

Safeguarding Strategy

Ensuring the Diocese of Salisbury provides a safe and caring environment for everyone but especially children, and adults who may be at risk of abuse and neglect.

From the earliest days Christians took great care of children. This was partly because of Jesus' comment, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (Mt 19.14), but it was more about the value of every human life, that everyone matters. In the language of later doctrine we are made in the image of God and therefore every life is precious. The care of the sick, marginal and vulnerable was one of the ways in which Christians bore witness to the world. A great tradition of care came from it: hospitals and hospices, schools and youth and children's work, and the inclusion of the marginal and disabled.

The Church is a major part of the social capital of this country. This is a great strength and to be celebrated as Christian service. The responsibility that goes with this is therefore very great. We need to take great care of people God loves. A series of recent scandals nationally have made it clear that every organisation has responsibilities for safeguarding but this is particularly important for us as a Church.

We need to ensure the safeguarding of everyone but especially of children and vulnerable adults. It is an area that is in particular focus for us at the moment and there are likely to be continuing changes. It is vital that we keep to the highest standards and that when a complaint is made it is dealt with in the ways set out by this strategy. All clergy receive safeguarding training as part of their Continuing Ministerial Development.

**The Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam
The Bishop of Salisbury**

Safeguarding: Guiding Principles

We are all in need of protection from harm and as a Christian community it is the responsibility of every one of us to protect those less able to protect themselves.

The safeguarding and protection of children, and adults at risk is everyone's responsibility, not just parents, guardians and carers.

The Diocese of Salisbury is committed to:

- The safeguarding and protection of all children and young people.
- Safeguarding adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect
- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all adults and children.

- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse
- Engaging with survivors of abuse in a way that is respectful and supportive to help inform this strategy and our safeguarding objectives.

We will respond without delay to every concern raised which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed or is at risk of harm, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

Our vision

It is our aim that each Parish in the Diocese of Salisbury has a robust safeguarding policy and supporting procedures, every member of staff and volunteer has received training appropriate to their role and we have created a culture across the Diocese which reflects our commitment to safeguarding as defined by the Guiding Principles.

Training

It is imperative that all members of the Diocese who come into contact with children or adults who may be at risk whilst carrying out their role, are equipped with the necessary knowledge of legislation and guidance and that an opportunity is provided to discuss in an open and confidential environment situations they have experienced or can anticipate. Every three years a new three year training plan is written and put to DSMG and Bishop's Council for ratification.

Disclosure Barring System (DBS)

The law requires that every person within the Diocese working or volunteering in a role which brings them into significant contact with children or adults who may be at risk completes a DBS check. In the Church of England this is renewed every five years.

Communication

It is important that information on matters such as national guidance received by the Diocese, significant events and other safeguarding matters are communicated effectively and appropriately to those within the Diocese in accordance with the Safeguarding Guiding Principles. Moreover, the Diocese needs to have effective communication with other interested external agencies and to respond accordingly to issues reported in the media. These and other objectives are contained within the Diocese Communications Strategy. The responsibility for implementing this strategy rests with the Diocesan Communications Group chaired by the Bishop of Sherborne.

Responsibilities of Parishes

Every parish has a moral and legal responsibility to implement a robust safeguarding policy that sets out how the Safeguarding Guiding Principles will be applied and to have in place a Safer Recruitment Policy and process which sets out how they will recruit people to those roles working directly with vulnerable people, both paid and voluntary. They are also required to adopt the Church of England Policy – Promoting a Safer Church.

Diocesan Safeguarding Management Group (DSMG)

The Group is responsible for overseeing arrangements for safeguarding in the Diocese, to report and as appropriate make recommendations to Bishop's Council. It is chaired by an Independent Chair appointed by the Bishop and includes the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, Parish Safeguarding representatives and members of the Diocesan management team.

Purpose

- 1) To promote good safeguarding practice in relation to children, and adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, encouraging the development of consistent safeguarding standards across the Diocese.
- 2) To provide an independent voice on safeguarding matters, monitoring and constructively challenging the effectiveness of Diocesan safeguarding work, including holding the Diocese to account regarding the deployment of resources required for safeguarding work.
- 3) To ensure the Diocese's safeguarding policy and practice is aligned with National Church policy developments and best practice, relevant legislation and guidance, including equality and diversity, and to review safeguarding policy and practice annually.
- 4) To monitor the Diocesan Safeguarding Training programme, reviewing implementation and user responses annually.
- 5) To work with survivors to help ensure the safeguarding strategy and objectives are fit for purpose.
- 6) Where required, to provide a confidential panel to assist the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor in assessing risk in cases of positive Criminal Records Disclosures, or in parish situations which cause concern and to provide members for the Risk Management Panel which monitors the quality of worship agreements for sex offenders.

Leadership

Every member of the Diocese with a leadership role has special responsibilities to ensure not only that the relevant policies and procedures are implemented, but that the culture of the Diocese is one which recognises the obligations of safeguarding and demonstrates our commitment to creating and maintaining an environment where children and adults feel safe.