activity Risk Assessments and Safer working practices

All church activities require a formal approval. Safeguarding issues must be considered as part of the activity risk assessment process, in advance of any church activities taking place.

When carrying out a risk assessment, the organisers of any activities for children or adults (within church buildings or in other locations but carried out on behalf of the church) should follow the detailed guidance in the ***Safer Environment and Activities*** and the ***Code of Safer Working Practice*** sections of in the ***House of Bishop's Policy and Practice Guidance*** and summarised in the ***Parish Safeguarding Handbook*** (hard copies of which are available from the PSO)

Lone Working

Those who act on behalf of the Church should not meet or work alone with a child or vulnerable adult where the activity cannot be seen unless this is necessary for pastoral reasons, in which case a written note of this will be made and kept, noting date, time and place of visit.

Hire of Church Premises

All those hiring or using a church building will be required to sign a copy of the church's booking agreement and a declaration that they have read and understood the Parish Statement of Safeguarding policy and Safeguarding Procedure, or that they agree to abide by their own organisation's safeguarding procedures.

On-Line presence and social media

The following PCC endorsed activities need to consider Safeguarding as part of their operation:

- Streaming of live or pre-recorded services
- Social media posts
- Video conferencing platforms e.g. Zoom, on-line services or meetings

When services are to be live streamed or recorded, this should be announced to the congregation before the service starts, giving people the option to withdraw from view. Those managing the filming of services should consider what is in view and should not focus on members of the congregation.

For social media accounts, set up on the church's behalf, a named person will be appointed by the PCC as accountable for the content of the account and will proactively monitor the content and communications.

Risks of running video conferencing services or meetings should be assessed and managed as part of the activity risk assessment process. If vulnerable adults or children are participating, two adult facilitators who are familiar with safeguarding policies and procedures should be present at all times. If safeguarding concerns arise during the session the facilitator should arrange to talk further with the individual after the session and away from the wider group. The host should ensure that security features such as personalised

invites, using the “Waiting room”, disabling one-to-one anonymous chat functions (for everybody other than the hosts), muting attendees on arrival are used. Advance notice of any recording plans must be given so that participants have the chance to exit/switch off cameras.

Photographs and other promotional material

Permission (written consent) must be obtained for photographs/videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.

Images count as sensitive personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). As with all such data, they should only be used with the consent of the person in the image.

Responding to and reporting of Safeguarding concerns

Details of key safeguarding contacts for the Parish and the Diocese will be displayed in each of the church buildings and on the church website and updated annually. This process is supported by the Diocese.

In the event of serious safeguarding concerns, we will follow the ***House of Bishop’s Policy and Practice Guidance*** and be guided by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA).

Diocesan Safeguarding concern reporting processes are detailed on the “Report a Concern” page of the Diocese website. Appropriate confidentiality for those who raise concerns or are the subject of a concern will be ensured but any disclosures relating to potential safeguarding issues must always be reported.

Emergency: If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm, contact the emergency services on 999.

Non-emergency: Contact the PSO or Incumbent, in the first instance. The PSO or incumbent will then contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA). If neither the PSO or incumbent is available, contact the DSA directly. At all other times a decision about referral to the DSA will only be taken by the PSO or Incumbent.

If the concern arises in an activity, discuss with the group/activity leader, and then contact the PSO or incumbent.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSA within 24 hours.

All safeguarding concerns that arise on social media must also be reported to the PSO.

All concerns raised about a child, young person or adult should be recorded, signed and dated. A record will be kept of how the concern or allegation was followed up, any actions taken, and decisions reached. The PSO will support this process.

Confidentiality and the safety of all parties is essential.

Where there is a need to make a Safeguarding Serious Incident Report (SIR) to the Charity Commission, the DSA will support and advise the PCC on completing such a report.

A subset of named PCC trustees (Trustee Group) will ensure that any requirements relating to the reporting of Serious Incidents to the charity commission are fulfilled. This subset will be the Church Wardens and the Incumbent.

Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons

We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to anyone who has suffered abuse and will provide them with details of local and national support agencies.

Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons

We will seek to offer informed pastoral care and will be mindful of the need to provide support to members of families, parishes, and congregations in such situations

Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

Where a person is considered to pose a risk to others, the PSO, Incumbent and Church Wardens will work with the DSA to mitigate any identified risk and arrangements will be detailed in a safeguarding agreement. Pastoral care and support will be offered whilst ensuring any risk has been assessed and is being managed in accordance with House of Bishops' policy and guidance and in collaboration with the statutory agencies and the Diocesan Safeguarding team. Appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties must be maintained.

Procedure Review

As part of its regular evaluation to ensure best practice, St Nicolas Parochial Church Council (PCC) will review this procedure and all related safeguarding policies and procedures on an annual basis, as soon as possible after the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.