

The United Benefice of St Mary the Virgin, Higham Ferrers with
St John the Baptist, Chelveston-Cum-Caldecott

SAFEGUARDING POLICY CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. PROMOTING A SAFER ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

We will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our Church Officers will respect all children, young people and vulnerable adults and promote their well-being.

2. SAFELY RECRUITING AND SUPPORTING ALL THOSE WITH ANY RESPONSIBILITY RELATED TO CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS WITHIN THE CHURCH

We will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church, in accordance with the House of Bishops safeguarding policy and practice guidance. We will train and equip Church Officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognize and respond to abuse.

3. RESPONDING PROMPTLY TO EVERY SAFEGUARDING CONCERN OR ALLEGATION

Anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or non-current abuse to the notice of the Church will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child and adult safeguarding procedures and the House of Bishops safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

4. CARING PASTORALLY FOR VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF ABUSE AND OTHER AFFECTED PERSONS

We will endeavour to offer care and support to all those that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred. Those who have suffered abuse within the Church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously.

5. CARING PASTORALLY FOR THOSE WHO ARE THE SUBJECT OF CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND OTHER AFFECTED PERSONS

The Church in exercising its responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law of an accused Church Officer including the Clergy. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. The Church will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect others when any Church Officer is considered a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

6. RESPONDING TO THOSE THAT MAY POSE A PRESENT RISK TO OTHERS

The Church, based on the message of the Gospel, opens its doors to all. We will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of the church community who may present a known risk. The Church will ensure that any risk has been assessed and is being managed in a safeguarding agreement in accordance with House of Bishops policy and practice guidance.

Adapted from The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults 2017

Adopted by both PCCs October/November 2020 and reviewed annually

If you have any concerns regarding the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, you can speak to:

Benefice Safeguarding contacts

- Benefice Safeguarding Officer – Brenda Elldred 07816 771702
- Vicar – Revd Michelle Dalliston 07961 003352

Diocesan Safeguarding contacts

- Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser – Bev Huff 01733 887040
- Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser – Samantha Jackson 01733 887041

Websites

- www.nspcc.org.uk
- www.womensaid.org.uk
- www.restoredrelationships.org
- www.stopitnow.org.uk
- www.scie.org.uk
- www.ceop.police.uk

Helplines

- NSPCC – For adults concerned about a child 0808 800 5000
- ChildLine – For children and young people on 0800 1111
- Action on Elder Abuse helpline 0808 808 8141
- 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247
- NAPAC – Offer support and advice to adult survivors of childhood abuse 0808 801 0331
- Stop It Now – preventing child sexual abuse 0808 1000 900
- Cruse – bereavement helpline 0808 808 1677
- Samaritans Helpline 08457 90 90 90