

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

Safeguarding Adults Policy dated: May 2026

Name: Parish of Chandler's Ford (hereafter, The Church)

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and
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THE PARISH OF
CHANDLER'S FORD

Table of Contents		Page number
1.	Introduction: Definition of Terms	4
2.	Why we have a Safeguarding Adults Policy	4
3.	Policy issues: Mission statement	5
4.	Church policy	5
5.	Definition of Vulnerable Adult	5
6.	Definitions of Abuse	6
7.	Who might Abuse	9
8.	Issues of Capacity and Consent	9
9.	Responding to Allegations of Abuse	10
10.	Appointment, Support, Supervision & Training of Leaders & Workers	10
11.	Support to those affected by abuse	11
12.	Working with Offenders	11
13.	Good Practice	11
14.	Procedures (list of)	15
15.	Key Publications relevant to this Policy	15
16.	Parish Safeguarding Officer Contact details	16

1. INTRODUCTION

This Parish Safeguarding Adults Policy has been produced using guidance contained within the Diocese of Winchester's *Safeguarding Adults Guidance Manual (2015)*. Information on how to access this Manual is to be found at the end of this Policy Document.

Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this Safeguarding Adults Policy, all references to:

'workers', 'staff', 'volunteers', 'helpers' are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to anyone interacting with adults on behalf of The Church

'Vulnerable adult abuse' refers to any of the recognised forms of abuse – physical, psychological, sexual, and financial or material abuse, and neglect and acts of omission or discriminatory or institutional abuse

2. WHY WE HAVE A SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

- *A Safeguarding Adults Policy will help protect **adults***

A safeguarding adults policy helps to create a safe and positive environment for adults and, although no procedures or processes can offer complete protection for adults, following these procedures and implementing a policy minimises the risk to adults from abuse and exploitation.

- *A Safeguarding Adults Policy will help protect **workers***

A safeguarding adults policy clarifies what The Church requires in relation to the safeguarding of adults. It sets out standards of behaviour for project staff and volunteers when they are working with adults and what to do if they notice, or are told about, inappropriate behaviour in others.

- *A safeguarding adults policy will help protect **The Church**.*

A safeguarding adults policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates The Church's commitment to safeguard adults from harm. Safeguarding adult policies will help move The Church towards best practice in this area and deter those who would wish to abuse adults from seeking to work with adults on behalf of The Church.

3. POLICY ISSUES:

MISSION STATEMENT

The PCC recognises the importance of its ministry with adults and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of all adults entrusted to the church's care or participating in church activities.

As part of its mission, the Church is committed to:

- The safeguarding, care and nurture of all adults within our church community and who participate in any activity of the church
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all those who minister with adults within the church
- Responding without delay to every report or cause for concern that an adult may be or may have been harmed in any way
- Full cooperation with statutory agencies during any investigation into allegations concerning abuse of any adult in the church community
- Providing informed pastoral care to any adult who has experienced abuse
- The management and supervision of any member of the church community known or thought to pose a risk of harm to adults who may be vulnerable

4. CHURCH POLICY

The PCC recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for all adults. It also recognises that adults can be the victims of physical, psychological, sexual, and financial or material abuse, and neglect and acts of omission or discriminatory or institutional abuse. The PCC has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter “the policy”).

The PCC is committed to on-going safeguarding training for all those who work with or minister with adults at risk of abuse and will regularly review the Policy and procedures.

5. DEFINITION OF VULNERABLE ADULT

All adults can be vulnerable to mistreatment at different times in their life

Within our work and ministry within the church we must be aware that there may be times when people are rendered vulnerable because of circumstances, and these are often the times when the church is in contact with them. Whilst these don't appear in the legal definition we must bear them in mind to ensure best practice in all areas of our ministry and service.

A “Vulnerable Adult” is a person 18 years old and over: who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness;

AND

who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself,

OR

unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation

Adults at risk of abuse may have a condition of the following type –

- a substantial learning or physical disability;
- a sensory, physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs;
- a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity;
- a dependency upon others in the performance of, or a requirement for assistance in the performance of basic physical functions;
- severe impairment in ability to communicate with others;
- impairment in a person’s ability to protect him/herself from assault, abuse or neglect;
- failing faculties in old age;
- a reduction in physical, mental, or emotional capacity brought about by life events;
- any situation which reduces a person’s capacity to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation;
- a person experiencing long term disability or deterioration in health, or caring for someone with physical difficulties;
- a recently bereaved person;
- someone coming to terms with life changing experiences – divorce, birth of a child, domestic abuse, retirement, loss of job etc

The definition could include a wide range of people and doesn’t make it easy for people in churches to identify areas where they may need to undertake special care or training.

6. DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

What is Abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse can consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented and cannot consent.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, and misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions. It may be deliberate or accidental. Injuries may be concealed. Action on Elder Abuse (AEA) notes: "It is important for volunteers and workers who are helping older people with personal care to take notice of any bruising or other marks in unusual places".

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. This is the most common form of abuse but can be the most difficult to recognise.

It might be playing on someone's emotions to make them afraid, uneasy or unnecessarily dependent. This might include bullying, shouting, persistent ignoring, isolation or withdrawal from social contact or supportive networks, emotional blackmail, undermining, ridiculing, coercion, racial abuse, deprivation of contact.

In a church context we need to be careful how we address spiritual issues, to ensure we do not abuse people over spiritual matters

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse covers a wide range of activity. It includes contact abuse: rape and sexual assault or sexual acts including being touched or forced to touch someone, and non-contact abuse: exposure to pornographic materials, being made to witness sexual acts, indecent exposure, sexual remarks and suggestions and encompasses sexual harassment, to which an adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

NEGLECT AND ACTS OF OMISSION

Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. This can occur at home or in care homes, or in hospitals.

FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. It does not need to involve large amounts of money to be abuse. Perpetrators sometimes justify this, saying that it is their rightful inheritance, or think that the older person does not need it. This is also a very common form of abuse.

In all our dealings we must ensure that people are never made to think or feel that the services of the church are dependent upon or influenced by money or giving.

DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE

Including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE

Institutional abuse occurs when the routines, systems and regimes of an institution result in poor or inadequate standards of care and poor practice which affects the whole setting and denies, restricts or curtails the dignity, privacy, choice, independence or fulfilment of adults at risk.

UNDER THE MENTAL CAPACITY ACT 2005 wilful neglect and ill treatment became a criminal offence

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

PHYSICAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- Cuts, burns, bruises, scratches.
- Injuries that don't match explanation.
- Injuries in concealed areas.
- Untreated injuries.
- Under or over use of medication.
- Lack of money for necessities.
- Unexpected withdrawals or changes in a person's bank account.
- Reluctance of person handling money to pay for food, clothes, furniture...
- Inability to explain what happening to income.
- Disappearance of possessions.
- Deterioration in appearance or personal hygiene.
- Unhygienic or unsafe environment.
- Rashes, sores, ulcers, unexplained weight loss.
- Inadequate food, drink or medical care.
- Lack of social stimulation.

INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SEXUAL ABUSE

Any allegations made by an adult concerning sexual abuse

- Pain, itching or injury in anal, genital, abdominal areas.
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing.
- Bite marks or bruises.

- Sexually transmitted infections or recurrent cystitis.
- Unexplained difficulty with catheters.
- Difficulty walking/sitting due to pain.

EMOTIONAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

- May feel or appear depressed, withdrawn, frightened, agitated, anxious, aggressive.
- Feelings of isolation
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour

DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT HARM

The concept of significant harm helps to determine how serious or extensive abuse must be to justify intervention.

“...harm should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment that are not physical); the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, emotional, social or behavioural development” (From “who decides” Lord Chancellor’s Department 1997)

7. WHO MIGHT ABUSE?

“Abuse of vulnerable adults may be perpetrated by a wide range of people including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people and strangers” (No Secrets Department of Health 2000)

8. ISSUES OF CAPACITY AND CONSENT

An individual’s capacity refers to their ability to make a decision for themselves based on information available to them.

Individuals will be assumed to have capacity to make informed decisions, unless there is clear evidence to the contrary. Adults at risk of abuse should be supported to make their own decisions based on an awareness of the choices available. In all instances where a person demonstrates a lack of capacity in relation to a specific area or decision, everything which is done must be based upon an assessment of that person’s best interest. To lack capacity a person must have a mental impairment.

In cases where there is evidence that an adult lacks capacity to make specific decisions, where appropriate, provision will be made to find a suitable independent person to represent their best interest. A referral to the Statutory Agency is appropriate.

9. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations, suspicions or disclosure of abuse should:

- Discuss concerns with the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager (01962 737317).
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with church procedures and kept in a secure place.
- The PCC will support the Parish Safeguarding Officer in her role and accept that any information she may have in her possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- All reports or concerns must be treated seriously.

10. APPOINTMENT, SUPPORT, SUPERVISION & TRAINING OF LEADERS & WORKERS

The PCC will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised appropriately.

APPOINTMENT OF WORKERS

The Church has a robust recruitment procedure, including: all prospective workers will be asked to complete an application form and apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service

The procedure for appointment will be:

- informal discussion
- completion of application form and a self declaration of any criminal record
- references taken up
- an application is made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for an Enhanced Disclosure
- receipt of the Disclosure from the DBS
- allocation of worker into area of ministry
- contract completed

The Vicar or Associate Priest will make a judgement on whether or not it would be appropriate to appoint a person.

Workers will be given a contract on appointment.

SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION

All workers will be provided with appropriate support and supervision within their roles.

TRAINING

All workers will be expected to undertake regular training and The Church will ensure that appropriate opportunities are made available.

11. SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE

The PCC is committed to offering pastoral care and support to those attending the church who have been affected by abuse.

12. WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

When someone attending the church or wishing to join the church is known to have abused adults who may be vulnerable, the PCC will ensure an appropriate Agreement is put in place, (where possible the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager will work with statutory agencies to ensure known risks are identified and included) to supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care. The Agreement will detail the conditions under which the person may attend church.

13. GOOD PRACTICE

If you have a safeguarding concern: DON'T:

- Panic
- Contact the alleged perpetrator
- Make assumptions
- Agree to keep secrets
- Be judgemental
- Contaminate evidence
- Ask leading questions
- Delay making the referral to the local Adult Services team
- Make decisions or take action without a discussion with the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager
- Decide whether a referral should be made or not as there may be other information you are not aware of.

If you have a safeguarding concern: DO:

- Always refer if you think it might be a safeguarding issue/concern
- Assess the immediate risk to the individual and others including staff visiting and take steps to ensure the immediate safety of the adult(s)
- Always make a referral regardless of whether the harm was intentional or unintentional
- It is your responsibility to ensure the referral is made as quickly as possible, not to decide if a referral should be made or not.
- Note that it is the Adult Services responsibility to determine whether there should be a safeguarding investigation or not

Reassure the person by telling them that:

- They have done the right thing by sharing the information with you.
- You are treating them seriously.
- The abuse is not their fault (if the information is being shared by the “victim”). Be aware of the possibility of forensic evidence if the disclosure refers to a recent incident.
- If there is a possibility that forensic evidence exists, preserve the evidence. Do not clean up.
- Explain that you are required to share the information with the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager, but not with other staff, volunteers or group members.
- Reassure the person that the church will take steps to support and where appropriate, protect them in future.
- Report the information to the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager at the earliest opportunity.
- Make a written record of what the person has told you.
- Do not stop someone who is freely recalling significant events; allow them to share whatever is important to them.
- Do not ask questions or press the person for more details (this may be done during any subsequent investigation, so it is important to avoid unnecessary repetition for the person involved)
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Do not contact the alleged “abuser” or the alleged “victim” (depending on who is sharing information)
- Do not be judgemental (e.g. why didn’t you try to stop them?)
- If there is reason to believe that a crime has taken place, seek the adult’s agreement to inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager immediately.

CONCLUDING

- Again, reassure the person that they were right to tell you and show acceptance.
- Let the person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to Social Services or the Police to prevent an adult who may be at risk of abuse returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse.
- Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Manager immediately
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

MAKING NOTES

Make notes as soon as possible. Write down exactly what was said and when it was said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Note if anyone else was present. Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place.

TOUCHING

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be instigated by / related to the adults needs, not the worker's.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the worker
- Adults are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.
- Adults have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- When giving first aid etc, encourage the adult to do what they can manage themselves, but consider an adult who may be vulnerable best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported.

GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

What is behaviour management?

Behaviour management is the means by which an individual or groups behaviour is managed to ensure the safety and well being of all present and to comply with the standards and practise of the organisation or activity. It may include nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement.

Do's and Don'ts of Behaviour Management:

DON'T

NEVER smack, hit or use physical force.

Do not shout in anger or put down anyone

DO

Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism, or calling each other names, a respect for property.

Keep the ground rules simple and clear, and make sure everyone understand what procedure will be taken if they are not followed.

Never reject a person, just the behaviour (tell the person that you value him/her, but you are not willing to accept the behaviour).

Remember that each adult is unique, special and individual, and each adult who may be at risk of abuse needs a different method of being dealt with. We therefore need to be asking ourselves "Why is the person behaving like that?"

Work on each individual person's positives, do not compare people with each other, but encourage and build up.

Help the adult learn that they will be noticed more when they obey the rules, rather than break them. Try to create an environment of care and offer more tangible rewards, where each person feels that it is worth keeping to the rules.

RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES / OFF SITE ACTIVITIES

From time to time activities may be arranged which will take place away from the usual meeting place and may include overnight stays. A comprehensive risk assessment of each activity will be undertaken, and appropriate risk management measures put in place.

BULLYING

Bullying of any sort will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Any such behaviour will be dealt with and those perpetrating the bullying will be made aware that such behaviour is not acceptable.

Adults experiencing bullying in any situation will be offered support to address the issues.

STORAGE AND USE OF INFORMATION, AND IMAGES OF ADULTS AT RISK OF ABUSE

Specific procedures for the making, storage and use of images of adults who may be at risk of abuse are available. No image will be taken, stored or used without the adult's permission.

USE OF INTERNET AND E-MAIL

Modern communication technologies may be used as a means of communicating with people. Clear guidelines exist about how these will be used

14. PROCEDURES

When appropriate and necessary to safeguard adults in our parish, we will use the procedures listed below that are detailed in the Diocese of Winchester's Safeguarding Adults Guidance Manual (2015):

1. Boundaries & Contracts for Offenders within the church
2. Handling Disclosure Information
3. Internet use including consent form for using images of adults
4. Off Site Activities Policy including all forms
5. Responding to Abuse - allegations
6. Responding to Abuse - survivors
7. Responding to Inappropriate behaviour
8. Working with Adults who may be vulnerable in the Community

And also

9. The Parish Drug and Alcohol policy (to be found in the Parish Policy Folder located in the Parish Office – copies available on request).

15. KEY PUBLICATIONS RELEVANT TO THIS POLICY

The Diocese of Winchester's Safeguarding Adults Guidance Manual is to be found online at <https://www.winchester.anglican.org/safeguarding-resources/> (press link entitled Vulnerable Adults Manual) and a paper copy is to be found in the Parish Office (open Mon. to Fri. 9am to 1pm).

The Church of England House of Bishops' Policy Statement on Safeguarding entitled *Promoting a Safer Church* (2017) can be found at www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding.

16. PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER CONTACT DETAILS:

Safeguarding Officer: Anne Addiss

E-mail: safeguarding@parishcf.church

Dedicated phone number: 07470 951191