

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the Genesis account of creation, which affirms that every human being is created 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.

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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 Vulnerable Adults.

2. Policy Statement

It is the responsibility of all members of the church of St Mary's, **hereby referred to as St Mary's**, 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 recognize 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, 2016¹ (see also **Appendix 3** - 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 and 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. 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.

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.

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

5. What to do if you are concerned that abuse/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	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

When 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:

First Response Team

Outside office hours

Early Help Team

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

0117 903 6444 for any new referrals

01454 615165 Emergency Duty Team

0117 9038700

0117 9037795

Adults:

Vulnerable adults safeguarding team

Vulnerable adults out of hours

Age related concerns, Age UK

0117 9222700

01454 615165

0117 9297537

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's 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's 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'² 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
- 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'³ (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.
- 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 behaviour and support offered.

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

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

6. Confidentiality and consent

Confidentiality: The parish of St Mary's 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's 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's 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's 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's 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' 2015⁴ (Available on the Diocese of Bristol website).

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

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.

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'. See **Appendix 3** for the St Mary's Safer Recruitment Policy for further information. Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken by employees or licensed ministers, and they will only do so after consultation with the Incumbent. Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken according to agreed process. All recruited staff and volunteers will be made known to PCC, by having a standard staff matters update at all PCC meetings.

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 relevant 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.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Responsibilities
Parochial Church Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree, implement, monitor and review annually this safeguarding policy and all associated policies • Ensure all staff and volunteers are recruited safely • Agree and implement supporting good practice guidance and processes • Ensure adequate insurance for all activities • Recruit and support adequate Parish Safeguarding Officers • Ensure all staff and volunteers are adequately trained and supervised
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) supported by Deputy Safeguarding officer (DPSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to all safeguarding allegations and concerns according to policy and guidance • Monitor and report to PCC regarding adherence to policy and practice • Arrange safeguarding training and maintain records • Process DBS disclosures for the church and maintain records
Incumbent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a point of contact should there be any safeguarding allegation or concern regarding a PSO
Church Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in the allegations management procedure when required • Take part in an 'agreement' as per 'ministering to those that may

	present a risk'
Social Media Named Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This person must be able to access all Social Media accounts for accountability and also be aware of current Safeguarding regulations in relation to Social Media. If they witness or have anything reported to them that is a Safeguarding concern, they are to report to the Parish Safeguarding Officer immediately.
Activity Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the Safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance Ensure that activities are run according to good practice guidance Report any safeguarding concerns as per policy Ensure all volunteers are safely recruited Ensure all volunteers have in date training and DBS checks as required Ensure all new volunteers receive agreed induction Supervise agreed volunteers
Staff and Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance Report any safeguarding concern as per policy
Church members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of the safeguarding and associated policies Report any concerns as per policy

10. Policy implementation and review

This policy was agreed by the Parish of St Mary's PCC on 10 July 2024?

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 the Safeguarding noticeboard.
- This policy will be monitored by the Bristol Diocese Safeguarding Team via the Church of England Safeguarding Dashboard
- This policy is to be reviewed annually. Next review due: **July 2025**

11. Additional Related Policies

Photographs and videos

It is the policy of the parish of St Mary's 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's 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 without

the written consent of the child's parent or carer. Only those delegated with that responsibility by PCC may ask for parental consent and arrange the taking of any photo or video.

At services where there are children or young people up front, there will be a verbal and/or screen notice to the effect of "You will be notified at an appropriate time during the service to take a photo. For safeguarding purposes photos are not permitted at any other time during this event."

Communications and Social Media

The detailed Social Media policy is set out in our Communications Policy. It is the policy of the parish of St Mary's that no one employed on a paid or voluntary basis, serving as a PCC member or as a licensed minister will contact vulnerable adults, 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.

Hire of Church Premises for non-church events/activities (regardless of whether a fee is charged) Organisations and individual users meeting at 'the parish church and halls of St Mary's' 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.

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

12. Useful contacts

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Caroline Owen 07711 821765 and 0117 9684646

Dedicated e mail address safeguarding@stmarysb.org.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Helen Meadows

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:

First Response Team

0117 903 6444 for any new referrals

Outside office hours

01454 615165 Emergency Duty Team

Early Help Team

0117 9038700

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

0117 9037795

Adults:

Care Direct

0117 9222700

Age related concerns

0117 9297537 www.ageuk.org.uk/bristol

Police

999 (emergency) or 101 (non-emergency)

13. 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 16th 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
Physical 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.
Sexual 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.
Emotional 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 choose and their privacy, dignity, self-expression, deprivation of contact, undermining self-esteem, isolation, and over-dependence. Failure to	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

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
		provide a loving environment for a child.	
Neglect Adults and Children	Failure of any person who has responsibility for the charge, care, or 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.	Fail to meet basic needs including food, environment, access to health care and education, failure to provide for social needs.	Unwashed/ dirty appearance, clothes too small/big, untreated sores or infections, isolation.
Financial 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
Organisational 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

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
			recognized and valued in terms of age, gender, disability, ethnic origin, race or sexual orientation, services not flexible
Discriminatory Adults	Exists when values, beliefs, or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals.	Verbal abuse, harassment or similar treatment, unequal treatment, deliberate exclusion from services such as education, health, justice and access to services and protection, harmful or derisive attitudes, inappropriate use of language	Repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment, and criminal justice
Modern Slavery	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.
Self-Neglect	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.

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
Domestic Violence	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
Spiritual Abuse⁵⁶ (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.

⁵ [http://files.ccpas.co.uk/documents/Help-SpiritualAbuse%20\(2015\).pdf](http://files.ccpas.co.uk/documents/Help-SpiritualAbuse%20(2015).pdf)

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf

Appendix 2:

Safer Recruitment policy

All recruitment of paid staff to any post within the Church of England must comply with the Church of England 'Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance, 2016'. Failure to follow this policy in full may invalidate insurance cover, place children and adults at risk and constitute a reportable breach to the Charity Commission. **The recruitment of volunteers who work in a leadership role, or a role that could be seen by other as a leadership role, must follow the same procedures as the recruitment of paid staff.**

It is particularly important to make sure that anyone having substantial contact with children and vulnerable adults within the church is safely recruited.

The practice of ensuring that all paid and relevant volunteer staff are recruited in a way that ensures those individuals have the values and skills to do the work we ask of them and that people who present a risk to vulnerable groups e.g. children or vulnerable adults, do not work with them. One of the strengths of church is the coming together of people of all ages and backgrounds. However, where someone wants to cause harm, this is also one of church's weaknesses. By recruiting safely, we meet our responsibilities to those we support to do all we can to ensure that those that lead, guide and work with the most vulnerable people are there to do good rather than to cause harm.

St Mary's is committed to implementing safer recruitment practice in the recruitment of all relevant volunteers and employees. The relevant vetting scheme is that of the Disclosure and Barring Service. The suitability of an applicant to work with children or adults at risk is never solely dependent on the outcome of a DBS check and the full safer recruitment process will be used to determine suitability of the candidate for the role. Those who work with children and/or vulnerable adults, and those who supervise those workers, who are eligible for a DBS check, will be required to undertake that check prior to starting in any role, whether employed or voluntary, within the Diocese of Bristol, as part of a safer recruitment process.

Those who are not eligible for a DBS check will be recruited in line with safer recruitment practice including the use of applications forms, references, and interview where applicable. Suitable induction, training and supervision will be provided to all those serving the church in a named role.

The PCC have agreed that best practice is that those who have joined the church should wait for six months before taking on a named role or joining a rota, and to be safely recruited into any role when the time comes. There may be exceptional circumstances where a different approach should sensibly be taken, in consultation with the Leadership Team, though safer recruitment will always apply.

Recruitment process

Be clear about who is responsible for recruitment and who will be involved in the process. Write down in a role description; what the person will do, where, when, and a person specification: what skills are needed?

Use the role description to decide:

- What recruitment process is required
- Application

- Interview
- References
- Is the role eligible for a DBS check?

Ensure that the process is clear to applicants. Further information on how to decide on the process can be found in the Church of England 'Safer Recruitment policy, July 2016'. Advertise the role, making it clear what the role is, what the application process is and whether the role is eligible for a DBS disclosure check. This is your first chance to publicly state your commitment to safeguarding and safer recruitment.

Prepare application form. The aim is to find out why the applicant wants the role and what skills and experience they bring to it. What questions are asked on the form will depend on what the role is but where a role involves contact with vulnerable people it should always include:

- Name, address, and telephone number.
- Qualifications and experience.
- Employment history with an explanation for any gaps and reason for leaving (paid roles only)
- Contact details of named referees.
- Information (based on the job description and person specification) in support of the application for the role.
- A declaration that all the information contained in it is true and that the applicant agrees to a Disclosure check being carried out where eligible should the organisation wish to appoint them.
- Date and signature box for applicant.

Carry out the interview. Depending on the role this could be informal or formal. The aim is to explore further the information on the application form, allowing the applicant to demonstrate their skills and experience in relation to the role, what support or training they might need.

Offer the role to successful applicant. Use an offer letter, which also explains the next steps (NB: they must not start the role at this point!). Any offer of appointment to a role, paid or voluntary, must clearly state that this is subject to references and, where required, a DBS check.

Take up references. What is required will depend on the role. Where the role is paid and/or involves substantial contact with children and/or vulnerable adults ensure that at least one referee is a person from outside of the church. Obtaining references is an essential part of gathering information about the applicant. Ideally at least one reference should be from the current employer or a previous employer if they are not currently working/volunteering. The reference request should include requests for the following information:

- Comments about the applicants' ability to perform the duties of the role (the job description and person specification / volunteer role profile should accompany the reference request).
- Comments about the applicant's attitude towards children/vulnerable adults and towards safeguarding generally; and,
- Any further information that might give rise to concern, either about the applicants' attitudes, values or known practices.

Information given by the referee can then be compared with information provided by the applicant. References should be followed up with a telephone call in order to verify their identity and it provides an opportunity to clarify any queries you may have. It also provides an opportunity to thank the referee for their time in completing the reference. Two references should be obtained. It is good practice to inform those applying to work for you that you reserve the right to telephone referees and to contact

any previous employer if necessary.

Where the role involves substantial work with children and /or vulnerable adults ask the person to complete a "Confidential Self Declaration". This can be requested at the application stage and placed by the applicant into a sealed envelope but should not be opened until the post has been offered subject to referencing and a DBS check if eligible.

The person must only be confirmed in role and start once the whole process is complete. This includes satisfactory references and DBS disclosure certificate having been seen and any risk assessment required having been completed. The PCC must then be informed that the person has been recruited.

Probation and Review

It is important that once a new staff member, including volunteers, is in post that they are supervised to ensure that they are coping with their new role. Each individual should start on a probationary period. This is a period in which the individual can try out their role and the employer can ensure that the person they have recruited is working in the way expected. This is usually 3-6 months. A review should happen at intervals e.g. 3 and 6 months and then annually. Suitable induction, training and support should be offered during and after the probationary period.

Any individual working with children and/or vulnerable adults must have basic safeguarding training during induction and attend a refresher course at least every 3 years. Some roles will require additional or more advanced training. After recruitment, it is Church of England policy that all staff and volunteers in eligible roles apply for a new DBS Disclosure within 5 years of the last certificate.

Policy implementation and review

- All staff, volunteers and ministers are required to abide by this policy and associated good practice guidance.
- This policy will be made available from the Church office and from the Parish Safeguarding Officer safeguarding@stmarysb.org.uk
- This policy will be monitored via annual audit and annual report to PCC.
- This policy is to be reviewed annually.

Next review due: July 2026

Appendix 3

Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders

1. As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), St Mary's complies fully with the [code of practice](#)⁷ and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
2. St Mary's undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
3. St Mary's can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that St Mary's are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended).
4. St Mary's can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
5. St Mary's is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
6. St Mary's has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.
7. St Mary's actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.
8. St Mary's selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
9. An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
10. St Mary's ensures that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences.
11. St Mary's also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

12. At interview, or in a separate discussion, St Mary's ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
13. St Mary's makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice and makes a copy available on request.
14. St Mary's undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Next review due: July 2026

Appendix 4

Safeguarding Recording Form - Private and Confidential

This form is to be used within a parish when a concern is raised or disclosure is given. The form should be started and kept up to date by the Parish Safeguarding Officer and kept in a safe and secure location. The form can be typed or written as required.

Section 4 should be kept up to date to provide a record of activity and actions taken. If you require advice regarding the use of this form please contact the Diocese Safeguarding Team, Tel: 0117 9060100 safeguarding@bristoldiocese.org

Please fill in as many details as possible

Section 1: Who is this record about?

Details of the person you are concerned about:			
Is this person the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator:		Victim <input type="checkbox"/> Perpetrator <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please provide as much information about the person about whom you are concerned.			
Subject of concern is an:	Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Child <input type="checkbox"/>	Gender	Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>
Surname:		Forenames:	
If the person is a child please provide their parent/carers details if known:			
Surname:		Forename:	
Address:		Postcode:	
Telephone number:		Email:	
Surname:		Forename:	
Address:		Postcode:	
Telephone number:		Email:	
Have the parents/ carers been notified of this incident?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If Yes please provide details of what was said and what if any action has been agreed:			
If No please explain why the child's parents haven't been informed:			

Section 2 – What is this record about?

Details of the disclosure/incident			
Time and date of disclosure/ incident:	Time:		Date:
Name and contact details of person making the disclosure/ reporting the incident:			
Surname:		Forenames:	
Address:		Postcode:	
Telephone number:		Email:	
Location of disclosure/ incident:			
Names of anyone else (witnesses) who was present:			
Position if any within the Parish/Church:			
Surname:		Forename:	
Address:		Postcode:	
Telephone number:		Email:	
Record of disclosure/incident <i>(attach any notes made by others regarding the disclosure/Incident)</i>			
Has a previous referral been made:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Name of agencies involved already:	
Have you informed the DSA?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Time/Date of Discussion:	
Who else have you spoken to:			
Your name:			
Your contact number:			
Your role:			
Signed:		Date:	

Section 3 – Who else has been contacted?

Onward referrals and external agency involvement			
External referral made:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Time:		Date:
With consent:	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (If No please give reason)		
Referral form sent?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> (Attach a copy of the referral form if used)		
Name of social worker/ police officer/ team:			
Telephone number:			
Outcome of referral to external agency:	NFA <input type="checkbox"/> ongoing enquiries <input type="checkbox"/> open case <input type="checkbox"/>		
Other Action taken:			
Details of support offered:			
Name of person in the parish dealing with this referral:			
Signed:		Date:	

Section 4 – What are we doing?

Use this section to record ongoing actions and notes of any contact with other parties regarding this situation. It is advisable to type the information into the form to aid legibility.

Date	Details	Response/ Action	Signed