

PARISH OF ST. HILDA, WARLEY WOODS, DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy statement was adopted on behalf of all members of the congregation of St. Hilda's at a Parochial Church Council meeting held on 03 March 2014.

This policy will be reviewed each year to monitor the progress which has been achieved. The next review is due in January 2019.

This Church appoints the following lead person to be Children's Co-ordinator, to provide guidance and support and to assist all in ensuring that this policy is followed:

Wendy Dyke.

and the following named person to be the Children's Advocate who will represent the views and needs of children and our meetings and to outside bodies:

Mandy Saunders.

Signed:

Incumbent: *Paul Hux* Date: *16/1/18*
Churchwarden: *G. Steel* Date: *16/1/18*
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Statement of Safeguarding Principles

St. Hilda's church endorses the following statement of safeguarding principles which appears at the head of each safeguarding policy of the Church of England:

We are committed to:

- the care, nurture of and respectful pastoral ministry for all children, young people and adults,
- the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and all adults
- the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse.

To this end:

- we will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

- we will respond without delay to every complaint made, that any adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- we will seek to offer informed pastoral care and support to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry that recognises the importance of understanding the needs of those who have been abused, including their feelings of alienation and/or isolation.
- we will seek to protect survivors of sexual abuse from the possibility of further harm or abuse.
- we will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- we will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- in all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy covers all activities involving children under the age of 18 organised by, or under the control of, St. Hilda's Parochial Church Council.

- We are committed to following the Diocese of Birmingham Policy for Child Protection ["God's Children - Our Diocese"], full copies of which are held by the Vicar and the Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- The Church and its appointed leaders and helpers are committed to the protection of children from physical, sexual, financial, spiritual and emotional abuse and neglect and to report any neglect, alleged or suspected.
- We will remind all groups that are outside our control but who use our premises regularly that they need to have in place an up-to-date policy to safeguard children and young people and that this policy should be reviewed annually.
- We accept responsibility for the appointment of leaders and to ensure that each person who works with children and young people receives a copy of this parish policy and is familiar with the policy, procedures and guidelines.
- We have a Health and Safety Policy in place and commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
- The Safeguarding Children's Co-ordinators will work together with the PCC to implement and monitor policy and procedures.
- There will be a Children's Advocate with the responsibility of representing the views and needs of children in the parish.
- We undertake to display a copy of this policy statement in a prominent place on church premises and in the church hall so that all may be aware of its existence.

GOOD WORKING PRACTICE

- Treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Provide an example of good conduct for others to follow
- Be available but don't intrude on personal space and privacy
- Create space for children to talk - informally and formally - and ensure they know who they can talk to
- Always challenge unacceptable behaviour
- Never use any form of physical punishment or play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- Always conduct activities which require physical contact within sight of another adult and have parental consent where possible e.g. toilet breaks, First Aid, comforting a child - this should always be initiated by the child
- Never be sexually suggestive towards, scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or show favouritism
- Always aim to work within sight of another adult
- Never give lifts to a child or invite a child to your home alone
- Always obtain consent for activities, trips, photos and video recordings
- Record any incidents/accidents
- Be prepared to refer to someone with greater expertise/experience and seek support where necessary
- Review your work regularly with others
- For indoor activities, ensure that access to the building is safe and well lit
- Ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for all activities
- A qualified first aid person should be appointed for all children/young people's groups and, except in an emergency, first aid should not be administered by anyone else
- For residential activities have separate sleeping accommodation for leaders and young people

RESPONDING TO A CHILD

DO:

- Keep calm
- Listen attentively - and keep on listening
- Take time - allow the child to talk
- Maintain eye contact
- Take what the child is saying seriously
- Reassure the child that they are right to tell and are not to blame
- Be honest with the child
- Be clear that you cannot keep the information to yourself and must share it with others to help keep the child safe
- Explain who you need to tell and what will happen next
- Reassure the child that they will continue to receive support

DON'T:

- Show shock
- Try to silence the child
- Ask leading questions
- Press for information
- Try to investigate yourself
- Keep the secret or agree to keep the secret
- Jump to conclusions
- Alert the perpetrator
- Make promises you cannot keep

SHARING AND RECORDING CONCERNS**SHARING:**

- Share information appropriately and only with those who need to know
- Always share concerns and allegations with the incumbent or a Safeguarding Children's Co-ordinator
- Always consider the safety and welfare of the child when making decisions about sharing information - the welfare and safety of the child must be the overriding consideration
- Seek the advice and support of the incumbent, Safeguarding Children's Co-ordinators, Bishop's Safeguarding Children Advisor, and/or Children's Social Care Services on the appropriateness of sharing concerns with the child's family

RECORDING:

- Preferably within one hour, write down the content of your conversation - what the child said and what you replied
- Record the context of your conversation - what happened just before, where it took place, who else was around and anything that seemed particularly significant
- Record/draw pictures of any injuries seen
- Date, record the time and sign your notes and have your signature witnessed.
- Give the document to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible. The record will be kept securely in a locked box file accessible only to the Incumbent and Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator. An electronic copy will be scanned and kept on the external hard drive in the box file.
- Electronic records (including email records) should be given to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator for storage on the hard drive. All other copies should then be deleted.
- Ensure all records are kept securely.

**PROCEDURES FOR SAFE RECRUITMENT
OF VOLUNTEERS AND PAID WORKERS**

- We will ensure that the job descriptions for each paid post or volunteer position is assessed for the appropriateness of a statement from the

Disclosure and Barring Service [DBS], that this assessment is documented and any advertisement for such a post will make it clear whether a Statement is required or not

- Any position which requires a Statement will also require two references from the applicant
- We will respect each person's abilities, skills, experience and qualifications and will take every step to ensure that these are given appropriate consideration in the appointment and recruitment process
- We will request candidates for a paid post or volunteer position to put in writing any convictions or other behaviour which might prejudice their appointment. This information will be submitted privately to the incumbent or to his/her representative and only taken into account when relevant to the position in question
- We will assist the potential appointee to apply for a DBS statement; the completed application will be verified by the incumbent or his/her representative and returned to the Archdeacon
- We will only confirm an appointment when notified in writing by the DBS Administrator that the Statement is clear
- In accordance with Diocesan policy, we will ensure that DBS statements are renewed at least every five years
- In accordance with Diocesan policy we will ensure that all 'Church Officers' [i.e. all paid or volunteer workers] attend the required Diocesan safeguarding training: (Level C3 for office holders and safeguarding officers, Level C2 for all requiring DBS statements, Level C1 and E-learning course C0 for workers not requiring DBS statements but who still have contact with young people).
- PCC members not requiring Levels C3/C2/C1 are recommended to do and E-learning C0 course which can be done locally in the company of someone who has received C3/C2 training.
- We will make every effort to ensure that all recruitment decisions involving Statement information are made sensitively and fairly but if an applicant feels that this has not happened, then the matter can be referred to the Archdeacon for an independent assessment

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

- We are committed to supporting previous perpetrators of abuse without losing sight of the fact that the safety of children and young people is of paramount importance
- If a perpetrator becomes known to the church, a 'Risk Management Plan' should be drawn up and action taken in accordance with "God's Children - Our Diocese" Section 5
- The incumbent or his/her nominated representative will supervise the individual and offer pastoral care and support where appropriate

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Important definitions

Abuse: Interdepartmental Government guidelines 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999' cite physical, emotional, sexual and neglect as the four categories of abuse and children may suffer from one or a combination of these. The four categories are physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and are defined in "God's Children - Our Diocese" Section 2.2.

Signs and indicators of abuse: It is normal for children when they are troubled to show this through their behaviour. This may be shown through a range of difficult behaviours or a sudden change in behaviour. These signals should not be ignored. There are three ways in which a child will indicate that something is wrong, namely: visual, behavioural and verbal
Further details are contained in "God's Children - Our Diocese" Section 2.5.

Appendix 2: Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual Abuse is a separate category of abuse. Although spiritual leaders may also perpetrate other forms of abuse, spiritual abuse is specifically the misuse of spiritual authority to threaten, pressurise or coerce. The perpetrators are not limited to people with specific leadership roles.

Spiritual abuse can exhibit in many ways, including

- misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline
- misuse of confession or absolution
- assuming inappropriate divine authority (*for example saying "God has told me you must move to Africa"*)
- inappropriately threatening an individual or group with divine punishment or judgment (*for example saying "you are going to hell for what you did to me"*)
- deliberate manipulation of teaching or liturgy to unduly threaten an individual
- oppressive teaching or attempting to force religious values or ideas onto children or vulnerable adults
- denial to children or vulnerable adults of the right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God
- intrusive healing or deliverance ministries (*for example praying for a disabled person to be healed without their consent, telling someone they are possessed by a demon and need it casting out, without their consent or wise discernment*)
- forcibly praying for an individual against their wishes or expecting them to act in response to a perceived answer to prayer
- making a person or persons feel guilt, inadequacy and a failure of discipleship for their difficulties in applying gospel principles such as offering forgiveness, friendship, hospitality and welcome

The abuse shatters a person's relationship and trust in the Church, severely impacts on their ability to make any connection with the spiritual, and creates profound confusion and doubt about God's love for them.

Appendix 3: Contact Details:

Incumbent: Rev. Paul Hinton: 0121 429 1384

Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator: Wendy Dyke 0121 552 1003

Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor: Steph Haynes 07342 993844

For Local Childcare Team, Sandwell Council: 0121 569 3100

NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000

Childline: 0800 1111

Appendix 4: Taking action when you have concerns about the welfare of a child or when an allegation has been made

Share your concerns with the Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator.
Make a record of the discussion and any decisions reached.



If the child is at risk of harm or an allegation of abuse has been made, the Incumbent or the Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator refers to the local authority children's social care services as soon as possible and also informs the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Advisor within 24 hours.



Advice is sought from the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Advisor.
A record is made of all discussions and decisions reached.

Possible Decisions

No further action

Continue to observe & offer opportunities for the child to confide in you

If safe, speak to parent(s)/carer(s)

Refer to children's social care services



Review with Bishop's Safeguarding Children Advisor within agreed timescales

NOTE:

If the concern is urgent or the child is in danger, immediately contact the emergency services and/or out of hours children's social care services. As soon as possible, contact the Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator. Always inform the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Advisor within 24 hours of any referral made to children's social care services.