

St Nicholas Church

Safeguarding Policy 2019

**Care, support and safeguarding at St Nicholas
Church Stevenage**

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2 Introduction

2.1 Our commitment

St Nicholas is proud to be a part of the Diocese of St. Albans in the Church of England, and is fully committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church.

St Nicholas Church see safeguarding as the practical outworking of the Christian way of life and in accord with the example of Christ's Ministry towards all.

Safeguarding is the action the Church takes to implement a safe culture. This means we will ensure the welfare of children, young people and adults; work to prevent abuse from occurring; seek to protect those that are at risk of being abused; and respond effectively to those that have been abused. We will take care to identify where a person may present a risk to others, and offer support to them whilst taking steps to avoid any risks they pose.

We affirm the 'Whole Church' approach to safeguarding. This approach encompasses a commitment to consistent policy and practice across all Church groups and Church Officers; and promoting that everyone associated with the Church who comes into contact with children, young people and adults, has a role to play.

The Church will take appropriate steps to maintain a safe environment for all, this includes children, young people and adults and to respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm.

Although safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone at St Nicholas, we have a team to lead and support this important work.

More information on the Church of England's National Safeguarding guidelines can be found here: www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding

More information about Safeguarding in the Diocese of St. Albans can be found here: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding>

2.2 Document status

	Name	Title	Signature	Date
Author:	Martin Bailey	Safeguarding leads		
Checked:	S.G.Bamford	Church Warden		
Approved:	D.Brown	Rector		
Review date:	November 2021			

2.3 Accessing the full document

This document has been designed to be primarily accessed via the church website and so is divided into different relevant sections. **A full PDF version can be downloaded by clicking here**

2.4 Partner organisations

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults who have care and support needs. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

Therefore, any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement must have their own policy that meets the safeguarding standards of our church and those of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Partnership for Children.

3 What do we mean by safeguarding?

3.1 Safeguarding and theology:

Why are we different from all other institutions?

All organisations seek to keep children, adults with needs and vulnerable adults safe; and to give support and welcome those who have suffered abuse. Significantly, the church is different from all others because we recognise that:

- We are all sinners, we have all turned our back on God, and need His forgiveness and the forgiveness of others. So we welcome those who recognise they are sinners, and repent from their sins, noting that this includes all wrong-doing.
- Through the death of Jesus we are forgiven; and we too must forgive those who sin against us.
- We invite those who are sorry to have hurt children and vulnerable adults to come to us, to point them to God, so that they can truly repent and be changed.

We must be a church where those who have been hurt by abuse find compassion, and people ready to travel alongside them. We do this through fellowship, prayer and sharing God's love for each of us.

We must be a repenting and learning church that recognises past and present failures and the harm they have caused, and seeks forgiveness from God and from those we fail. We recognise that we are all sinners and need God's forgiveness.

We must be a church where the abused, neglected and violated are listened to, understood and cared for and where abuse is not tolerated, ignored or 'explained away'. As Proverbs 31:8 says let us 'speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable'.

We must to be a church where all people are welcomed into open and secure communities that make known Christ's reconciling peace. We establish and maintain a safe church by keeping our eyes wide open to the possibility that 'It could happen here'. We participate in

required training, complete DBS and other checks and follow national and local procedures to help make our church safe.

We must be a church where those who commit abuse are called to face human justice, hear God's word of judgement, repent and believe the good news. We do this by being alert to behaviour or situations of concern, and sharing our worries with the safeguarding lead person/rector and with the authorities as legally required.

3.2 Defining safeguarding: across a continuum

At St Nicholas Church we see Safeguarding as everyone's business; those in church and those in the wider society.

We are a community who demonstrates the love of God through kindness, caring and support for one another, balancing the rights of people and our responsibilities to ensure people are safe from harm.

Our church offers a wide range of care and support and these can be seen across a continuum. We are all likely to experience a range of support from a number of the different activities described in the coloured boxes in table1. The colour coded scale helps here because:

- It identifies who is responsible for an overview of support given to someone.
- It defines confidentiality boundaries for each of the different categories along the continuum.

It also reflects the way on which support services in Hertfordshire are based on a Continuum of Need to support different levels of need for children, families, young people, those with physical and mental health needs, vulnerable adults and vulnerable elderly people.

This all helps us recognise that safeguarding is everyone's business.

<p><u>Caring for each other as part of the church family</u></p> <p>Sunday and other services for congregational worship, prayer, communion, teaching and fellowship.</p> <p>Prayer partners</p>	<p><u>Listed Activities</u></p> <p>S. Club</p> <p>Home groups</p> <p>Men and women @ St Nicks.</p> <p>Music group</p> <p>Flower arranging</p> <p>Cleaning</p> <p>Catering</p> <p>Little Lambs (mum and toddlers)</p> <p>School assemblies</p>	<p><u>Prayer ministries</u></p> <p>Individual daily prayers.</p> <p>Prayer ministry after the service</p> <p>Monthly prayer meetings.</p> <p>Prayer chain.</p>	<p><u>Pastoral team support</u></p> <p>Includes visits to people in their own homes for prayer, emotional or basic practical help – e.g. shopping, meals, DIY, lifts to church etc.</p>	<p><u>Pastoral “plus” support</u></p> <p>Beyond that which Church friends and family normally would help with and beyond usual pastoral support, but below that when adult or children’s services automatically become involved.</p>	<p><u>Care and Protection</u></p> <p>Where external child, youth or adult specialist, safeguarding, protective or legal professional involvement is involved and St Nicks contribute to the plans led by the specialists.</p>
Who is involved					
Rector	Rector	Rector	Rector	Rector	Rector
			Pastoral Lead	Pastoral Lead	
				Safeguarding Lead	Safeguarding Lead

Table 1: Different levels of care and support across a safeguarding continuum in our church and who from the Leadership are involved.

It has become very apparent that there is a significant gap between the Pastoral Care that we offer and when statutory agencies for children, vulnerable adults and families can become involved. Three things need recognition:

- The term ‘safeguarding’ actually refers to a continuum, ranging from very low risk or minimal support which families or individuals can choose should they wish to, through to very high risk situations and where statutory services become involved regardless of whether or not people ask for help. The latter comes from health, protection and care services and are done so under specific legal duties.

Safeguarding in essence is a preventative concept and so we need to avoid thinking that safeguarding refers only to 'child protection' or 'abuse' etc.

- Church members, through their kindness and compassion, sometimes take on too great a responsibility and undertake tasks that should be done by wider family or professionals in a supporting role (e.g. home carers, schools, children's centres etc). This can leave both the vulnerable person AND the Pastoral Team person in difficult situations, which we want to avoid.
- As a church, we can inadvertently wait too long to alert services, (often because of our fears or our desire to help). However, local service arrangements are designed for 'early help'; to offer support to prevent difficulties from escalating and seeking to prevent the need for statutory intervention where possible.

To combat these problems, at St Nicholas Church we use the term 'Pastoral Plus'. This helps to identify problems early, to point people to local services and to avoid church members taking on tasks that the wider family or professionals should be doing.

This helps us to understand that safeguarding is a continuum of care and support, from everyone together on a Sunday, through groups and activities, through pastoral support to the signposting or referring to specialist professional services. These are all underpinned primarily by the Gospel and also by a commitment to safeguarding everyone.

3.3 Pastoral Care

We all need a little help from time to time. The vast majority of support comes informally through church family and friends and this is not the business of others. Sometimes Church family members need a bit of extra help and for this we have a pastoral care team. The pastoral team is made up of the Rector and named members of the church family.

Pastoral Care is the giving of spiritual, emotional and practical support to church family members who are in need. Pastoral support may be helpful in times of personal/family need or in times of spiritual questioning or growth etc. The pastoral team oversees and undertakes all of this work.

- Spiritual support includes things like prayers, ‘journeying with’ and pointing to resources
- Practical support could include things like having a coffee and listening, making a meal, shopping, lifts to/from church
- Emotional support could include listening, comforting and being available to talk to.

Pastoral support of any kind never includes intimate personal care, financial activities, wills and legacies. Under no circumstances should a pastoral worker carry out their own investigation into social care needs, health needs or an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Pastoral workers should avoid doing the roles of professionals, even when there appears to be no other solution.

3.4 Pastoral Plus

Pastoral Plus is a term used by St Nicholas Church to explain the type/level of support offered in times of greater need or crisis that go above and beyond the basic Pastoral care, beyond that which Church friends and family normally would help with, but below that when adult or children’s services automatically become involved. It may be for an individual or for a family. Pastoral Care Plus does not have to be delivered by members of the pastoral team, others in the church may be more suitable and able. Pastoral Plus describes situations such as:

- Where more intense support with a clear and specific goal is needed where the pastoral team have been approached for help/support. This may be short-medium term.
- finding information on services e.g. Citizen Advice Bureau, Age UK, specialist advocacy for an individual/family on a specific issue, attending non-statutory health appointments or a school meeting with a family in order to advocate/support on behalf of the church pastoral team or in the role of a church leader. (This is not where friends are just supporting each other as part of daily life).
- where specialist/statutory outside support would be helpful, but the person declines any such support.
- where a referral to care and protection agencies was made, but the referral did not meet the external agencies’ threshold for support.

In any such situations:

- Any support that is offered must be part of a simple written plan that is held by the Rector and the Pastoral Plus/Safeguarding lead
- the Rector and the Pastoral Plus/Safeguarding lead may ask for guidance from others in the church family on a confidential need to know basis. There may be no need for anything to be formally recorded.
- It is important to be clear what the church is unable/able to do in terms of support.
- The plan may be carried out by the pastoral team or by others within the church and may be longer term. Anyone involved in that support will be given information on a need to know basis.
- It may help to record if there is a continuing need to ask family or extended family/professionals to address the worry/gap that the church cannot fill.

3.5 Care and Protection:

‘Care and Protection’ covers the rare occasions where the law and/or C of E policy gives little option as to what must be done. These situations are unusual, but as part of keeping everyone safe, we must recognise that ‘the unthinkable’ could happen to someone - or be carried out by someone - in our church.

Examples when a situation escalates from Pastoral Plus to ‘Care and Protection’, include where:

- The Rector or Safeguarding Lead make a referral to statutory agencies such as Children’s Social Services, NSPCC, Police, Adult Care Services. (as required by CofE and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Partnership policies and legal duties).
- Where pastoral support is given and a member of the church leadership attends a statutory health, care or legal appointment with a member of the church family.
- Children Services, Adult Care Services or the Police have a statutory plan in place for an individual/family and the Church has a named role in the plan in any way.
- Statutory agencies require the Church to provide information to keep an individual safe.

The role of the Church leadership or members is not to decide whether statutory agencies should or should not be involved. If statutory agencies are involved and an individual or family dispute statutory involvement, the Church may only signpost an individual or family to advocacy/legal specialist advice. Under no circumstances will the Church take on the role of disputing statutory involvement, although the church will continue to offer pastoral care as needed. In exceptional circumstances, the church may stand alongside a family, individual or group to fight social injustice.

In 'Care and Protection' situations a more detailed record of referrals, contacts, support and outcomes will be kept by the Pastoral Plus/ Safeguarding lead; and information shared with the Rector. Those directly involved in a support plan may be given proportional information on a need to know basis.

In defining these roles clearly, we can also be clear that the role of church leadership and members and leaders is **NOT** to:

- unintentionally become a social care service
- take on the duties of health, social care etc
- take on the responsibilities of families

The role of the church and members **IS** to:

- offer fellowship and show love
- pray for the situation
- point people to those in the church who might be able to arrange or offer help
- with consent if possible, talk to the pastoral lead, Rector, Pastoral Plus/Safeguarding lead if you think the person or family could benefit from support.
- be clear on what we can and cannot do; what we must and must not do.

3.6 Things we don't do

Personal Care of any church member (toilets etc) shall only be carried out by a family member or formally authorised 'carer'.

Finances: we do not help individuals to access or manage their personal finances- this is something family or professionals must do.

3.7 Support and safety where there are known perpetrators

When someone attending our church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to adults who have care and support needs the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned, following advice from the Diocesan Officer, and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults who have care and support needs, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

If a known abuser or perpetrator of any form of abuse (against children, young people, or adults) turns up at church, one of the leadership team (safeguarding leads, church warden etc) will sit with the person during the service, explain they are welcome, but must meet with the Rector and others to agree a safety plan regarding their attendance and membership of the church and what (if any) activities they would be excluded from.

If a known abuser or perpetrator of any form of abuse who has or had a safety plan with another church, leaves that church and seeks to come to St Nicks, a meeting with the Rector and safeguarding leads of both churches will be held agree the next steps.

4 Who's who: the safeguarding team

The following roles require a named responsible person within the church body.

4.1 Pastoral Care Lead

The role of the pastoral care lead is to:

- Liaise with the incumbent to agree any spiritual, emotional and practical support a church family member needs.
- agree the boundaries of any support given.
- coordinate all of the Pastoral Care which is done in the church
- coordinate and support a team who make up the Pastoral Team.
- Liaise with the Pastoral Plus/Safeguarding lead as required.

Contact rector@stnicholaschurch.org.uk

4.2 Safeguarding Lead (Pastoral Plus and Safeguarding lead).

The CofE regulations require all churches to have a safeguarding lead who sits on the PCC.

The role includes:

- Overseeing all safeguarding work in the church
- Preparation and implementation of a safeguarding policy and its annual review.
- Ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are followed.
- Keeping accurate records relating to safeguarding concerns.
- Regularly informing the Leadership on good practice issues.
- Working in partnership with statutory and other agencies.
- Working in partnership with Diocesan Safeguarding team.
- Informing the Charities Commission in the case of the reputation of St. Nicholas. Church being adversely affected due to disclosure matters.
- Ensuring that the correct recruitment policies are followed for the appointment of paid staff.

At St Nicholas Church, we have expanded the title to help bridge the significant gap between Pastoral Care and the more acute 'Care & Protection' Safeguarding responsibilities with the introduction of the term 'Pastoral Plus'. The role is referred to as the Pastoral Plus and Safeguarding Lead with the aims of:

- Clarifying what support the church can and cannot offer.
- Pointing people to professional help should they wish.
- Managing situations better when statutory agency thresholds for involuntary involvement are not met.

We believe that safeguarding leads in many churches carry out these functions, but these realities are not well recognised, meaning confusion arises and mistakes easily made.

Contact: safeguarding@stnicholaschurch.org.uk

4.3 Safeguarding training officer

The safeguarding training officer is responsible for all aspects of training. The role covers:

- Keeping records of all the roles carried out by different staff, volunteers and helpers and who needs which type of training
- Guiding people to the required training for helpers, leaders, recruitment and refresher courses
- Sharing any concerns with the Safeguarding lead as required.
- Liaising with the Safeguarding Recruitment officer to help provide regular PCC updates on the numbers of people who have undertaken training or DBS clearances which are 'completed', 'in progress', 'out of date'

Contact: safeguardingtraining@stnicholaschurch.org.uk

4.4 Safeguarding Recruitment Officer

The safeguarding recruitment officer is responsible for DBS checks and Safe Recruitment of volunteers. The role covers:

- Liaising with the lead for Children and Young People and Incumbent so they are aware of who needs to go through the safe recruitment process.
- Ensuring that the correct recruitment policies are followed for the appointment of volunteers.
- Guiding people to complete all the correct forms when becoming a volunteer.
- Keeping a record of applications, references and DBS checks.
- Liaising with the Safeguarding Training officer to help provide regular PCC updates on DBS numbers which are 'completed', 'in progress', 'out of date'
- Sharing any concerns with the Safeguarding lead as required.

The role includes overseeing all DBS applications, including:

- Checking hard copies of each applicant's personal details against ID documents.
- Inputting information onto the CofE DBS system.
- Log the response from the DBS system, take note of the number, put this onto the Church google docs recording form.

If a DBS is flagged on line with a query, it is to be scrutinized and discussed with the incumbent and safeguarding lead to agree appropriate action.

Contact: safeguardingdbs@stnicholaschurch.org.uk

4.5 Incumbent, Church Wardens and PCC members

Additional information and details of responsibilities for other leaders can be found in section 3 of the House of Bishops document *Key Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies Practice Guidance. October 2017.*

5 Responding, reporting and recording

5.1 Things to be alert to

The national and Diocesan polices training and handbooks define the legal terms and topics of abuse and can be accessed by clicking here

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding/>

If an individual recognises signs where some form of help might benefit someone they should share this with the safeguarding team so that they can determine what level of support is required; whether it is pastoral, pastoral plus, Care & protection or outside agency help.

Some examples of signs are shown below:

5.1.1 Children and Families:

All families face difficulties at some time; some families more than others. Families, friends, health services, schools and many others are often able to help and guide people through very difficult times. Signs that someone may benefit from professional help include:

- If parents are struggling with a new-born baby, children or teenagers.
- If there has been a sudden trauma, illness, death or other major change in family circumstances.
- A child discloses or it becomes clear that they are being aggressively hit, sexually abused, emotionally abused, not kept safe, not being fed or their health needs are ignored or they are being spiritually abused.

5.1.2 Young People:

Be alert to the following signs:

- Peer bullying
- Persistently going missing from school, home or being found a long way from their local area
- Unexplained acquisition of money, clothes or mobile phones
- Excessive receipt of texts, messages etc or phone calls
- Being in relationships where there is control, coercion, violence, older adults
- Being involved in gangs
- Leaving home without explanation
- Self-harm, suicidal thoughts or attempts
- Being victim of assault or unexplained injuries
- Significant decline on school, college or work performance
- Significant changes in emotional well-being
- The young person engages in violent behaviour, crime, drugs etc

Note: Where a number of these factors co-exist, the risks to a young person may increase significantly.

5.1.3 Adults:

Where the adult is currently struggling with, carrying out or *was subject to* any of the following in their (distant) past:

- If someone moves in and takes over their home and/or kicks them out (“Cuckooing”)
- Behaviour: drugs, alcohol problems, long term unemployment.
- Health: severe obesity, depression, suicidal thoughts/attempts.
- Abuse: physical, emotional, sexual (doing to their child, or having received as a child themselves).
- Neglect: not giving to their child or having received as a child themselves love, attention, safety, security; the basic needs.

- Personal difficulties: mental illness, domestic violence, substance misuse, acrimonious separation, relative in prison.
- Victim: has been or is a victim of domestic abuse, trafficking, sexual or economic exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, slavery, trafficking.

5.1.4 Older People:

where the person may be:

- Struggling with cooking, cleaning, self-care and daily routines.
- Suffering from confusion or memory problems.
- Hoarding.
- Themselves a carer of their elderly / disabled / sick partner
- Struggling with banking, finances or where a friend, family or other may be taking advantage of their finances.
- If someone moves in and takes over their home and/or kicks them out (“Cuckooing”) or seems to be taken advantage of by another adult.

5.2 A scale to guide thinking when you are worried about someone

Judging big decisions can be difficult, particularly when you are worried about someone’s, health, wellbeing or safety. A good rule of thumb to help make such judgements might include asking yourself:

- How worried am I about this person?
- How knowledgeable am I about the topic?

These two factors can be used in a scale to help guide you using our colour coded levels aligned with the corresponding support levels.

I am not at all worried	I am a little worried	I am quite worried	I am very worried	I am extremely worried
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Table 2: A worry scale to guide decision-making

IF YOU ARE VERY WORRIED OR EXTREMELY WORRIED, YOU MUST CONTACT THE SAFEGUARDING LEAD OR THE RECTOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND SHARE WITH THEM YOUR CONCERNS.

5.3 If a person tells you very personal information

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child, young person or adult with care and support needs to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting.
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking.
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used.
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different.
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality.
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.
- As soon as you can, make a note of the meeting, taking care to record the time, date, setting, and persons present, as well as what was said.

A comprehensive record of all the facts, events and conversations must be made on the same day as they occur. Known facts should be distinguished from allegation and opinions; this information may be required for legal purposes.

Helpful responses	Unhelpful responses
<p>You have done the right thing in telling</p> <p>I am glad you have told me</p> <p>I will try to help you</p>	<p>Why didn't you tell anyone before?</p> <p>I can't believe it!</p> <p>Are you sure this is true?</p> <p>Why? How? When? Who? Where?</p> <p>I am shocked, don't tell anyone else</p>

A handy set of 'rules of thumb' can be:

- Respond (do not play down or ignore what you are hearing).
- Reassure (show love, kindness, support and that you will help).
- Report (inform the appropriate person as soon as possible).
- Don't investigate (doing so can cause great difficulties for any victim, for any alleged perpetrator, for church leaders and external support services).
- Don't try to solve things yourself (even if you have expertise in the area).
- Don't keep it to yourself (see the confidentiality and need to know section).
- If in doubt, talk to the Rector or the safeguarding lead.

5.4 When people don't accept the help or support they appear to need

Lots of people, and often older people, do not want professionals in their lives or in their homes. This is quite understandable for many reasons, including:

- Fear of loss of independence
- Feelings of intrusion
- Feeling undermined
- Disagreeing with their assessment or decision
- Unable to accept the reality of their situation
- It can also include someone wanting to hide their behaviour from professionals

Sometimes an illness such as mental illness, dementia or learning difficulty may inhibit the decision-making capacity of a vulnerable person. For adults, their condition must be at an advanced level to meet legal thresholds for 'non-voluntary' support to be given.

In cases where church has made referrals to specialist or care and protection agencies, but the person is refusing help, the church should:

- Gently, seek to encourage the person to accept specialist external support.
- Seek wider family involvement to be more involved.
- Respect their right to make their decision – even if you disagree with them.
- Liaise closely with specialist services in case their criteria or thresholds do become met.

When a person refuses to accept external specialist support, it is important that volunteers do not seek to 'fill in the gaps' or cover over the risk, harm or any abuse that may be going on. This can easily happen, especially if:

- We are either fearful of a referral being made in case it damages their relationship with the person they support.
- We feel there is no point because the person refuses.
- A referral was made, but statutory services are unable to help (criteria not met etc)

In such cases, the Rector and the Safeguarding Lead will agree the limits to what support can be given.

5.5 Confidentiality and 'need to know' across the continuum.

If you think that a person might enjoy, need or benefit from other activities or support within or outside the church, then you and/or they can be signposted to the appropriate lead person. This table gives guidance on how best to liaise with the appropriate person and how confidentiality is maintained at each level, based on who needs to know.

<p>Proverbs 11: 13 guides us. “A gossip betrays confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret”</p>	<p>Speak to the relevant group or activity leader. Personal matters are kept within the specific group, unless there is a care and protection issue or the person gives consent for you to seek help or guidance.</p>	<p>Speak to the pastoral support leader. Only those from the Pastoral Team and who are involved directly need to know.</p>	<p>Speak to the Rector or Safeguarding lead. The pastoral team lead shares information with those directly involved on a need to know basis. This always includes the rector and the safeguarding (PPS) lead.</p>	<p>Speak to the Rector or Safeguarding (PPS) lead. The safeguarding lead shares information with those directly involved on a need to know basis. This always includes the rector.</p>
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Table 3: A continuum of confidentiality and ‘need to know’.

If you think that someone’s immediate safety or wellbeing is seriously compromised (e.g. a child would be going to a person they just told you was abusing them; or if the person says they are thinking about taking their own life), even if you do not have their agreement, then you should contact one of the church safeguarding team or the Rector immediately – or even an external specialist agency – details are in section 10 of this document.

If there are suspicions in any way that involve the Safeguarding Lead, then you should contact the Rector or one of the church wardens immediately.

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Lead and the Rector, then the report should be made immediately to Social Services and/ or the Police and the Diocesan Safeguarding Lead.

5.6 Record keeping:

5.6.1 Pastoral Care

A very basic record of agreements or plans may be made by the Pastoral Lead or nominated person, to help coordinate support and for no other purpose. These can be destroyed or deleted once they have served their purpose.

Emails should be headed with 'Pastoral Care' to help with boundaries and confidentiality.

5.6.2 Pastoral Plus

The Diocesan policy requires the Safeguarding lead to keep confidential records of serious concerns, incidents and issues. These records can for be a one-off incident or a chronologic record over time about a person, or family.

A record of actions, agreements or plans should be kept by the Pastoral Plus/Safeguarding lead, to help coordinate support and outcomes. These records would be kept for 3 years and then deleted/destroyed unless they are part of Care and Protection records.

For security and confidentiality, we use a password protected google drive and any documents created are password protected and shared under a strict 'need to know' basis.

The content MUST be shared with the person being supported, except where there are serious care and protection concerns that may be compromised or someone else may be compromised as a result. In any such situations, the decision should be explored by the safeguarding lead and Rector, with external guidance from the Diocese as required.

Emails should be headed with 'Pastoral Plus' to help with boundaries and confidentiality.

5.6.3 Care and Protection

The Diocesan policy requires the Safeguarding lead to keep confidential records of serious concerns, incidents and issues. These records can for be a one-off incident or a chronologic record over time about a person, or family.

An ongoing detailed record of actions, agreements or plans should be kept by the Pastoral Plus/Safeguarding lead, to help coordinate support and outcomes. These records would be kept for 5 years and then deleted/destroyed or given to statutory agencies as required.

For security and confidentiality, we use a password protected google drive and any documents created are password protected and shared under a strict 'need to know' basis.

The content SHOULD be shared with the person being supported, but in certain circumstances this may not be suitable and a note made as to why not should be kept. In any such situations, the decision should be explored by the safeguarding lead and Rector, with external guidance from the Diocese as required.

Emails should be headed with 'Care and Protection' to help with boundaries and confidentiality.

6 DBS and Safe Recruitment

6.1 Safe recruitment process

The Leadership will ensure all paid workers and volunteers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written role description for the post (Children's work co-ordinator, Pastoral team leader and helpers; SClub leaders and helpers, Youth workers)
- Those applying have completed an application form and may be asked to also complete a self-declaration form. The application form includes two referee signatures and declarations.
- Those applying will meet the relevant leader to discuss their role and agree to follow the safeguarding policy and use of Gospel focussed lesson plans.
- Appointments shall be made by the relevant leader with the agreement of the incumbent, starting with a 3 month trial period.
- After 3 months, the leader and the applicant will both sign the application form again to confirm the appointment.
- A disclosure and barring service application has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information (Appendices 4 and 5)). (This could be either the Basic or the enhanced DBS as decided by national CofE policy) **Applicants shall not work directly with children, young people or vulnerable adults until clearance is obtained.**
- The applicant is given access to the St. Nicholas Safeguarding Policy and shown how to report concerns.
- Suitable training and support is provided for the successful applicant
- Young helpers (14 – 18 year olds) must complete the young helper form and be supervised at all times.

6.2 Application forms for volunteers and consent forms

6.2.1 Application form for voluntary work with children and young people

6.2.2 Role description for S.Club leaders and helpers

6.2.3 S.Club Parental Consent form

6.2.4 S.Club weekly record sheet

6.2.5 Risk assessment form for S.Club

6.3 DBS application process

The Church of England sets national guidance on who must have a DBS clearance before they can take on a wide range of paid, voluntary or helping roles within the church. This includes people such as Church Wardens, everyone who does any form of children's groups and many other people too. For detailed information, click here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Church%20of%20England%20role%20%20%28Appendix%208%29%20-%20Safer%20Recruitment.pdf/>

To find out all about the DBS process, click here

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/DisclosureServiceStAlbans.pdf>

To file your DBS application on line, click here

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/E-Bulk-Guide-for-Applicants.pdf>

6.4 Policy for equal opportunities in DBS applications

- 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 Nicholas

Church complies fully with the [code of practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly

- St Nicholas Church undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed
- St Nicholas Church can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that St Nicholas Church 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)
- St Nicholas Church can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected
- St Nicholas Church 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
- St Nicholas Church 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
- St Nicholas Church 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
- St Nicholas Church select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
- 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

- St Nicholas Church ensures that all those in St Nicholas Church who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences
- St Nicholas Church 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
- at interview, or in a separate discussion, St Nicholas Church 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
- St Nicholas Church 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
- St Nicholas Church undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

6.5 Policy for storage and use of DBS information

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

7 Safeguarding training

7.1 Who needs which level of training

The CofE designates training requirements for differing roles which can be seen below.

C0-Basic Awareness	Recommended for anyone who needs a basic level of awareness of safeguarding.
C1 - Foundation	Required for anyone who has safeguarding responsibilities/ contact with children and/ or vulnerable adults

C2 - Leadership	Required for anyone who has safeguarding leadership responsibilities/ Leading activities involving children and / or vulnerable adults
C3 - Clergy and Lay Ministers	Those holding a license, commission, authorisation, Permission to Officiate from a Bishop; Ordained or Lay
C4 Senior Staff	Senior staff who have key roles in safeguarding policy, strategy and practice
C5 Refresher	Anyone who has completed C1, C2 or C3 after 3 years

Up to date details of the roles and the different levels of training required can be found here.

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Practice-Guidance-Safeguarding-Training-and-Development-2017.pdf>

7.2 Training Requirements for different roles in detail

	C0	C1	C2	C3	C5
Incumbent and Clergy, Licensed Lay Ministers e.g. Readers	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Parish workers with children/ vulnerable adults (paid or volunteer)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

PCC safeguarding Lead	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Leaders/Supervisors of work with children/vulnerable adults (paid or volunteer)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Church Operations Manager	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Church Wardens	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
PCC member	Yes	No	No	No	No
Youth and Children's Pastors	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Music Group leader/Choir Leaders	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Bell Tower Captains	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

7.3 Accessing C0 and C1 training online

In order to access the course please click on this link:-

<https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/>

Once on this Welcome page, those wishing to complete the course should click on 'Online Courses' and then login (or register if not already done so) and choose module C0 or module C1.

7.4 What leaders training events are available?

For leaders and those in positions of responsibility who need C2, C3, C4 or S1 levels and others, you can see what training is available locally, click here

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/deanerysafeguarding/>

8 Groups Good practice guidance

8.1 On site groups (e.g. S Club)

8.1.1 Promoting positive behaviour

As a place of worship working with children, young people and adults who have care and support needs we operate and promote good working practice. This enables workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

Relating safely to children, young people and adults who have care and support needs

We will treat all children, young people and adults who have care and support needs with respect and dignity befitting their age, taking care that our language, methods of communication, tone of voice and "body language" are all appropriate.

We will adhere to the following practices to ensure the safety of all:

- Leaders and those with pastoral oversight will take opportunities to observe those for whom they are responsible as they work with children, young people or adults who have care and support needs. Adult and young helpers should not be given overall responsibility for any activity or meeting.
- Be aware of using circumstances in which any person is shown special attention either by being highly favoured or treated unduly harshly. Control and discipline will not involve using physical punishment. Ensure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed.

If there are incidents, e.g. fighting, in which injuries occur, one of the leaders present should write and sign a report that day, and a second leader present should sign it that day also.

This should be given to the Incumbent to keep on file in case required.

We will not engage in any of the following:

- Invading the privacy of children, young people or adults who have care and support needs when they are toileting.
- Any form of game that may appear to be sexually provocative.

- Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, young person or adult who has care and support needs, even in "fun".
- Inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form.
- Any ridiculing, scapegoating or rejecting of a child, young person or adult who has care and support needs.

8.1.2 Ratio of staff to children in groups

Children 0-2 years old:	1 member of staff to 3 children
2-3 years old:	1 member of staff to 4 children
3-8 years old:	1 member of staff to 8 children
Over 8 years old:	1 member of staff for the first 8 children and then 1 extra person for every extra 12 children

The minimum number of adults should always be two and it is recommended that a gender balance be maintained if possible. Groups must not run without the minimum number of approved adults.

8.1.3 Health, safety & risk

- The room should be well lit, and there should be adequate heating, lighting and ventilation in the venue.
- The location of fire-fighting equipment and exits should be known.
- The premises should be checked for any hazards, e.g. piles of chairs that might fall over, equipment with sharp edges, unprotected heaters – and action taken to reduce the chance of accident.
- Food and drink should be prepared hygienically and carefully.
- Toilets should be hygienic.
- Volunteers/helpers/workers must keep their eyes on the children's whereabouts and be open to seeing risks.

- The Church wardens are responsible for maintaining the two first-aid kits on behalf of all the groups using them. They must be informed when any items from the kit are used.
- An Accident File is kept, in which any accidents should be recorded. The date, a brief account of what happened, the action taken and the names of the individuals involved should be recorded and parents informed immediately.
- No adult will work alone with children or young people. This may mean leaving doors open or two groups working in the same room.
- A weekly register should be kept of all in the group, including leaders and helpers in attendance. The incumbent will have an overall list.
- At the end of an event, leaders must ensure that children and young people are being collected by someone with actual or delegated parental responsibility, or they are old enough to make their own way and this is agreed by parents. For more clarity on transportation, see section on off-site events.

8.1.4 Audio and visual (still or moving) recordings

We have notices in the church asking people NOT to take photographs of children during church activities.

At some events it is socially acceptable for anyone to take pictures or videos (weddings and baptisms etc.). In these situations, and in others, we cannot take any responsibility for pictures taken of children by others in church.

The leadership will authorise a photographer at times. Photographs that are taken in church will:

- be stored safely
- be stored without personal identity
- not be shared
- not be used in any way without the parent's specific written consent, which will be sought by the leadership in line with the above.
- Will gain permission from those with parental responsibility which sets out the required boundaries for use and sharing.

8.1.5 Social Media

Children

- Leaders and helpers will not be friends or linked with any child from church on Facebook or any other social media.
- Leaders and helpers will not communicate with any *child* by email or any other form of messaging (such as SMS). Communication will be with those with parental responsibility.

Young People

- With permission from those with parental responsibility, leaders may communicate with a *young person* by email, SMS or other messaging service where parental consent has been given. Social media will not be used.

8.1.6 S.Club forms (for leaders):

Go to the safeguarding tab and select download Parental Consent form

Go to the safeguarding tab and select download Weekly Register form

Go to the safeguarding tab and select download Risk Assessment template

8.2 Off Site Events

8.2.1 Health and Safety Risk Assessments and Parental Consent

For ALL off-site events, a risk assessment **MUST** be carried out. This will include things like:

Contact details, adult/child ratios, parental consent, risk of injury, back up plans etc.

Additional parental permission must be gained for any meetings or activities arranged away from church premises.

For good guidance and forms, please refer to the Diocesan templates which can be found here: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding-documents/>

8.2.2 Transportation to/from events

St Nicholas Church does not provide transport under any circumstances. Transportation for children, young people and adults is always a voluntary activity undertaken by church family members under their own personal auspices and insurance. The pastoral team may coordinate or put people in touch with each other so attendance at events is possible, but the activity of lifts or driving is not the responsibility of the church.

9 External information

For further information and specialist support on a wide range of topics, visit these external links. Please note that St Nicholas Church is not responsible for any content on these external sites.

9.1 Diocesan safeguarding policies and guidance

Click here for all the policy documents and resources from the Church of England Diocese of St Albans

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding/>

9.2 Parenting and Family Centre Services

Click here for everything to do with support for families, parents and carers; for antenatal, new-borns; breastfeeding; family learning; parenting courses, early years, parenting and school nurse information.

<https://www.hertsfamilycentres.org/family-centres.aspx>

9.3 Mental Health

An NHS single point of access for all mental health problems

<https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/contact-us/>

9.4 Adult NHS Community Mental Health Services

NHS services

<https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/services/community-services/adult-community-mental-health-services/>

Happiness, wellbeing and mental health services in Hertfordshire

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Health-in-Herts/Happiness-wellbeing-and-mental-health.aspx>

9.5 Violent or coercive relationships

A confidential, free support and signposting service for anyone affected by domestic abuse, partner violence coercion or control.

<https://www.hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org/>

9.6 Drugs or alcohol problems

Advice and support to help with a drug or alcohol problem, for young people and adults

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Health-in-Herts/Drugs-and-alcohol.aspx>

9.7 Carers in Herts

Advice, information and support to unpaid carers – people (young and older) looking after someone who is elderly, disabled, has a physical or mental illness or who misuses drugs or alcohol.

<http://www.carersinherts.org.uk/>

9.8 Age UK

An independent charity offering services to older people in Hertfordshire

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/>

9.9 Community Help and Information

Hertshelp - a network of community organisations in Hertfordshire working together to listen and help you find independent support, guidance and information

<https://www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx>

9.10 Independent Inquiry into child sexual abuse

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse was set up because of serious concerns that some organisations had failed and were continuing to fail to protect children from sexual abuse. Click for more information

<https://www.truthproject.org.uk/i-will-be-heard/>

The Truth Project is part of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. The Truth Project offers victims and survivors the opportunity to share their experience in writing, on the telephone or in person. Click for more information

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/>

10 Responding to urgent concerns

10.1 If you are worried about a young person

If you suspect abuse, neglect, gangs, crime, self-harm etc.

If you believe a child is in immediate danger **call 999**

If you're worried about a child or young person being abused or mistreated, call **0300 123 4043** number anytime

You can also call Childline on **0800 1111**

Or contact the NSPCC Helpline on **0808 800 5000** or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.

For more information, click <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Childrens-social-care/Child-protection/Hertfordshire-Safeguarding-Children-Partnership/hscp.aspx>

You may also speak in confidence to the Rector, Church Safeguarding Lead or church warden, who will act in the best interests of the child as per the statutory requirements.

For up to date information to explain what is abuse, neglect, maltreatment, go to

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding-documents/>

10.2 If you are worried about any adults

If you suspect there might be violence, coercion, control, drugs, alcohol, mental health, trafficking, slavery, grooming etc.

0300 123 4042 - call this number anytime if you are worried about an adult or parent

Call **999** if they are in immediate danger or a crime is being committed.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/adult-social-services.aspx>

You may also speak in confidence to the Rector, Church Safeguarding Lead or church warden, who will act in the best interests of the child as per the statutory requirements.

For up to date information to explain what is abuse, neglect, maltreatment, go to

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding-documents/>

10.3 If you are worried about an older person

If you are concerned about their health, safety, finances or home conditions etc.

0300 123 4042 - call this number anytime if you are worried about an adult or parent

Call **999** if they are in immediate danger or a crime is being committed.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/adult-social-services.aspx>

You may also speak in confidence to the Rector, Church Safeguarding Lead or church warden, who will act in the best interests of the child as per the statutory requirements.

For up to date information to explain what is abuse, neglect, maltreatment, go to

<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding-documents/>

11 Appendices / documents to download

The following forms can be downloaded from the safeguarding pages on our website

11.1 Application form for voluntary work with children and young people

11.2 Role description for S.Club leaders and helpers

11.3 S.Club Parental Consent form

11.4 S.Club weekly record sheet

11.5 Risk assessment form for S.Club