



ST PETER & ST PAUL NORTHLEACH

POLICY STATEMENT PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

The Parochial Church Council of St Peter & St Paul, Northleach accepts the House of Bishops Policy "Promoting a Safer Church" and our church is therefore committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The PCC will:

- I. Create a safe and caring place for all.
- II. Ensure that everyone involved in the care of children, young people and adults, whether through paid employment or volunteer positions, is made personally aware of the House of Bishops Policy and the PCC policy.
- III. Ensure that everyone involved in the care of children, young people and adults is clear of the nature of the work they have agreed to do and the name of the person to whom they are responsible.
- IV. Nominate Angie Leach to be the Nominated Person who will administer and monitor this policy on behalf of the PCC, and to whom all cases of suspected or alleged abuse must be reported immediately.
- V. Ensure that all those currently involved in the care of children, young people and adults, and all candidates for new paid posts and volunteer positions, are interviewed by the parish priest or Nominated Person and asked to complete a Confidential Declaration and a Personal Details Form¹.

¹ These forms are available from the Safeguarding section of the Diocesan website.

- VI. Ensure that, where an individual's current or future role requires a criminal records check, that individual applies to the Disclosure and Barring Service for the appropriate level of disclosure, and that evidence supporting their application is checked by the Nominated Person or another Evidence Checker who is registered with the Diocese.
- VII. Ensure that completed forms are held securely in confidential Church records².
- VIII. Ensure it reviews its employment and volunteer recruitment practices so that the level of disclosure applicable to every position is clearly set out (as appropriate), and that no one is active in a particular role until any required disclosure has been received and any subsequent risk assessment has been completed satisfactorily.
- IX. Ensure that any individual organisation renting or using PCC premises for activities involving children and young people is aware of its own individual responsibilities to have appropriate safeguarding policies and processes (including risk assessments) in place.
- X. Ensure that any complaint made regarding a child, young person or adult for whom the PCC is responsible, and who may have been harmed or is at risk or in danger, is reported immediately to the appropriate authorities and escalated as necessary to statutory agencies via the Diocesan Safeguarding Office.
- XI. Inform the relevant statutory agencies, via the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA), of any suspected criminal offenders, or any concerns that it is made aware of in respect of its contact with children and young people.
- XII. Cooperate fully with statutory agencies and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DAS) throughout any investigation into allegations affecting or concerning a member of the church community.
- XIII. Offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse, and will provide them with details of local and national support agencies.
- XIV. Work closely with the Diocese to ensure that it effectively supervises and supports any member of its church community known to have offended against a child, young person or adult.
- XV. Work closely with the Diocese to ensure that any necessary DBS checks or other required checks and references are obtained, and to ensure that it complies with the three year rolling programme of DBS rechecks administered through the Diocese.
- XVI. Work closely with the Diocese in ensuring appropriate people are trained and updated on good practice, legal changes, etc.
- XVII. Make adequate provision for insurance cover for all activities for children and young people in line with the House of Bishops' guidance.

² Completed forms will be strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of law, will only be seen by the parish priest, the Nominated Person, or those acting on the Bishop's behalf.

DIOCESE OF GLOUCESTER

DIOCESAN POLICY STATEMENT

WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Scripture teaches that all people are special because they are made in the image of God. This is therefore true for children and young people, who should be respected and protected. Jesus warned that those who exploited or abused children deserved profound condemnation. Within the Kingdom of God, children matter in their own right and are to be taken seriously.
2. The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Clergy and laity who work for the Church in a paid or voluntary capacity need to exercise the greatest care when working with those for whom they have been given responsibility.
3. The highest standards should be maintained therefore in all pastoral, counselling, educational, worship and recreational circumstances. The exploitation of any relationships for any purpose will not be tolerated.
4. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to creating a culture of informed vigilance which takes children, and adults who are vulnerable, seriously – and will work closely, and in partnership with, the local authority and statutory authorities to ensure that we offer best practice advice and guidance.
5. The Diocese of Gloucester accepts the principle of The Children Act (1989) that the welfare of the child is paramount, and will follow the Home Office Code of Practice: “Safe from Harm”, and the House of Bishops’ “Protecting all God’s Children” and “Safer Recruitment” advice and guidelines.
6. If allegations of abuse are made, then the Diocese of Gloucester will respond without delay and collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with investigating such allegations of child abuse. It will not conduct investigations on its own and will work in partnership with the police, local authority, and others to follow legal compliance, and to ensure we are able to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person, or adult who has suffered abuse.
7. It will be standard practice in the Diocese of Gloucester to require completion of a common declaration form in accordance with guidelines of the Children Act 1989, from the following categories of people prior to selection or appointment for work within the Diocese:
 - all candidates for ordained ministry and accredited lay ministry
 - all clergy and accredited lay ministers moving into and within the diocese
 - employees of the Diocesan Board of Finance who are likely to have opportunities for contact with children and young people
 - volunteers who support the work of the Diocesan Advisory Boards and Committees on a regular basis
8. It is Diocesan policy that all PCCs should have in place a policy for Safeguarding/child protection – and that this is reviewed annually and a copy supplied as part of the requirements of the Archdeacon’s Visitation.

- XVIII. Ensure that a copy of this policy is displayed on the parish notice board and website alongside a ChildLine poster, and will make a copy of this policy available to all employees and volunteers of the parish, and to parents and guardians.
- XIX. Review this policy annually and risk assessments at the Autumn PCC meeting and ensure that a copy of this policy is presented to the Archdeacon at the Visitation.

Adopted by the PCC at its meeting on 20th November 2024



Rev John Hollows



J Abbotts Churchwarden



A Leach Safeguarding Officer

Supporting Documents:

House of Bishops Policy (Promoting a Safer Church)

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/PromotingSaferChurchWeb.pdf>

Diocesan Safeguarding Guidance and Policies

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/about-us/safeguarding/guidance-and-policies/>