

# St Mary Magdalene Stoke Bishop

## Safeguarding Policy for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

*Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's recreation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.*

### Contents

1.	Policy Context	2
2.	Policy Statement	2
3.	Who is a child, young person or adult who may be vulnerable?	3
4.	What is abuse and neglect?	4
5.	What to do if you are concerned that abuse or neglect may be happening	4
6.	Confidentiality and consent	6
7.	Record Keeping	6
8.	Safer Recruitment and ongoing support and supervision	8
9.	Staffing Levels - Children's Groups	8
10.	Health and Safety	9
11.	Insurance	9
12.	Roles and Responsibilities	10
13.	Policy implementation	11
14.	Additional Related Policies	11
15.	Useful contacts	13
16.	Additional Information	14
Appendix 1	Categories, Definitions and Indicators of Harm	15
Appendix 2	Social Media policy.....	18
Appendix 3	Lone working and personal safety.....	24

# 1. Policy Context

In developing this policy, the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop commits to following the safeguarding policies of the Church of England, safeguarding policy and guidance as issued by the Diocese of Bristol and commits to working within legislation and statutory guidance as related to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults.

# 2. Policy Statement

It is the responsibility of all members of the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop to give paramount importance to the nurture and care of children, young people and vulnerable adults in a safe and secure environment. It is about preventing harm to children and adults wherever possible.

We will ensure there is clear information available regarding our safeguarding arrangements, including a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy and other relevant information on our website and displayed on the church safeguarding noticeboard.

### **We recognise that:**

- ❖ the welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount.
- ❖ everyone has different levels of vulnerability and each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.
- ❖ all children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable (regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse which can occur in all families and communities.
- ❖ working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

### **We will develop a culture in our church that:**

- ❖ enables a safe and caring community to provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.
- ❖ enables and encourages concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently and protects children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable from actual or potential harm.
- ❖ ensures all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
- ❖ values, listens to and respects children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable, encouraging them to be active contributors to the church community.
- ❖ encourages adults who may be vulnerable to lead as independent a life as possible.

### **When concerns are raised we will:**

- ❖ respond without delay to every concern raised that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm, through abuse or neglect.
- ❖ work with police, local authority and other partners in any investigation, including where allegations are made against a member of the Church community.
- ❖ challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

### **If abuse has occurred, we will ensure:**

- ❖ informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse, including support to make a complaint if so desired.
- ❖ supervision is provided for any member of the Church Community known to pose a risk of harm to others.
- ❖ appropriate pastoral care is provided to any member of our church against whom an allegation is made.

### **In all recruitment we will:**

- ❖ carefully select those with any responsibility within the Church (including voluntary workers) in line with the Church of England Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance, 2016<sup>1</sup> (see also the parish of St Mary Magdalene Safer Recruitment Policy) and provide ongoing supervision, support and training.

### **In our publicity we will:**

- ❖ share information about good safeguarding practice with children, young people and vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and all those working and worshipping with them.

## **3. Who is a child, young person or adult who may be vulnerable?**

**Children and young people:** for the purposes of this policy means anyone under the age of 18 years. Children and young people may be abused by an adult or child, male or female. It is far more common for a child or young person to be abused by a person known to them than by a stranger. This could be a parent, family member, friend, teacher, minister or anyone else. Children may be abused in person or via electronic media, they may experience harm as a result of seeing or hearing the abuse of others.

Where conflicts of interest arise between the welfare of the child and that of adults, the child's wellbeing must always be of paramount importance and priority.

**Adults who may be vulnerable:** The Care Act 2014 defines an adult to whom statutory safeguarding duties apply as an adult who:  
*has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of these needs)  
is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect  
as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect.*  
(Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2016)

The definition may apply to anyone 18 years old and over who may not be able to protect themselves from abuse, harm or exploitation, which may be by reason of illness, physical, sensory or learning disability or impairment, mental illness, use of drugs or alcohol. Increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/c-e-safer-recruitment-2016/>

An adult may be abused or neglected by family (including spouses, parents and children), friends, carers (paid and unpaid), strangers and professionals and members of the community. Those at risk may live alone or may live with family or in a care setting e.g. residential home.

#### 4. What is abuse and neglect?

Please see the table attached as **Appendix 1**. This outlines the forms of abuse noted in legislation related to safeguarding children, young people and adults alongside some examples and potential indicators that abuse or neglect may be occurring.

#### 5. What to do if you are concerned that abuse or neglect may be happening

You may see or hear something of concern or someone may tell you something of concern (a disclosure). If a child, young person or adult tells you that they have experienced abuse, are experiencing abuse or are concerned that they may be at risk:

Do	Don't
Listen. Try to move to a quiet space if possible	Tell them to speak to someone else
Let the person talk at their own pace and say what they want to say. If you need to clarify points ask open questions like: Tell me.. what happened, Explain ... about the incident Describe ...where it was , what happened	Investigate. Ask leading questions e.g. why did they do that, was it 'name', did it hurt you?
Take it seriously	Try not to react as though unbelieving or shocked
Reassure. Confirm they are doing the right thing by telling you.	Tell them not to tell stories
Tell them you need to share the concern with the right people e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer, police, social care	Promise to keep a secret or tell people who don't need to know.
Record what was said and the facts as accurately as possible as soon as possible	Try to just remember it
	Contact the person the allegation is about

**Whether a child, young person or adult has shared a concern with you or you have seen or heard something of concern;**

if the situation is urgent i.e. there is an imminent risk of harm, call **999** for emergencies; otherwise **101** and ask for the **Safeguarding Coordination Unit**.

#### **Children:**

<b>First Response Team</b>	<b>0117 903 6444</b> for any new referrals
<b>Outside office hours</b>	<b>01454 615165</b> Emergency Duty Team
<b>Early Help Team</b>	<b>0117 9038700</b>
<b>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)</b>	<b>0117 9037795</b>

#### **Adults:**

<b>Care Direct</b>	<b>0117 9222700</b>
<b>Age related concerns, Age UK</b>	<b>0117 9297537</b>

Once you have sought advice from police or the Local Authority and the situation is made safe, inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible of the concern and actions taken; provide a written record of this. If the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

**If the situation is of concern but is not urgent:** Contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer to report the concern and provide a written record (if the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser). They will decide with you whether to discuss with the child, their parents or carers, or the adult and any carers and whether a referral to the Local Authority Children or Adults Safeguarding Team is needed or any other action.

**Note:** Anyone can report a concern directly to police or the Local Authority at any time.

The Parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop hopes that all will follow this policy but where there is any concern that an issue has not been reported and should be, or any reluctance to inform the church of an incident, the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop wishes to make clear that the most important point is that those concerns are reported to the appropriate authority so that they can be acted upon where needed.

**If there is an allegation that a person in a position of trust (minister, PCC member, staff member or volunteer) has abused or neglected a child or adult or that such a person may present a risk to a child or adult:** The Diocese of Bristol 'Allegations Management Procedure<sup>2</sup>' will be followed (copies of this procedure can be found on the Diocesan website and copies are held by the Parish Safeguarding Officers, Clergy and in the Parish Office). In brief this procedure requires that:

- ❖ the concern should be reported as above; the report should reach police or Local Authority within 1 working day.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/allegations-management-procedure/>

- ❖ the concern should not be made known to the person against whom the allegation is raised without agreement with police and or the Local Authority.
- ❖ next steps will be decided in conjunction with police, Local Authority representatives (including Local Authority Designated Officer where there is a concern for the welfare of a child), the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and parish representatives (usually PSO, Incumbent and Churchwardens).

**If a person is identified who has a caution or conviction for abuse of children and or adults who may pose a risk to others:** (usually those with convictions for sexual or violent offences) the Diocese of Bristol guidance 'Ministering to those who may pose a risk'<sup>3</sup> (Copies of this guidance can be found on the Diocesan website and copies are held by the Parish Safeguarding Officers, Clergy and in the Parish Office) will be followed. In brief this guidance advises that that Parish Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser are made aware and that the individual is informed that:

- ❖ to support their being part of the congregation as safely as possible, contact will be made with police, probation and other agencies connected with their case.
- ❖ the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and Church leaders will need to know of their circumstances.
- ❖ that a risk assessment will need to be completed.

and

- ❖ that a written agreement will be needed between the individual and the Church which agrees when the individual will or will not be involved in church services and activities, boundaries of behavior and support offered.

## 6. Confidentiality and consent

**Confidentiality:** The parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop accepts the principle that only those with a need to know should be made aware of safeguarding concerns or other confidential information. All staff, ministers and volunteers are expected to share confidential information appropriately and to ensure that written records and verbal information is shared responsibly and stored securely.

**Consent:** The parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop accepts that all people have a right to make their own views and wishes known and that these wishes should be followed wherever possible.

**Children:** Where there is a concern that a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect they may ask those that know not to tell anyone. The parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop accepts that we cannot do this; these concerns must be reported to the appropriate authorities to enable the child or young person to receive appropriate help and support. The parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop asks all staff, ministers and volunteers to explain this to children in their care when appropriate. Where there is concern that a child is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect the parish of St Mary

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/ministering-those-may-present-risk/>

Magdalene, Stoke Bishop expects that parents and carers will be communicated with and will have their consent sought for information to be shared with the Local Authority or other agencies. This should happen except where there is concern that to do so would place a child at increased risk or where a parent or carer may be involved in the sexual abuse of the child. In those circumstances advice of the Local Authority or police should be sought before informing the parents or carers of the concern. Where the allegation is against an individual who may have access to other children or vulnerable adults the referral should be made without seeking consent from parents or carers - how they are made aware of the concerns will be decided alongside statutory agencies.

**Adults:** Adults have the right to make their own decisions about their lives. Consent should be sought from an adult before information is shared about them. However, where an adult withholds consent for a safeguarding concern to be shared with statutory authorities (police and local authority), this should be accepted except where there may be others at risk (e.g. is the abuse or neglect is happening in a care home or hospital or the abuser has access to other vulnerable adults or children) or where there is reason to doubt that the individual has capacity to make that decision or where there is imminent risk of serious harm. Advice should be sought from statutory services (Adult social care or police) or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser where there is any doubt as to whether a concern should be referred.

## 7. Record Keeping

Records of all safeguarding concerns will be kept by the Parish Safeguarding Officer. They will keep a record of the initial concern and all actions taken. The records will be securely held in a locked cabinet to which only the Parish Safeguarding Officer and Deputy have the key. All those involved with any safeguarding concern must ensure that they provide to the Safeguarding Officer any records related to that case for secure storage.

Records will be retained as per Church of England guidance 'Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church' 2015<sup>4</sup> (Available on the Diocese of Bristol website).

Great care should be taken where email is used to ensure that confidential information is not open to being accessed by unauthorised individuals. Individual's confidential information should not be communicated via email (e.g. any information should not make the individual identifiable by name, address etc.).

Records must be maintained of staff and volunteer training and DBS checks. These will be maintained by the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/safeguarding-records-practice-guidance/>

## 8. Safer Recruitment and ongoing support and supervision

All recruitment of staff and volunteers will be undertaken in line with Church of England policy 'Safer Recruitment, 2016'<sup>5</sup>. See the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop Safer Recruitment Policy for further information.

Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken by those delegated such responsibility from PCC. Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken according to agreed process. All recruited staff and volunteers will be made known to PCC.

Anyone who has not been safely recruited will not be permitted to work unsupervised with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable.

In brief, all staff and volunteers will:

- ❖ have all recruitment checks completed and approved prior to starting in role.
- ❖ all eligible staff and volunteers will have a repeat DBS disclosure every 5 years. Any lapsed DBS check will require the post holder to stand down until the check has been completed.
- ❖ attend safeguarding training as required by the Church of England.
- ❖ attend any other training as decided by the PCC.
- ❖ have a named supervisor.

## 9. Staffing Levels - Children's Groups

1. Those responsible for organising activities need to think carefully about safe staffing levels, taking into account the age ranges of the children involved, any special needs they may have, the nature of the activities, and staff qualifications where that is appropriate (e.g. if groups of children are being taken swimming).
2. The number of adults needs to be increased to take account of the factors above e.g. if groups are being taken out on a trip to take account of potential dangers and risks. The number of adults needed to deal with under-3s should ensure that no-one would have to carry more than 2 children in the event of a fire or other emergency. If there are children who have disabilities they will need special consideration.
3. There should ALWAYS be a minimum of 2 adults but with different ages the adult /child ratio should be:

**0 – 2 years:** 1 adult to 3 children

**9 - 12 years:** 1 adult to 8 children

**2 - 3 years:** 1 adult to 4 children

**13 - 18 years:** 1 adult to 10 children

**4 - 8 years:** 1 adult to 6 children

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/c-e-safer-recruitment-2016/>



4. Swimming activities - there should be one adult in the water with every 3 children under the age of eight. It is also advisable to have a qualified lifesaver available if the activity is not supervised by the swimming pool's own attendants.
5. It can be helpful to check that there is a first aider present.
6. Where other organisations are using church premises they should meet the staffing requirements of their registering authority or umbrella organisation.
7. Only those who have a DBS check for regulated activity should ever be on their own with a child or young person, e.g. toilet trips or mentoring.

## 10. Health and Safety

1. An up to date First Aid Kit should always be available. This will be maintained by the Office Staff.
2. All accidents should be recorded in the Accident Book, indicating what happened, when, who was present and who was affected by the accident. The report should be signed and dated, and a copy held in the church office.
3. Incidents which occur which could give rise to an accident in the future should be noted and reported to the Youth and Children's leader for future reference in order that steps may be taken to avoid such accidents.
4. A register should be kept of attendance at all youth groups, including a list of the adults who were present. Parental consent should be obtained for regular attendance at all Youth and Children's groups. These records will be kept by the Youth Leader in a locked cabinet for a minimum of 5 years.
5. Church premises will not be used to provide sleeping accommodation without the specific permission of the PCC.
6. If a church group wishes to take a party of young people on a day trip or for residential activities they should ensure that parental consent to the trip, risk assessments, health forms etc. are properly completed.
7. Risk assessments should be completed for all groups and for any unusual activities, e.g. cooking.

## 11. Insurance

1. A comprehensive insurance policy will be in place.
2. Where children are being taken out, the organisers must ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for transport to and from the activities involved. The PCC needs to be informed of all planned external activities; the Leadership team can be informed on behalf of the PCC if there is no PCC meeting in advance of the trip.
3. Organisations which use the building may need to have their own additional insurance arrangements.

## 12. Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Responsibilities
Parochial Church Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Agree, implement, monitor and review annually this safeguarding policy and all associated policies</li> <li>❖ Ensure all staff and volunteers are recruited safely</li> <li>❖ Agree and implement supporting good practice guidance and processes</li> <li>❖ Ensure adequate insurance for all activities</li> <li>❖ Recruit and support adequate Parish Safeguarding Officers</li> <li>❖ Ensure all staff and volunteers are adequately trained and supervised</li> </ul>
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Respond to all safeguarding allegations and concerns according to policy and guidance</li> <li>❖ Monitor and report to PCC regarding adherence to policy and practice</li> <li>❖ Arrange safeguarding training and maintain records</li> <li>❖ Process DBS disclosures for the church and maintain records</li> </ul>
Incumbent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Act as a point of contact should there be any safeguarding allegation or concern regarding a PSO</li> </ul>
Church Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Take part in the allegations management procedure when required</li> <li>❖ Take part in an 'agreement' as per 'ministering to those that may present a risk'</li> </ul>
Activity Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Follow the Safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance</li> <li>❖ Ensure that activities are run according to good practice guidance</li> <li>❖ Report any safeguarding concerns as per policy</li> <li>❖ Ensure all volunteers are safely recruited</li> <li>❖ Ensure all volunteers have in date training and DBS check as required</li> <li>❖ Ensure all new volunteers receive agreed induction</li> <li>❖ Supervise agreed volunteers</li> </ul>
Staff and Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Follow the safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance</li> <li>❖ Report any safeguarding concern as per policy</li> </ul>
Church members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Be aware of the safeguarding and associated policies</li> <li>❖ Report any concerns as per policy</li> </ul>

### **13. Policy implementation and review**

This policy was agreed by the Parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop PCC on **12 May 2021**.

All staff, volunteers and ministers are required to abide by this policy and associated good practice guidance.

This policy will be made available on the Church website; and on the Safeguarding notice board.

This policy will be monitored via annual audit and annual report to PCC.

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

**Next review due: May 2022**

### **14. Additional Related Policies**

#### **Photographs and videos**

It is the policy of the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop that no one should take photographs of children or young people without the written consent of that child's parent or carer and the consent of that child where they are old enough to give consent.

Where photographs are to be taken consent will be gained from parents and carers in advance, using the agreed form. This will stipulate: who will take photos, for what purpose they may be used, how they will be stored and after what period they will be destroyed. All photos and videos taken for the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop should be stored securely on devices belonging to PCC. No photo or video should be left stored on personal photography or videography equipment.

No photo will be taken, shared or used for any purpose which shows a child in any state of undress.

Children will not be named in publicity related to photographs or video.

Where an event may be photographed and is open to the public; signs will be displayed noting that photographs and or video may be taken and inviting anyone not wishing to be in any photos or video used to make this known to a named person. The photographer/ videographer will be named on these signs and will wear ID.

Only those delegated with that responsibility by PCC may ask for parental consent and arrange the taking of any photo or video.

#### **Communications and Social Media**

The detailed policy on social media is set out in Appendix 2. It is the policy of the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop that no one employed on a paid or voluntary basis, serving as a PCC member or as a licensed minister will contact children or young people directly via social media, email, phone or text without the knowledge and consent of that child or young person's parent or carer.

Where such contact needs to be made (for example a text to advise of a change of time for an activity) the child's parent or carer will be asked for consent in advance and the parent or carer will be copied into that communication.

Very rarely contact may be made with a child or young person without the knowledge of the child's parents or carers (for example where there are serious safeguarding concerns for a child and it would increase the risk to the child to contact the parent). In this case the person making contact with the child must agree in advance with the Parish Safeguarding Officer that this is appropriate, a second adult should be copied into all communications e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer or Incumbent and must keep a record of all communications and provide these to the Parish Safeguarding Officer for the case record.

Where a group wishes to have a social media account to publicise or communicate regarding their group or activity the following will apply:

- ❖ The account shall not be a personal account belonging to any group member or leader; it will be a separate group account.
- ❖ More than one adult will be administrator for the account so that all content and messages can be seen by more than one adult.
- ❖ All users will be made aware that bullying, harassment or other anti-social behavior will not be tolerated. Information will be available to all users about how to raise a concern about the conduct of others and who with.
- ❖ Steps must be taken to prevent people outside the group having access to the names or personal details of anyone who is part of the group e.g. if a group Facebook page is used, the account settings should prevent group members being identified and any message sent to anyone other than the administrator.
- ❖ All those in a leadership role will ensure that their language is professional and appropriate e.g. not adding 'xx' to messages, not using nicknames that are not what the leader is called by everyone else, avoiding addressing others by endearments which would be ambiguous, such as 'love'.
- ❖ Further advice and information regarding online safety is available from the Diocese Safeguarding Team.

### **Hire of Church Premises for non-Church events and activities (whether a fee is chargeable or not)**

Organisations and individual users meeting at 'the parish church and halls of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop' will be expected to adhere to this safeguarding policy or where they work regularly with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable, to have their own safeguarding policy.

The parish of St Mary Magdalene, Stoke Bishop is responsible for overseeing users and ensuring that the agreed hire process and forms are in use. This will include obtaining a copy of the hirer's safeguarding policy where relevant and providing a copy of this policy.

## 15. Useful contacts

### Parish Safeguarding Officer

Caroline Owen 07711 821765 and 0117 9684646

Dedicated e mail address [safeguarding@stmarysb.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stmarysb.org.uk)

### Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

Adam Bond Tel: 0117 906 0100 (office hours) Email: adam.bond@bristoldiocese.org

**Out of Hours:** If advice is needed on a safeguarding issue and the PSO or DSA are not available, the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) provide a helpline that can be contacted on **0845 120 4550**. Please state that you are calling from a Diocese of Bristol church and contact your PSO as soon as possible to report that you sought advice from CCPAS and action taken.

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** 0117 903 7795

#### Children:

<b>First Response Team</b>	<b>0117 903 6444</b> for any new referrals
<b>Outside office hours</b>	<b>01454 615165</b> Emergency Duty Team
<b>Early Help Team</b>	<b>0117 9038700</b>
<b>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)</b>	<b>0117 9037795</b>

#### Adults:

<b>Care Direct</b>	<b>0117 9222700</b>
<b>Age related concerns</b>	<b>0117 9297537</b>
<a href="http://www.ageuk.org.uk/bristol">http:// www.ageuk.org.uk/bristol</a>	
<b>Police</b>	<b>999 (emergency) or 101 (non-emergency)</b>

## 16. Additional Information:

**Child Sexual Exploitation:** All children and young people can be at risk of sexual exploitation. This includes boys and girls of any age. This is a form of sexual abuse. Whilst young people can give consent to sexual acts from the age of 16 (so long as they have the capacity to do so) they continue to be at risk of sexual exploitation beyond their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Any concern that a child or young person may be at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation must be reported immediately to Children's Social Care or the police.**

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/ economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

**Female Genital Mutilation:** Female genital mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. It has been estimated that over 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the UK each year, and that 66,000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM. However, the true extent is unknown, due to the "hidden" nature of the crime. The girls may be taken to their countries of origin so that FGM can be carried out during the summer holidays, allowing them time to "heal" before they return to school. There are also worries that some girls may have FGM performed in the UK. Any concern that a child or adult who may be vulnerable may be at risk of FGM must be reported immediately to the relevant Local Authority or directly to police.

**Terrorism and Extremism:** Any person may become drawn into extremism or sympathy with such views and into terrorism. This will often happen through contacts made via the internet but a culture that supports this can develop in any community, group, school or faith organisation. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places duties on certain bodies, not including Faith Organisations (excepting where such an organisation runs a school or other relevant premises) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Everybody should be alert to any indication that a person or group may be developing or has developed an interest or ideology that may include harm to others. **Any concern related to this whether for a child or adult must be reported to the police without delay.**

## Appendix 1: Categories of Abuse and additional information

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
<b>Physical</b> Adults and Children	Non-accidental harm to the body. From careless rough handling to direct physical violence. Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions.	Hitting, slapping, pinching, shaking, pushing, scalding, burning, dragging, kicking, physical restraint, locking an individual in a room or a car.	History of unexplained falls or minor injuries, bruising which is characteristic of non-accidental injury – hand slap marks, pinch marks, grip marks, bite marks, scalds, flinching, reluctant to undress.
<b>Sexual</b> Adults and Children	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without capacity and/or consent. Individual did not fully understand or was pressured into consenting.  Note: A child under 16 years old can never consent to any sexual act	Coercion to be involved in the making or watching of pornographic material. Coercion to touch e.g. of breasts, genitals, anus, mouth, masturbation of either self or others, penetration or attempted penetration of vagina, anus, mouth with or by penis, fingers and or other objects	Pregnancy in a woman unable to give consent, difficulty in walking or sitting with no apparent explanation, torn, stained or bloody underclothes or bedding, Bleeding, bruising to the rectal and/or vaginal area, bruising. Behavioural changes, sexually explicit behaviour, explicit language, self-harm, obsession with washing, fear of pregnancy may be exaggerated
<b>Emotional</b> Adults and Children	Behaviour which has a harmful effect on an individual's emotional well-being or development, causing mental distress undermining their self-esteem and affecting individual's quality of life. Wilful infliction of mental suffering by a person in a position of trust and power.	Shouting, coercion, bullying, blaming, insulting, ignoring, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, depriving an individual of the right to choice and their privacy, dignity, self-expression, deprivation of contact, undermining self-esteem, isolation and over-dependence. Failure to provide a loving environment for a child.	Loss of interest, withdrawn, anxious or depressed, frightened, avoiding eye contact, irritable, aggressive or challenging behaviour, unexplained sleep disturbance, self-harm, refusing to eat, deliberate soiling, unusual weight gain or loss
<b>Neglect</b> Adults and Children	Failure of any person who has responsibility for the charge, care or	Fail to meet basic needs including food, environment, access to	Unwashed/ dirty appearance, clothes too small/big, untreated

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
	custody of an adult at risk or child to provide the amount and type of care or treatment that a responsible person could be expected to provide.	health care and education, failure to provide for social needs.	sores or infections, isolation.
<b>Financial</b> Adults	The unauthorised taking (theft), deprivation or misuse of any money, income, assets, funds, personal belongings or property or any resources of an adult at risk without their informed consent or authorisation.	Misuse of power of attorney or appointeeship. Money and possessions stolen, misuse or misappropriating money, valuables or property, possessions or benefits, undue pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, denying the adult at risk the right to access funds, unauthorised disposal of property or possessions, being asked to part with money on false pretences,	Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, Power of Attorney obtained and misused when a person lacks or does not lack mental capacity to understand, unexplained withdrawal of money with no benefits, person lacking goods or services that they can afford, extortionate demands for payments for services
<b>Organisational</b> Adults	Involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide safe, appropriate and acceptable standards of service to adults at risk.  Mainly relates to health and social care provision but aspects may be relevant to Church settings	Lack of individualised care, inappropriate confinement or restriction, sensory deprivation, inappropriate use of rules, custom and practice	Whistle blowing policy not in place and accessible, insufficient employees training and development. Organisational standards not meeting those laid down by regulatory bodies, service users not treated with dignity and respect, diverse needs not recognized and valued in terms of age, gender, disability, ethnic origin, race or sexual orientation, services not flexible
<b>Discriminatory</b> Adults	Exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity	Verbal abuse, harassment or similar treatment, unequal treatment, deliberate exclusion from services	Repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment and criminal justice



Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
	to some groups or individuals.	such as education, health, justice and access to services and protection, harmful or derisive attitudes, inappropriate use of language	
<b>Modern Slavery</b>	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.	Adult or Child trafficked into UK or between places in UK for purpose of sexual abuse or labour. Adult or Child forced to work as domestic servant. Adult or child forced to work as sex worker, farm labourer, car cleaner.	Individual may not have their passport or Identity documents. They may not have access to or contact with friends and family. May never be left alone, live in poor conditions, not be able to leave of own free will. May have no access to funds. May not know where they are or who they are with.
<b>Self-Neglect</b>	A wide range of behaviour involving neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.	May not react to or appropriately fulfil needs for health care, food, warmth. May live in an environment that is an environmental or fire risk and not take any measure to reduce risk or inadequate measures.	Environment, which is poorly maintained, dirty, animal infested, cramped to the degree that it places the individual's wellbeing at risk. May have untreated or inadequately treated physical health issues.
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. Age range 16+	Includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so, called 'honour' based violence; Female Genital Mutilation; forced marriage.	Appears to be afraid of partner / of making own choices, behaves as though she/he deserves to be hurt or mistreated, low self-esteem or appear to be withdrawn, appears unable or unwilling to leave perpetrator, makes excuses for or condones the behaviour of the person alleged to have caused harm, blames abuse on themselves

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
<b>Spiritual Abuse</b> <sup>12</sup> (not defined in Statutory Guidance)	Inappropriate use of religious belief or practice	The misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing or deliverance ministries which may result in various types of harm.	Could be any of the above.

## Appendix 2: Social Media Policy

A guide for staff and volunteers on using Social Media to promote the work of St Mary's Church, Stoke Bishop and in a personal capacity.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually. St Mary's Parochial Church Council are responsible for amending this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.  
Date of last review: September 2020

This Policy is to be read and signed by at least the following groups of people within St Mary's Church:

- Licensed Clergy
- Licensed Lay Ministers
- Employees of St Mary's PCC
- Interns and Ministry Experience Scheme Workers
- Trinity College Placement Students
- PCC members
- Volunteers working with children and young people
- Volunteers whose role involves communicating using Social Media on behalf of St Mary's Church

Evidence that this policy has been read and signed should be held by the person's line manager or supervisor, or by the PCC Secretary in the case of PCC members. Ideally this would take place when someone takes on a new role. Other people not listed above may be asked to sign it at the discretion of the Vicar.

### 1. What is Social Media?

Social Media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which can be accessed on a smart phone or computer that enables users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of Social Media include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Tik Tok, Snap Chat, Zoom, and Instagram.

Use of Social Media is common among many people and a large part of how people communicate today. While Social Media may in some respects be similar to face-to-face communication we are aware that the more relaxed and immediate nature of Social Media, alongside the absence of social cues we have in face-to-face interaction, poses risks that we must be aware of.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/175437/Action\\_Plan\\_-\\_Abuse\\_linked\\_to\\_Faith\\_or\\_Belief.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://files.ccpas.co.uk/documents/Help-SpiritualAbuse%20\(2015\).pdf](http://files.ccpas.co.uk/documents/Help-SpiritualAbuse%20(2015).pdf)

## 2. Why do we, as St Mary's, use Social Media?

It may be appropriate for Social Media to be used to further the work of St Mary's to share content or information regarding upcoming events, public notices, and community engagement. Various forms of Social Media may be used to reach different audiences.

### 2.1 General communication

The aim of using Social Media should be to share neutral or positive news pertaining to St Mary's and the Diocese of Bristol, and the Church of England in a more general sense where appropriate. Social Media should not be used to create controversy or offence to those who will view it.

### 2.2 Specific communication

Alongside this, Social Media can be used to communicate with groups of people who are known to the church to relay information and updates about groups or events in a more direct way. Both adults and young people may be contacted in ways that are suitable to them.

## 3. Purpose of Social Media Policy

This Social Media policy aims to make clear how St Mary's should be portrayed on the Church's Social Media channels by those approved to use and post on them. It will also give guidance on how those affiliated with St Mary's should conduct themselves on Social Media. Social Media is a large part of most people's professional and private lives and is seen as an extension of the face-to-face interactions they have offline. Because of this it is important to set out clear guidelines for all who use Social Media on behalf of St Mary's as well as those connected to St Mary's in an employed or voluntary capacity. Whatever content is shared on Social Media carries similar connotations of other print media (digital or otherwise). Whatever is posted to Social Media should reflect the values you hold as a Christian and other areas of your work. Whatever is posted should be done so under consideration of who will see it and how that will reflect towards you in your role and reflect the church.

## 4. Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for all employees of St Mary's, and those who are part of the Ministry Team, including clergy, church wardens, licensed ministers, Interns, MES worker and Trinity Theological College Placement students. It is also for all volunteers whose role involves them communicating on behalf of St Mary's church using Social Media. This will typically include those working with young people but may also include others.

## 5. Role of the PCC and Named Person

The role of the PCC is to be aware of this document and select a Named Person to have oversight of Social Media communications on Behalf of St Mary's. The named person will be accountable to their line manager and the Safeguarding Officer. The named person is Hayley Brydges, St Mary's Youth Minister. This person must be able to access all Social Media accounts for accountability. This person must also be aware of current Safeguarding regulations in relation to Social Media and if they witness or have anything reported to them that is a Safeguarding concern, they are to report to the Safeguarding Officer immediately.

## 6. Risks of using Social Media

While there are many benefits to using Social Media within the work of St Mary's, there are also risks which need to be considered before initial or continued use of Social Media.

## 6.1 Forming inappropriate relationships

Communicating through Social Media poses the risk of forming inappropriate relationships with others online. The naturally informal nature of Social Media may lead to the types of conversations which in person you would naturally avoid or be more aware of, overly friendly language for example. This, alongside the use of symbols and pictures, like emojis or 'xx' or Gifs can convey a message which may be misunderstood by the recipient or reader. A person should be aware of this particularly when communicating with someone of the opposite sex, children and young people, and vulnerable adults. We must be aware of how we are communicating with others on Social Media and consider how what we might say may be perceived to ensure the content could not be viewed as grooming or manipulation by a third party.

## 6.2 Saying things that are inappropriate or inflammatory

Social Media may make us feel removed from the things that we are commenting or messaging in a way that we would not be in fact to face interaction. This can make it so that we comment in ways which we would not ordinarily about people, places, events, ideas, and organisations. Making these comments on Social Media could mean that they are easily 'shared', or screen shots taken of them and shown to a wider audience than originally intended. Some comments made could be construed as:

- Unfounded, defamatory, bullying, racist or harassing statements
- Breaches data protection
- Material of an illegal nature
- Offensive sexual references
- Inappropriate language

Comments of this kind should be avoided on the St Mary's Social Media platforms and direct messaged should be responded to, if appropriate, in consultation with a named person. We ask that on the personal profiles of who this document relates to that such comments are avoided for your personal reputation, that of St Mary's, and the organisations we are linked to.

## 6.3 Difficulties concerning maintaining confidentiality

Whatever is shared on Social Media should not be in breach of any person's confidentiality. If something is shared which could be identifiable information a person has the right to request it is removed.

## 6.4 Blurring of personal and professional boundaries

When using Social Media, it can be hard to maintain the personal and professional boundaries in place for face-to-face working as well as personal opinions and beliefs not held by St Mary's being shared and associated with the church. Work that is done on behalf of the church should be done through Social Media platforms set up for only this purpose. Also, when posting to a St Mary's or personal Social Media these things should be considered:

- Always assume that everything you write is permanent and can be viewed by anyone at any time.
- Always assume that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues or the church.
- Never say anything that you would not wish to be quoted publicly.

## 6.5 Harassment and bullying

Social Media is sometimes used to harass and bully others publicly or through direct messaging. Also, those using Social Media on behalf of St Mary's should be aware of harassment by 'bots' (accounts set up to spam pages or other accounts into clicking on malicious links). Young people and vulnerable adults are particularly susceptible to this. It must be made clear to all accessing Social Media that any behaviour of this kind will not be tolerated.

## 6.6 Grooming

There are clear dangers to children, young people, and vulnerable adults from those who use Social Media to groom others.

## 6.7 Security

Social Media platforms may be 'hacked' or come under some technical fault which interferes with their level of security. Each church Social Media platform is advised to have a different and 'strong' password which is known by those who post and the Named Person and not shared anywhere else. Passwords should be updated, and other security advice given by that platform should be considered and followed by those who access the platforms and the Named Person.

## 7. Consent

To share photos of adults and contact them through Social Media of any kind St Mary's Privacy Policy must be followed at all times. A person has the right to remove permission of their photo being shared or their permission to be contacted at any time. For young people and children written consent must be given parents/carers for:

- Photographs from activities or events in official church publications, or from the church's Social Media, website and displays
- Email communication
- Use of telephone, text message and other messaging services between young people and adults
- Young people connecting to the church's Social Media pages
- Use of video calling services such as Zoom

## 8. Confidentiality

It should be made known to all who engage with the Social Media that although security measures are undertaken to ensure the safety of the Social Media platforms, the platforms themselves are not confidential systems. Those commenting or messaging on the Social Media platforms should be reminded not to share sensitive data about themselves. Also, if there is something shared on a Social Media platform where there is concern that a young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of abuse or harm, or they themselves pose a risk to others, the church's safeguarding procedure must be followed. Any concerning messages or interactions must be saved and shared with the Safeguarding Officer. Parents of young people, or those looking to know more about internet safety and confidentiality can be recommended these websites:

- Thinkuknow
- ParentZone
- Parents Protect - Internet Safety
- ChildNet International
- NSPCC
- Child Line

## 9. Conduct in a trusted role

In your role at St Mary's you are in a trusted position and working on behalf of the church. To many you will be a role model for your faith and for the way to interact with people face-to-face and on Social Media. Therefore, when using Social Media in your personal life we ask that you remember you are in this trusted role and consider the things written above in what you share and post.

### 9.1 Be Safe

As with any face-to-face interaction the safety of young people, vulnerable adults, and yourself must be maintained. If anything is raised that is a concern speak to the Safeguarding Officer.

### 9.2 Be Respectful, Be Kind, Be Honest

Do not start, engage with, or perpetuate any behaviour that could be classed as harassment or bullying as outlined in 7.5. Treat others how you would wish to be treated and do not mislead anyone you are interacting with as to who you are.

### 9.3 Take Responsibility

You are responsible for the things that you post and comment in the way you are for the things you do and say face-to-face. This does extend to your personal use of Social Media as you are affiliated with the church. If you are unsure if a message, text, or image is unsuitable do not post it.

### 9.4 Follow the rules

When using Social Media for St Mary's be aware of the rules set out by the platform you are using. This may include age restrictions, what can or cannot be shared, copyright information etc. Social Media platforms have a 'report' function that you can use if you see anyone violating these rules.

### 9.5 Credit Others

When reposting or sharing something that is the property of another person make sure that they are correctly cited. Ensure if doing this that you do not release any sensitive information.

### 9.6 Disagree Well

As with face-to-face interaction use your wisdom if in a conversation where there is disagreement. The values that you hold should come across in what you say and how you say it. Social Media makes us feel that all communication must be instantaneous, however, use judgement when replying to sensitive messages and seek advice from the Named Person or other trusted staff member.

## 10. Social Media Groups/pages involving young people or vulnerable adults

### 10.1 Usernames and emails

The Social Media groups and pages that may be created for young people and vulnerable adults to specially interact with should be created so only using a St Mary's account. This should be done by using 'example@stmarysb.org.uk' email address or a church use only number, not your personal details.

## 10.2 Group administrators

There should be more than one person who has access to a social media page or group. This would usually be a named leader and the Named Person but can also include other leaders.

## 10.3 Transparency

Try to keep all messaging in public view as 1-2-1 communication is not advised. Where there is 1-2-1 communication with a young person, young people must be made aware that these conversations can be viewed by the Named Person and other leaders. The reasons for this procedure should be shared with the young person. If the group/page is messaged privately try to answer publicly where possible or bring another leader into that conversation. You may want to decide upon setting up a group/page that you will turn off/not answer direct messages from young people. If using a platform like Instagram be aware of what interactions are available to the young people through this page. Apps like Snap Chat should not be used to communicate with young people.

## 10.4 Photos

Any photos put onto these pages or groups falls under the Consent section of this document.

## 10.5 Contacting young people directly

Where possible contact young people via their parents. To contact young people directly parental permission should be obtained. This can be through a parent's email address or if using Zoom (as age of use is 16+) a parent's email address should be used.

## 10.6 Safeguarding concerns

If something is shared on a Social Media platform where there is concern that a young person is at risk of abuse or harm, or they themselves pose a risk to others, the church's safeguarding procedure must be followed. Any concerning messages or interactions should be saved and shared with the Safeguarding Officer.

## 11. Mobile Phones

### 11.1 Contacting young people using text/WhatsApp

If using services like text or WhatsApp to contact others another Church Officer should be present in the group/1-2-1 message - people should be informed of the reasons why. Communication should be kept within contact hours which should be kept so sociable times, not after 8pm for example.

### 11.2 Data storage

Back up and save conversations regularly so they can be reviewed by the Named Person.

### 11.3 Boundaries

As much as possible we encourage that you do not use your personal mobile number to interact with those you are working with to maintain good personal and professional boundaries.

## 11.4 Phone calls to young people

If you need to call a young person do this over voice call and in a public space where you can be both seen and heard.

## 11.5 Safeguarding concerns

If any concerning messages or pictures are shared speak to the Named Person and Safeguarding Officer.

## 12. 'Leaving' Social Media

It is advised that when you are finished uploading/posting to Social Media or the communication hours are 'finished' for the day, that you log off of whichever application you are using. This is to ensure that you will not be contacted at inappropriate hours, that nothing can be accidentally posted to a St Mary's Social Media account without your knowledge, or that no one can use any of St Mary's Social Media pretending to be you.

## 13. Compliance

Misuse of Social Media by those to whom this policy applies will result in any offending content being removed and may lead to the individual being suspended from using Social Media as a representative of the church. A note of the incident will be kept and in the case of a safeguarding issue will be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding team or the Police if appropriate. More serious violations may also be pursued through the provisions of the appropriate Disciplinary Procedure and could include dismissal.

## **Appendix 3: Lone Working and Personal Safety ( An extract from the Health and Safety Policy)**

Quite a lot of tasks in the life of church involve lone working, from setting up for a communion service, through cleaning the church building to pastoral visiting, and many others besides.

### **11.1 General Guidance**

Many of the tasks we perform in our daily duties are quite safe, but risks are multiplied by working alone. It is therefore necessary to plan quite carefully. High among your priorities when assessing the risks must be how you would evacuate the area you are working in if an accident occurred (ensuring a safe level of lighting on your escape route is vital, for instance), and what you would do if rendered immobile by an accident. Having a working mobile phone, with a charged battery (and checking that it has a strong signal where you're working) is a great help.

If working alone, always inform a responsible person that you are doing so, what you are doing, and how long you expect to be. Inform them when you have finished and have left the area.

Some tasks, such as working at heights, may be considered too hazardous to be carried out alone. Careful thought also needs to be given to the age, health, and competence of those working alone. A task such as setting the communion table before a service (which involves carrying chalices, patterns, bread and jugs of wine up and down steps in and out of the vicar's vestry) might be a low risk when carried out by someone young and reasonably fit and well but might be quite hazardous



when carried out by someone with mobility issues, or whose sight isn't very good. Such a person might be able to carry out the task, but would probably require closer, more regular supervision.

If you are alone in the church building when nobody else is on site, you should ensure that all the doors are locked.