

The Parish of St Mark's Kensal Rise SAFEGUARDING POLICY PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on 23rd July 2024

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is 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 Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints **Kellie Jarrett** as the Parish Safeguarding Officer and **Sue Bush** as Children's Champion.

Incumbent: **Revd. Dave Roberts**

Churchwardens: **Paul Kidner & Vivienne McKoy-Salt**

Reviewed and Updated: July 2024

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Appendix A: CODE OF SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

This code is provided for all those across the diocese to follow in working and volunteering with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The code represents the behaviors which constitute safe practice. As such it will assist those working with children and vulnerable adults to do so safely and responsibly enabling each to monitor their own standards of integrity and good practice.

The policy applies to all within the church, paid and unpaid, clergy and laity

You should:

- treat all children, young people and adults with respect and dignity, keeping your own language, attitude and body language respectful
- actively communicate with children, young people and vulnerable adults and involve them in planning and running activities where possible
- avoid being alone with a child, there should always be two properly recruited adults with each group of children
- develop a culture where workers, children and vulnerable adults feel comfortable to point out inappropriate attitudes and behaviour in each other
- make it plain who someone can speak to about a personal concern, and be proactive in addressing concerns and allegations
- never use illicit drugs, abuse prescription medication, or use alcohol when responsible for a child or vulnerable adult
- keep physical contact specific to the needs of the activity and always seek permission from the person first
- obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed
- never use rough play, sexually provocative words and games or any forms of physical punishment
- never scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult or allow others to do so
- avoid showing favouritism to any one child, adult or group or doing anything to reinforce their possible infatuations towards you
- never give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own or allow unknown adults access to children
- never share sleeping accommodation with children or invite them to your home alone
- always operate within the Diocesan principles, procedures and guidelines, clarifying these when unsure.

The above set clear expectations of behaviour and codes of practice which serve to reduce the possibilities of positions of trust being abused or misused, or false accusations being made.

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APPENDIX B HOW WE RESPOND TO SAFEGUARDING DISCLOSURES

In all cases, even if you have a nagging doubt about whether you feel an adult or child is at risk, tell the safeguarding officer and get advice.

However, if the situation requires an immediate response, because there is an immediate threat of danger, then phone police/ambulance and follow the advice given. Then take the following steps where applicable.

1. If someone has approached you and tells of a situation that causes you concern, reassure them that the right thing has been done in sharing it with you and that you believe it, taking what they have said seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
2. They should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting any type of abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should they be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
3. Don't promise confidentiality. Explain that the safety of those concerned is your priority and that may mean that it is shared with a trustworthy person who will treat the information sensitively and seek help.
4. Don't ask leading questions e.g. Not *'Did that make you feel really scared?'* But *'How did that make you feel?'*
5. Record what was said as quickly as possible after you had the conversation – within 24hrs. Just record your name and contact number, what was said - not your interpretation of events, giving date and time, where you were and who else was there when the conversation took place. Make a note of the person/ child's full name, age and any information given to you about the alleged abuser.
6. Pass on your note to the Safeguarding Officer: admin@sktmk.org. and Dave dave@stmkr.org Telephone Kellie on [020 8960 3929](tel:02089603929) with any safeguarding concern.
7. If there are further meetings with the person who has the safeguarding issue, please write notes as indicated above for those conversations too.
8. The Safeguarding Officer will get back to you with any advice from the safeguarding team.
9. If you can't get hold of the Safeguarding Officer contact a member of the clergy, and then the Diocesan Safeguarding Team Tel: 020 7932 1224

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APPENDIX C HOW WE PRAY FOR PEOPLE

'Prayer ministry' means the prayer one to another connected with a worship service. This includes Sunday morning services, worship gatherings or prayer meetings. It is normal for Christians to pray for each-other, but must be done in keeping with our safeguarding policy to respect and protect everyone in our care from various risks and abuses.

Context:

- the Prayer Ministry Team acts under the authority of the Vicar and the PCC, within the community of St Mark's, ultimately under the authority of the Bishop.
- We do not seek to provide counselling or advice.
- Prayer Ministry will follow the church's Safeguarding Policies and good practice in confidentiality; anonymized cases may be used for training purposes in team meetings.
- A prayer minister might signpost to the church's pastoral care provision and suggest next steps, but this would always be at the decision of the individual being prayed for

The Prayer Ministry Role:

- Those involved in Prayer Ministry will have been accepted by the Vicar and team leader.
- Training and experience will be reviewed and they must be willing to attend occasional team meetings for prayer, sharing and training.
- It is expected that they will be 'known people', regularly present at worship and part of the praying life of the church.
- All prayer ministers will require DBS background checks, and are recommended to take safeguarding training C0

In practice

- Prayer ministry is to be performed by a team of 2 people, at least one of whom must be of the same sex as the person being prayed for.
- Prayer ministry should be performed in a place visible to others, but providing discretion and allowing confidentiality. During a service, this would be by the font, or on the left of the stage; after the service, the Chancel, between the choir stalls.
- Ministry should mitigate against the possibility of falling or physical risk. Chairs should be available and ministers should pray with their eyes open at all times
- If a safeguarding disclosure comes up during prayer ministry or ministers believe that there is risk of harm to the person or others then they follow the procedure in Appendix B above
- If there is a manifestation of strange physical behaviour or the minister believes that there is undue emotional risk during prayer, they should send for the Vicar or Prayer Ministry Leader. The best practice is to stop and give the person space and comfort before providing suitable next steps or signposting.