

St Gabriel's Church Weoley Castle

SAFEGUARDING POLICY: CHILDREN



This Policy is based on work done at a national level as set out in the House of Bishop's document 'Protecting All God's Children – The Policy for Safeguarding Children in the Church of England' (4ed 2010), the work done by the Birmingham Diocese as set out in 'God's Children: Our Diocese (2011), and the document Safer Recruitment & DBS Application Procedures (2015).

The Parish Church Council of Weoley Castle; St Gabriel's recognises the need to safeguard the children and young people in our care and guard against the possibility of any form of abuse of children and young people by persons who may be acting in the name of our parish. We aim to create a safe environment for the nurture and development of children and young people, in order for them to feel valued and confident to ask for support and help. Children and young people are a precious gift from God and we have a clear responsibility to do all that we can to ensure their safety and well-being. We will treat them with respect, take their views seriously and always take appropriate action to ensure their welfare is given priority. We will pay particular attention to children and young people with additional needs – physical, behavioural, learning – or from minority ethnic groups to ensure their full integration and protection within the church family. We will create policies and procedures that uphold the importance of our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to our care. A Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will be appointed to ensure the implementation of this policy.

OUR POLICY

- We commit to providing a safe physical environment for work with children and young people
- We will ensure the children and young people in our care know who they can talk to if they have any concerns
- We will always listen to and take seriously any child or young person who reports that they have been abused, following our procedures
- We recognise our responsibility to always respond to and report abuse in whatever context, inside or outside the church environment
- We will always report allegations of abuse and concerns about a child or young person in accordance with our procedures
- We will always report all allegations of abuse to the appropriate statutory agency and to the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser
- We will keep all records in relation to safeguarding concerns, allegations and the recruitment of volunteers and paid workers securely
- We commit to informing the whole church community about our child protection policy and procedures
- We commit to the safe recruitment of all new and current volunteers and paid workers who have contact with children and young people.

- We will assess all new and current volunteer and paid worker roles and, in every case where the role is deemed to be eligible, apply for an appropriate level criminal record check every five years
- We commit to providing every worker and volunteer with clear instructions and information in respect of their role, adequate support and supervision and regular opportunities for review
- We accept responsibility for initiating and providing initial and on-going training for all our paid workers and volunteers
- We will suspend a worker or volunteer about whom there are concerns or against whom an allegation has been made as a neutral act whilst an investigation into the allegation/concern is conducted
- We will ensure appropriate supervision of anyone who is known to have offended against a child or young person who attends activities organised by the Parish Church Council of Weoley Castle St Gabriel's and will consult with and follow all recommendations of the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser in this regard
- We commit to the support of adult and child survivors of abuse
- We commit to providing appropriate support and guidance to any individual within our church community who is accused of causing harm to a child or young person in our care
- We require all hirers of our premises to have their own child protection policy and procedures, to provide us with an assurance that these are implemented and to provide us with a copy
- We will review our child protection policy annually to ensure that it meets all current legislation, House of Bishop's policies and practice guidance and The Church of England – Birmingham policy, God's Children: Our Diocese

OUR PROCEDURE

1 Recruitment:

- 1.1 Staff and volunteer recruitment procedures will include a Disclosure check at an enhanced level for all personnel with substantive access to children and should always include the Confidential Declaration and the use of references.
- 1.2 All staff and volunteers working with children and those who have 'access' to children on a regular basis should be vetted and required to hold a Disclosure Certificate at the relevant level. This group of staff should also attend a training course.
- 1.3 All staff and volunteers who come into contact with children should be invited to attend training courses but vetting will not be required.

2 Creating a Safe Environment:

- 2.1 Staff and volunteers working with children should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, coaching and use of equipment.
- 2.2 Staff and volunteers working with children should carefully plan activity sessions with care and safety of children as their primary concern, including the use of appropriate activities that are testing and stretching yet not unnecessarily rough or demanding.

- 2.3 Wherever possible, staff and volunteers should avoid being alone with a child, including offering lifts or taking children to their own home.
- 2.4 Staff and volunteers should only assist children in a non-intrusive manner and should encourage children to be responsible for getting themselves ready.
- 2.5 Care should be taken in mixed-aged activities (such as Sunday Morning Worship, Soul Food, Parish Events) that parents/carers understand they are responsible for their children and that unaccompanied children have written parental permission and relevant registers are kept. Mixed-aged activities with unaccompanied children should have two staff/volunteers responsible for unaccompanied children during the session.

3 Roles and Responsibilities:

- 3.1 Staff and volunteers must give due regard to issues of safety at all times.
- 3.2 All accidents involving staff and volunteers or participants should be recorded in the organisation's accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible.
- 3.3 Staff and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with building safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment.
- 3.4 Staff and volunteers are responsible for reporting suspected cases of child abuse to the appropriate people.

IT IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS TO INVESTIGATE SUSPECTED ABUSE.

- 3.5 Staff, or the volunteer in charge, will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.
- 3.6 Staff, or the volunteer in charge, should have access to any parent consent/emergency consent forms for all children taking part in the organised sessions and this information should be treated as confidential.
- 3.7 Staff, or the volunteer in charge, should ensure that they are adequately insured under the PCC policy for the activity they are undertaking.

4 Managing Allegations made against a member of Staff or Volunteer

St Gabriel's PCC will ensure that any allegations made against volunteers or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures. ·

- 4.1 The staff or volunteer must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made. ·

5 Recognising Abuse

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. During staff child protection training all staff will be trained in the signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect and will be expected to be vigilant of the signs.

- 5.1 *Physical Abuse:* Bruising is a normal part of active, healthy childhood, however be alert when a child with developed language cannot give a reasonable explanation for marking. Marks may

include hand slaps, pinch or grip, burns or bites as well as bruising in an unexplained place. These may be made by hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or any other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child's ill health also constitutes physical abuse.

5.2 *Sexual Abuse*: This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse. Signs may include bruising to the buttocks, inner thighs, vaginal or anal areas, sexually explicit behaviour or language and complaints of "pains" in the tummy or genitals with no medical explanation.

5.3 *Sexual Exploitation*: Child sexual exploitation occurs when a child or young person, or another person, receives "something" (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of the child performing sexual activities, or another person performing sexual activities on the child.

The presence of any significant indicator for the sexual exploitation should trigger a referral to children's social care. Signs may include; having a relationship of concern with a controlling adult or young person (this may involve physical and/or emotional abuse and/or gang activity), entering and/or leaving vehicles driven by unknown adults, possessing unexplained amounts of money expensive clothes or other items, frequenting areas known for risky activities, being groomed or abuse via the internet and mobile technology and having unexplained contact with hotels, taxi companies or fast food outlets.

5.4 *Emotional abuse*: Varying degrees of emotional abuse is present in virtually all child protection incidents, but can also constitute abuse in its own right. Emotional abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or torture causing, or likely to cause, severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Such behaviour may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or making them feel unnecessarily frightened or vulnerable. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person or involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying). Sign may be; a child consistently describes themselves in a very negative ways, over-reaction to mistakes, delayed physical mental or emotional development, sudden speech or sensory disorder, inappropriate emotional responses, neurotic behaviour, self-harming drug or solvent abuse, fear of parents being contacted, running away, compulsive stealing, appetite disorders, soiling smearing faeces wetting.

5.5 *Neglect*: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, such as is likely to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing for a child, or failing to adequately protect them from physical harm or ill health Neglect can also manifest itself in a failure to meet the basic emotional needs of child. Signs may include; delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed, unawareness or denial of any injury pain or loss of function, incompatible explanations offered – several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to their age and development, reluctance to give information or failure to mention other know relevant injuries, frequent presentation of minor

injuries, a persistently negative attitude of parent towards the child, unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child, alcohol drug substance misuse in parents, parents request removal of children home or violence between adults in the household

- 6 All concerns or changes of behaviour will be recorded on an **Incident Sheet** and given to Parish Safeguarding Co-Ordinator.

6 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN WHO ARE VULNERABLE TO RAICALISATION

6:1 Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.

6:2 We value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. We all have the right to speak freely and voice our opinions, however freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

6:3 The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. We are clear that exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protection children from the risk of radicalisation is part of our safeguarding duty.

6:4 We seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism including but not restricted to, those linked to Islamist ideology, or to Far Right/Neo Nazi/White Supremacist ideology, Irish Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary groups, and extremist Animal Rights movements.

7 INDICATORS OF VULNERABILITY TO RADICALISATION

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

7:1 Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as; vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.

7:2 Extremism is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as: The demonstration of unacceptable behaviour by using any means or medium to express views which:

- Encourage, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of particular beliefs.
- Seek to provoke others to terrorist acts.

- Encourage other serious criminal activity or seek to provoke others to serious criminal acts or
- Foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK.

7:3 There is no such thing as “typical extremism” those who become involved in extremist actions come from a range of backgrounds and experiences, and most individuals, even those who hold radical views, do not become involved in violent extremist activity.

7:4 Children may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors – it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities.

7:5 Indicators of vulnerability include;

- Identity Crisis – the child is distanced from their cultural/religious heritage and experiences discomfort about their place in society.
- Personal Crisis – the child may be experiencing family tensions, a sense of isolation, and low self-esteem, they may have dissociated from their existing friendship group and become involved with a new and different group of friends, they may be searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal Circumstances – migration, local community tensions, and events affecting the child’s country or region of origin may contribute to a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy.
- Unmet Aspirations – the child may have perceptions of injustice, a feeling of failure, rejection of civic life.
- Experiences of Criminality – which may include involvement with criminal groups, imprisonment, and poor resettlement/reintegration.
- Special Educational Need – children may experience difficulties with social interaction, empathy with others, understanding the consequences of their actions and awareness of the motivations of others.

This list is not exhaustive, nor does it mean that all young people experiencing the above are at risk of radicalisation for the purposes of violent extremism.

7:6 Critical risk factors could include

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
- Possessing or accessing violent extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives and a global ideology to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations.
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour and
- Experiencing a high level of social isolation resulting in issues of identity crisis and /or personal crisis.

Any concerns about a child or young person being at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism should be referred to The Single Point of Contact Revd Fiona Harrison-Smith.

St Gabriel’s PCC has a duty to cooperate with Channel – a multi-agency approach to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity led by the Police Counter-

Terrorism Unit. This would include cooperating with the Police in providing information about an individual who is referred to Channel (Section 38, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015).

This policy is to be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation.

Signed: _____FHarrison-Smith Incumbent_____ Date: __updated Jan19_