

Policy on the Safeguarding of Adults/Children for St Matthew's Parish Church

St Matthew's is committed to Safeguarding and has adopted the National and Diocesan Safeguarding Policies. Our Safeguarding Coordinator is

Louise Inwood who can be contacted on 07983566509

Email safeguarding@stmatthewsdonningtonwood.org

Policy adopted by St Matthew's PCC at meeting held 18th April 2024

To be reviewed annually .

Next review by 17th April 2025 (unless superseded by new National Church Guidelines).

This statement was adopted by St Matthew's Church , Donnington Wood at a Parochial Church Council meeting held on Thursday, 18th April 2024

- 1. This policy will be reviewed each year to monitor the progress which has been achieved. We recognize that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives.**
 - 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 the existence of power when working with and leading 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 leaders 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 adults activities and events – undertaking supervision of leaders 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.

2. As members of this parish we commit ourselves to respectful pastoral care for all adults and children to whom we minister.

- We will consider issues relating to spiritual care in prayer activity, ensuring that Ministers, Servers and Junior Church leaders consider power, control and spiritual abuse issues in their ministry.
- We will ensure that leaders of Junior Church 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 undergo safeguarding training.
- We commit to discuss safeguarding as a standing PCC agenda item.

3. We commit ourselves to the safeguarding of people who may be vulnerable, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church.

- We will ensure that leaders of groups as well as other ministries that involve working with vulnerable persons have appropriate enhanced DBS checks.
- We will encourage participation in worship and in social activities and enable all God's people to use their gifts as appropriate for the benefit of the whole worshipping community .

4. We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.

- We commit to discuss safeguarding and support of safeguarding as a standing PCC agenda item
- We will ensure that those in positions of trust (such as wardens), and those with remits or leadership of groups involving children etc have appropriate enhanced DBS checks and that these are updated every 3 years.

- We will engage with appropriate training and seek to develop relationships with other agencies and the diocese on safeguarding.
- Safeguarding including revision of policy will be a regular PCC agenda item and agree that whilst we have a named co-ordinator we will accept collective ownership for this important issue.

We will be transparent, open and not have secrets.

- We commit to discuss safeguarding and support of safeguarding as a standing PCC agenda item.

5. 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 enable them to participate and contribute as a full part of the church.

6. 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 appropriate action 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.
- 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 recording with care policy 2017)

- 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.

7. We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with people who may be vulnerable.

- We will ensure that those in positions of trust (such as wardens), and those with remits or leadership of groups involving vulnerable children etc have appropriate enhanced DBS checks and that these are updated every 3 years.
- We will engage with appropriate training and seek to develop relationships with other agencies and the diocese on safeguarding.
- Safeguarding including revision of policy will be a regular PCC agenda item and agree that whilst we have a named co-ordinator we will accept collective ownership for this important issue.

We will be transparent, open and not have secrets.

- Our incumbent undertakes 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 Safeguarding co-ordinator.
- Safeguarding co-ordination undertakes to maintain a relationship with diocese level safeguarding team and ensure that this policy is followed.

8. The parish is committed to supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable.

- We will ensure that those in positions of trust (such as wardens), and those with remits or leadership of groups involving vulnerable

children etc have appropriate enhanced DBS checks and that these are updated every 3 year.

- We will engage with appropriate training and seek to develop relationships with other agencies and the diocese on safeguarding.
- Safeguarding including revision of policy will be a regular PCC agenda item and agree that whilst we have a named co-ordinator we will accept collective ownership for this important issue.

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- Safeguarding co-ordination undertakes to maintain a relationship with diocese level safeguarding team and ensure that this policy is followed.

9. St Matthew's Church is committed to Safeguarding and has adopted the National and Diocesan Safeguarding Policies.

- The Parish will report and record in line with Diocese policies and comply with local guidance's for implementing national policies as defined in diocese policies. These include the diocese safeguarding policy, recording with care policy, social media policy and safer recruitment policy.

10. 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 outlined in this policy.

This church appoints Louise Inwood to represent the concerns and views of vulnerable people at our meetings and to outside bodies as Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

ADDENDUM

Whilst St Matthew's Church remains in 'Vacancy' and until such times as confirmation of new postholder, please read all references to 'Incumbent' as Area Dean.

Safeguarding Social Media and Online activities: A Policy for the Diocese of Lichfield, its churches and Parishes.

Written By Neil Spiring DSA; in Consultation with Rosalind Clarke and Tamar Willoughby, with material taken from the Online Pastor's Policy as written by Kim Hodgkins (DSA).

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Version 1.2 -17/09/2018.

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1. Introduction and context

1.1 This policy was written by Neil Spiring (Diocese Safeguarding Advisor), with consultation being provided by the former Diocesan Online Pastor Rosalind Clarke and revisions by her successor, the Diocesan Online Enabler Tamar Willoughby. As such, it pulls in relevant parts of pre-existing Online Pastor's Policy (written by Rosalind Clarke and Kim Hodgkins) and seeks more importantly to integrate the learning and evidence from the development of these Online roles.

1.2 This policy recognises that the Christian faith has communication (written or spoken) at its heart and that electronic communications is now a central part of everyday life. In this sense it has a vital role in updating, co-ordinating and improving the experiences of Christian groups (such as youth groups, community care groups, house groups and prayer ministry). It is also recognised that with this comes risk, and it is in this document that we will explore how this risk can be managed; what can, should (and how it should), be done with regards church life online in the Diocese and parishes of Lichfield.

1.3 This is an open document to be developed and improved over time by the amendment and contributions of our stakeholders in the Diocese and beyond. We welcome suggestions, debate and engagement in development to ensure organic improvement. Should you have any queries, ideas, suggestions or additions relating to this or any other Diocese Safeguarding Policy we would like to hear from you.

Neil Spiring – Diocese Safeguarding Advisor. 17/09/2018

2. Working Principles of this Policy

2.1 Safeguarding vulnerable adults, children and young people is always the primary concern and responsibility of all those associated with church activity. As a consequence, safeguarding is everyone's concern, rather than one person's.

2.2 As a result of the above we commit to the principle of 'No More Secrets' and will be transparent in our responsibilities, interests, behaviours and concerns. We will be open to scrutiny without defence and admit mistakes openly. We will challenge each other in appropriate ways and work together to ensure we consider all issues from as wide a range of perspectives and views as possible. We will be forgiving but hold ourselves and others to account.

3. Who is covered by this policy?

3.1 Any person undertaking activity relating to online and social media, whether lay or ordained; licensed/PtO or not; through an account belonging to a Church, Chaplaincy or Fresh

Diocese Safeguarding Advisor

Will formulate, oversee, advise and review Policy (implementation and development).

Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Responsible for records, policy implementation and day to day advice.

Accountable Body

This will be the PCC or Priest in charge who is ultimately responsible for governing online content and social media. Social Media Groups must function with approval of the above. The above may choose to appoint a designated person. However, the administrators and users of groups are ultimately accountable to the above.

Administrator

Person or persons running a Social Media Forum for a defined church purpose (as agreed with PCC, Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Diocese/church leadership when set up). For example, this person may be a church youth leader or house group leader.

Participants

Members of online forums with a defined purpose. The Administrator should monitor who uses these participants, who are responsible for conducting online life in a Christian manner and reporting any concerns to the Safeguarding officer or other persons above.

Expression which is part of Lichfield Diocese or in a manner that could be understood to be posted as a representative of such is subject to this policy, along with the Diocesan safeguarding policies for children and vulnerable adults, and national Church policies. This policy is specific to social media and online material and any issues not covered within it relating to this type of activity should be addressed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor on a case by case basis.

4. Structure for ensuring Safety on Social Media

The persons shown in the structure below are referred to throughout this document:

5. Transparency and social media accounts

5.1 Personal social media accounts should be kept distinct from accounts relating to church roles and responsibilities, and should be clearly labelled so that the views expressed cannot be taken to represent those of the Diocese or parish. Nonetheless, church leaders administering online duties for the church should ensure that their personal social media use is conducted in a manner consistent with their Christian character.

5.2 Online social media accounts relating to church roles and responsibilities should all be administered with oversight. Administrators will ensure they have login and password details for full access at any time and there should be a process in place to ensure a second person has also these (in order to cover absence, illness etc). Administrators should be DBS checked appropriately and have completed safeguarding training to C2 level. *This person shall be referred to as Administrator throughout this document but may be one of the persons listed above.*

5.3 The Administrator should check all of the church social media accounts regularly and keep a log. Any concerns should be raised with the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor as appropriate. Screenshots of any concerns are to be taken and retained by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator where they will be retained on file for three years in case they need to be later referenced.

5.4 Administrators will regulate membership, behaviour, content and undertake other functions identified to this role in line with this policy.

6. Social Media types and parameters

6.1 The church group will only use clearly labelled groups/forums to facilitate communication between members. Public pages (eg church websites or church Facebook pages or groups), may be used to communicate with the church and the wider community. Secret groups will not be permitted at any time or in any circumstance.

6.2 Consideration will be given to the purpose of social media. For example, is it intended for private/closed group discussion within a group or will it be utilised for general public engagement? The Administrator should give consideration to the risks and requirements of managing a platform based on the above factors; particularly how the safety of vulnerable users can be maintained.

6.3 Administrators should give consideration to the social media platform being used and its potential risks. For example some platforms do not retain a log of past entries and will be harder to police. The suitability of any given platform will likely depend on its intended audience and use. This should be assessed on a case by case basis using a risk assessment if appropriate.

6.4 The church accepts the suitability of closed group/forum accounts of providers such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for use with groups where those under 18 are involved. Other platforms such as WhatsApp may be used following proper consideration of risks and restrictions).

6.5 The church accepts the suitability of closed group/forum accounts of WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for use with groups where those aged over 18 are involved.

Other platforms may be used following proper consideration of risks. If in doubt, consult with Diocese communication and safeguarding officers.

7. Online Behaviour of participants

7.1 Being online is an extension of church life and the expectations of the parishioner remain as high in this context as in any other. In general those engaging online will conduct themselves in a Christian manner and demonstrate these values at all times. In particular:

7.2 Language: there must be no swearing or offensive language.

7.3 Respect: those participating will give space to others when communicating and will not say anything designed to cause upset or distress to others. Individuals will not engage in online disputes and arguments contrary to group harmony or that may cause wider offence and distress.

7.4 Equity: unkind and inappropriate reference to someone's race, gender, disability, religion or other similar demographic factor will not be tolerated and will result in an offline discussion in line with equal opportunities and other policy processes.

7.4 Rules and boundaries: participants will respect all local group rules in addition to all those points made in this policy. This will be monitored by the Administrator. The Administrator will act in accordance with direction of their Accountable Body.

7.5 Participants will respect and act upon any direction provide by the Administrator.

7.6 Persons refusing to respond to direction and instruction are subject to removal from the group and may be cautioned offline in relation to their behaviour.

7.7 Offensive, sexual or unChristian photos, files and attachments will not be posted by members. Administrators should also risk assess the users involved to see if attachments, files or photos are appropriate to be posted.

7.8 The use of web cameras and livestreaming videos must not be offensive, sexual or unChristian. Administrators should consider if use of cameras, videos or livestreams are appropriate to any forum being operated, by assessing the associated risks to users.

7.9 Offline meetings should not be arranged online.

7.10 In some cases members of groups may have offline friendships that are not connected to their involvement in a church forum. In such cases any communication relating to that friendship should not be made on a social media group organised and connected with the church.

7.12 Users will undertake to keep themselves safe online – not engaging in inappropriate discussion, language or behaviour and reporting any person that approaches them in such a way to the Administrator, their vicar or another appropriate designated person.

8. Reporting Online Safeguarding Concerns

8.1 This policy deals with how to manage Safeguarding in an online context but does not seek to define safeguarding of adults or children. ***What Constitutes abuse in the real world constitutes abuse in the virtual world*** and persons using this policy should ensure they are fully aware of and trained in the use of all church safeguarding policies and procedures defined and discussed in other local and national policies.

8.2 Administrators and others with concern should take screenshots of any concerning content. These should be stored safely, away from social media, and should be shared with the Parish Safeguarding Coordinator and Diocese Safeguarding Advisor. A record of all incidents and actions taken should be kept.

8.3 The Administrator and Safeguarding Co-ordinator should keep a log of all incidents and appropriate action taken to minimise immediate risk.

8.4 Concerns should be reported to the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor as a safeguarding referral (in line with the principle that abuse is abuse – online or offline).

8.5 Administrators and participants should ensure that appropriate boundaries are maintained between their work, participation and their personal life when interacting with each other online and offline. This should be specifically monitored where children or vulnerable adults are participating.

8.6 Images and videos must not be posted online unless permission has been given from all those identifiable in the photograph or video. Consideration needs to be given to how long this material once posted will remain available.

8.7 Online communication should normally take place in public forums. However, if in rare circumstance the use of direct messaging is necessary (for example if an online member is reporting abuse to the Administrator or making a disclosure, or should the Administrator need to discuss a member's behaviour with them) it must be made clear that all conversations may be monitored and that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

8.8 The Administrator should provide safe spaces online, being particularly alert to bullying, trolling, grooming, sexting and other forms of internet abuse. Where necessary, the Administrator can and should exclude and report anyone engaging in such practices.

8.9 Bullying, trolling, grooming, sexting and other forms of internet abuse should be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator who in turn **will refer** as a safeguarding referral to the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor. This policy makes no distinction between online abuse and real world abuse. Information will be shared with the Police and Social Services as appropriate.

8.10 If it is necessary for an Administrator to meet offline and face-to-face due to behaviour or disclosure meetings should be in a safe place and should involve at least two persons from the list in section 4 of this policy.

8.11 Under-18s should be accompanied by a parent/guardian/youth worker/other responsible adult for any face-to-face meeting. All such meetings should be discussed in advance with and between the Administrator, responsible body and Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator. Such meetings should be discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor.

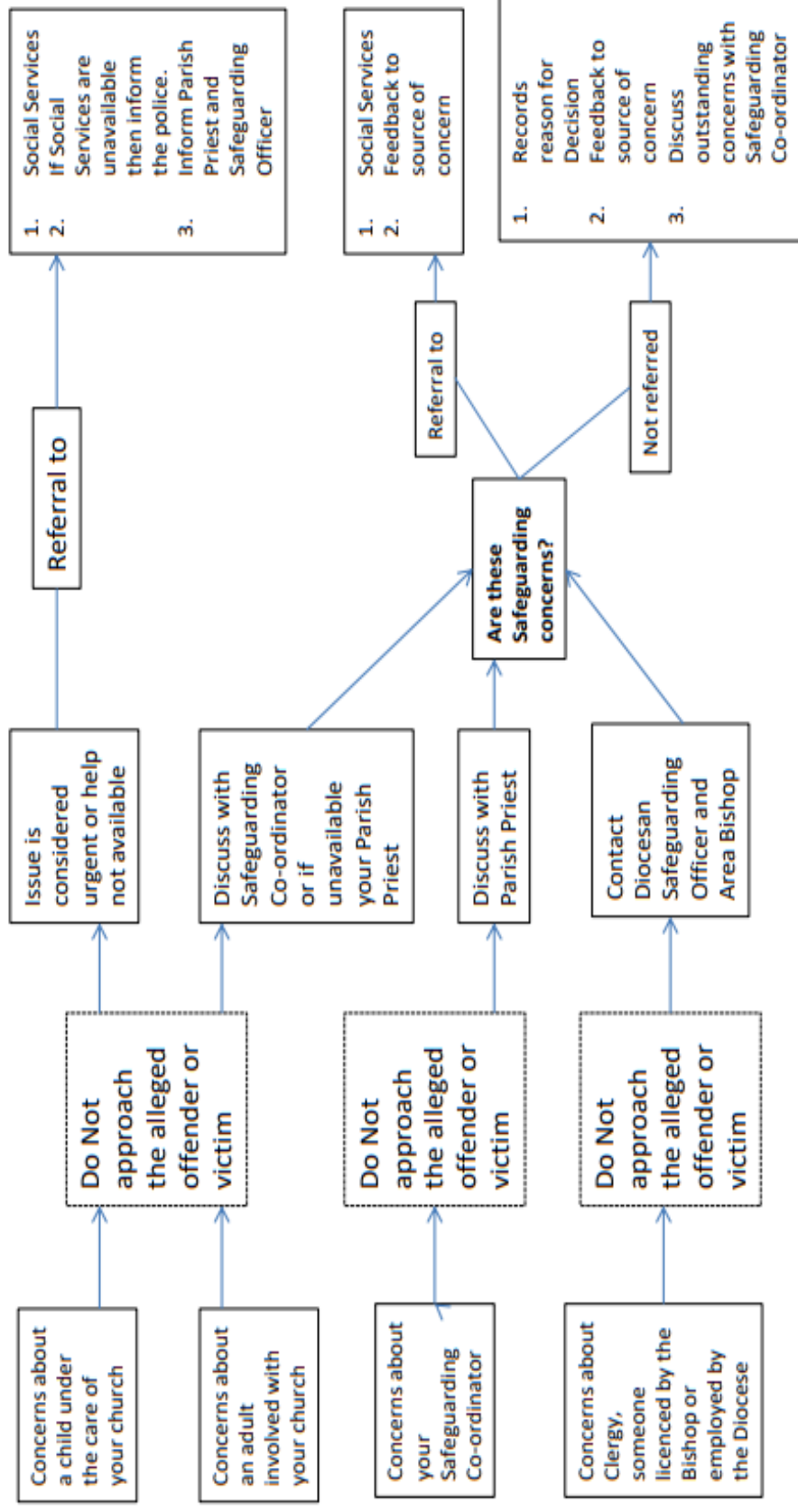
8.12 All allegations of abuse or other concerning information should be immediately reported to the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor and Social Services' First Response team or the Police as appropriate.

8.12 Administrators should take and share screenshots of any concerning content and share with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and any statutory services involved.

8.13 The parish should review all online groups at least annually. This meeting as a minimum should involve all Administrators and the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

END

IN THE EVENT OF A SAFEGUARDING ISSUE IN YOUR CHURCH



Safeguarding Co-ordinator..... Parish Priest.....
 Diocesan Safeguarding Team 01543 306030 Out of Hours Support: 0303 003 1111 (option 2)
 Nearest Social Service Office..... Nearest Police Station.....
 Area Bishop...The Rt. Revd.....



Safeguarding Good Practice Guidelines in Lichfield Diocese

What to do if...

You have concerns about possible abuse (including allegations):

1. In an emergency, respond immediately
2. Consult the person to whom you are responsible.
3. Decide together whether to seek advice or to make an immediate referral.
4. Keep a record of what happened, your concerns and your actions.
5. Tell your minister and/or safeguarding co-ordinator.
6. Only tell others who need to know.

A child, young person or adult wishes to disclose they have been abused:

1. Listen. Keep listening. Do not question or investigate. Do not promise confidentiality; tell them we need to share this. Assure them they are not to blame.
2. Tell them what you are going to do and that they will be told what happens.
3. Make careful notes of what is said, record dates, times, events and when you are told.
4. Report it to the person to whom you are responsible and your minister or safeguarding co-ordinator.
5. Only tell those who need to know.
6. If a child is in imminent danger report to the Police or Social Service.

Things to remember...

- Treat everyone with respect, setting a positive example for others.
- Respect personal space and privacy.
- Ensure another adult is present or within sight or hearing of any activity.
- Ensure any actions cannot be misinterpreted by someone else.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour
- Do not put anyone, including yourself, in a vulnerable or compromising situation.
- Do not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- You must not keep allegations or suspected abuse secret.

Resources

- Promoting a Safer Church (CHP 2017)
- The Parish Safeguarding Handbook (CHP 2018)

Your church's safeguarding co-ordinator:

Name: **Louise Inwood**
am.safeguarding@eaststowbenefice.co.uk
 Tel: **07 983566509**

www.lichfield.anglican.org/safeguarding

Useful contacts

- NSPCC**
0800 800 5000, www.nspcc.org.uk
- Stop It Now**
0800 1000 900, www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Childline**
0800 1111
- Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors**
08000 010140, www.macsas.org.uk
- Thirty One Eight: Formerly CCRAS**
PO Box 133, Swanley Kent BR8 7UQ
0203 009 11 11, www.thirtynoneeight.org
- Domestic Violence Support Refuges/Women's Aid**
www.womensaid.org.uk
helpline@womensaid.org.uk
- Samaritans**
Counselling for those in despair or suicidal
116123, jo@samaritans.org
- Victim Supportline**
0800 168 9093, www.victimsupport.org.uk
- NANAC – National Assoc. for People Abused in Childhood**
0800 801 0331, www.nanac.org.uk
- National Domestic Violence Helpline**
0800 2000 247
- Elder Abuse Helpline**
080 8000 8141
- Family Lives Helpline**
0800 800 2222
- RESPECT Men's Advice Line**
0800 801 0327

If you need to contact your local Children's Services Safeguarding team please check your local authority website.

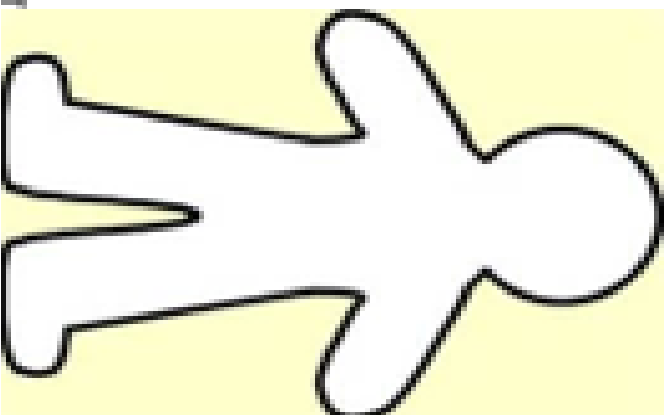
Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers

Neil Spiring
 Head of Diocesan Safeguarding
 Reg Social Worker (SWE 39993)
 T: 01543 306147
 E: neil.spiring@lichfield.anglican.org

Peter Hurd
 Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
 Registered Social Worker (SWE 113321)
 T: 01543 221105
 E: peter.hurd@lichfield.anglican.org

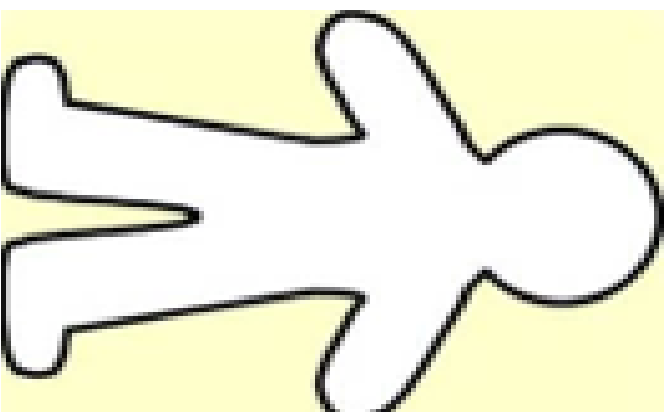
Kim Hodgkins
 Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
 T: 01543 306099
 E: kim.hodgkins@lichfield.anglican.org

For out of hours emergency support please call 0300 003 1111 (option 2). If a child or adult is injured or in immediate danger please call the police on 999. Should you require further information see the Lichfield Diocesan website: www.lichfield.anglican.org/safeguarding



FRONT

| BACK



A body map is used to record information about a physical injury /mark to a person, particularly if it is thought that the injury is [not](#) accidental or following a pattern. The body map provides a visual record of physical abuse and helps professionals to work together when deciding if there is a safeguarding concern.

You must never photograph the child/adult when recording injuries.

Name of the person whom the injury concerns

Name of person and role of person completing form

Name of person and role of person who noticed the injury

Brief description of injury including, colour, size, shape and condition

Any observations of the person's general behaviour for example, are they showing any signs of distress?

Any comment from the person regarding the mark.

Name and signature of person completing form..... Date:

Action taken: Date:

Name: Sign: Date:

Parish:

PSO Tel E mail:

Incumbent Tel E mail:

Subject Alleged Victim <input type="checkbox"/> Alleged Abuser <input type="checkbox"/> DOB <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>	Name and Address	Tel/Mob/Email	
Subject Alleged Victim <input type="checkbox"/> Alleged Abuser <input type="checkbox"/> DOB <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>	Name and Address	Tel/Mob/Email	
Contact Person (Referrer)	Position	Church/Agency	Tel/Mob/Email
<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> date(s) referred	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> date opened	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> date(s) closed	
Children <input type="checkbox"/>	Adults <input type="checkbox"/>	Allegation <input type="checkbox"/> (church officer)	
Physical <input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Abuse <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neglect <input type="checkbox"/>	Financial <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Psych/emotional <input type="checkbox"/>	Discriminatory <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual abuse <input type="checkbox"/>	Organisational <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sexual abuse non-current <input type="checkbox"/>	Spiritual <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Child Sexual Exploitation <input type="checkbox"/>	Online <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modern Slavery <input type="checkbox"/>
School/Nursery <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	GP <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>		Groups attended <input style="width: 100px; height: 40px;" type="text"/>

Name:

Case No:

Notes

Initial Information as Reported

Signed

*A copy of this form should be retained confidentially in the parish by the **Parish Safeguarding Officer**. A copy should be e mailed to the **Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser**.*

Name:

Case No:

Ongoing Record

Name:

Case No: