

The Parish of St Matthews, Tipton
SAFEGUARDING POLICY
PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on the 4th September 2023.

For the purpose of this Safeguarding Policy the definition of a young person/vulnerable adult is:

young people/person - means any individual aged 14 - 17 years old

vulnerable adult - Section 6 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 defines a 'vulnerable adult' as 'a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired.'

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

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

The Parish will:

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

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- We recognise that a position of power in relation to another creates a risk of vulnerability. As a consequence, we strive to ensure that we consider power when working and leading with people.
- We recognise that children by virtue of legal status and dependency on adults for their emotional and physical needs will always be vulnerable and at a disadvantage. We commit to considering this in our children's activities— undertaking supervision of staff working with them and risk assessing activities and groups as a check and balance in our work.
- We understand that illness, disability, race, mental health and other issues can put adults in a position of vulnerability. We accept that these can be long term (ongoing), or temporary. We commit to considering this in our adult's activities and events — undertaking supervision of staff and risk assessing activities and groups as a check and balance in our work.
- We commit to transparency in our actions and accountability for our work.
- As members of this parish, we commit ourselves to respectful pastoral care for all adults and children to whom we minister.
- We commit ourselves to the safeguarding of people who may be vulnerable, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church.
- We will consider issues relating to spiritual care in prayer activity, ensuring that members of our prayer team consider power, control and spiritual abuse issues in their ministry.
- We will ensure that leaders of our Kid's Church and House Groups (Connect Groups) as well as other ministries that involve working with vulnerable persons have appropriate enhanced DBS checks.
- We will ensure that those who care for people in our parish attend appropriate safeguarding training.
- We commit to discuss safeguarding and support of safeguarding as a standing PCC agenda item.
- We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
- We will ensure that those in positions of trust (such as wardens), and those with remits or leadership of groups involving vulnerable children have appropriate enhanced DBS checks and that these are updated in line with the Diocese of Lichfield guidelines.
- We are committed to all within a position of trust will undertake relevant safeguarding training with the Diocese of Lichfield.
- Safeguarding including revision of policy will be a regular PCC agenda item and agree that whilst we have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer, we will accept collective ownership for this important issue.
- We will be transparent, open and not have secrets.
- The parish commits itself to promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be vulnerable. We will consider the impact of power, disadvantage, inclusion, disability, age and race on how we provide and plan for our ministry.
- We will actively (but appropriately), challenge each other in our work in order to ensure we consider a wide range of perspectives and views— ensuring that we do not oppressively impose our own values or views to another's detriment.
- Where a person struggles with an activity due to disadvantage, disability or illness we will go the extra mile to assist them so they can participate and contribute as a full part of the church.
- It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of vulnerable people and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect. We will not collude, keep secrets or make decisions when we have suspicion of abuse. We will seek through discussion the views of others and try to ensure through use of external agencies and the diocese safeguarding service that we engage and welcome external perspectives in order to promote a healthy accountable culture.

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- We will report without being bias to our personal view. We will report and not investigate. We will record concerns factually in diocese suggested formats (as per the House of Bishop’s Guidance)
- We will not take chances with the welfare of children or vulnerable adults.
- We are open to scrutiny and encourage this in others..
- We have zero tolerance to abuse and put the welfare of vulnerable children and adults first.
- We take seriously training and activities relating to the safeguarding of children and seek to engrain this in our congregational culture. We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with people who may be vulnerable.
- Our incumbent or interim minister undertake to ensure that to the best of his or her knowledge all PCC members, wardens and ministry leaders are of good standing.
- The PCC undertakes to appoint and upskill a dedicated Parish Safeguarding Officer
- Parish Safeguarding Officer undertakes to maintain a relationship with diocese level safeguarding team and endure that this policy is followed. The parish is committed to supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable. Each person who works with vulnerable people will agree to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this church. Those working with vulnerable adults or children will sign a declaration to state that they have read and agree to abide by the points.

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

St Matthews Church, Tipton is committed to safeguarding and has adopted the National and Diocesan Safeguarding Policies.

This church appoints Sue Guest as the Parish Safeguarding Officer

IncumbentRev Larry Bain.....

Churchwardens

Date: 04/09/2023