



St Helen's
Bishopsgate

Safeguarding Policy Part A

Overview of Safeguarding at St Helens

Principles and Procedures

ST HELEN BISHOPSGATE AND ST PETER-UPON-CORNHILL

Revised: June 2023

Date for review: June 2024

Policy statement and principles

In accordance with the House of Bishops' Policy Statements 'Promoting a Safer Church' (2017), 'Protecting All God's Children' (2010) and the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy 'Promoting a Safer Diocese' (2018), our church is committed to:

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

The Parish will:

- create a safe and caring place for all.
- have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the Incumbent and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to implement policies and procedures.
- safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and vulnerable adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- display the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs in church premises and on the parish website.
- listen to and take all those who disclose abuse seriously.
- take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following the House of Bishops' guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse and when or where it occurred.
- care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults while maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- ensure that the health and safety policies and procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- review the implementation of the safeguarding policy, procedures and practices at least annually.
- ensure each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

This general policy is one part of the whole St Helen's safeguarding policy, which is formed of the following documents:

- General safeguarding policy (part A)
- Safeguarding policy for children (part B)
- Safeguarding policy for youth (part C)
- Safeguarding policy for vulnerable adults (part D)
- Safeguarding policy for responding to domestic abuse (part E)
- Safeguarding policy for safer recruitment & people management (part F)
- Safeguarding policy supplement A: church staff team
- Safeguarding policy supplement B: PCC statement on recruitment of ex-offenders

For the purposes of this document and all associated documents listed above, the 'St Helen's safeguarding policy' refers to the sum of all the documents listed.

Overview of safeguarding responsibilities

1. The PCC has overall responsibility for safeguarding within St Helen's. This policy is maintained, reviewed, and sanctioned by the PCC.
2. The church safeguarding sub-committee is a source of advice and guidance on safeguarding issues. They will advise the PCC on any matters relating to safeguarding, make recommendations for changes in policy and procedure, ensure provision of appropriate safeguarding training and hold ministry area leaders (MAL) accountable for policy implementation.
3. The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) is appointed by the PCC and given the responsibility for safeguarding within the church family and all its various ministries. Given the size of our church and the diversity of our ministries, it is necessary for the PSO to delegate their responsibilities to ministry area leaders. The PSO will assist and advise ministry area leaders if a safeguarding issue or risk arises and needs to be addressed. The PSO will also be included in decisions about whether to permit someone to be involved in ministry with children where their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is blemished, or information is provided about them under the DBS scheme.

St Helen, Bishopsgate with St Andrew Undershaft and St Ethelburga, Bishopsgate and St Martin Outwich and St Mary Axe is one parish with two church buildings, the Parish Safeguarding Officer is identical to the Church Safeguarding Officer. The Church Safeguarding Officer of the parish of St Peter-upon-Cornhill is separate from the Parish Safeguarding Officer of St Helen, Bishopsgate.

4. For the purposes of safeguarding, the church's various activities have been divided into separate ministry areas. Ministry areas which make formal provision for children and young people require a named ministry area leader and must comply with all St Helen's safeguarding policies. Caregivers recruited to these ministry areas must read the relevant policy.

None of the ministry areas make formal provision for vulnerable adults. However, the vulnerable adults policy outlines considerations relevant to all ministry areas where vulnerable adults may be in attendance. This supplement must be read by anyone providing formal care for vulnerable adults. For the purposes of this document and all other associated policies, we have opted to use the term 'vulnerable adult' in place of 'adult at risk' as the former is a more familiar term.

5. Ministry area leaders are responsible for safeguarding within their ministry area. Ministry areas leaders are listed at the end of the document. They receive the same training as the PSO. Their responsibilities include:
 - promoting a safer culture within their ministry area
 - ensuring that all church staff, volunteers and small group leaders within their area of ministry are familiar with the safeguarding policy
 - working with the PSO and safeguarding administrator to ensure that all caregivers within their areas of ministry are recruited and trained in accordance with this safeguarding policy
 - acting as safeguarding officers for any disclosures of abuse within their ministry area

6. The Children's Champion raises the profile of children within the church and on the PCC.

7. A 'caregiver' refers to anyone serving in any role within church which involves any oversight of children, young people or vulnerable adults. They are recruited according to the Safer Recruitment and People Management Policy (SRPM).

All caregivers share a particular responsibility for:

- loving those in their care as Christ loves them
- setting an example of proper Christian conduct
- praying for those in their care

All caregivers must read Part A General Safeguarding Policy, and then the relevant policy for their area of work - children, youth or vulnerable adults.

When a separate organisation uses our parish premises, we request a copy of the safeguarding policy of any external organisation which hires or uses parish premises.

Responding Well to A Disclosure or Concern of Abuse

This guidance has been abbreviated from the Church of England Safeguarding e-manual. The full version can be found here: [Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse | The Church of England](#). This guidance relates to any disclosure or concern of abuse whether this is recent or in the past. Historical abuse must be treated as seriously as recent abuse and each individual must be treated with pastoral sensitivity.

In 2020, the National Safeguarding Team (NST) commissioned [Survivors Voices](#) to contribute to the development of national standards in responding well to victims and survivors. Through a survey and focus groups with victims and survivors, they identified the following as “what good looks like” in responding well to victims and survivors:

1. Survivors know that they are heard, understood, believed and will be supported.
2. The response by Church Bodies and Church Officers to disclosures is victim and survivor-centred and does not cause further trauma to the person disclosing.
3. People with safeguarding responsibilities understand the impact of trauma and the best way to respond to it.
4. Churches create a culture of listening, transparency and respect that makes it safe to disclose.
5. Victims and survivors and Church workers know what process will be followed if someone reports abuse.
6. Survivors are helped to receive the support they need, both from the Church and other people and organisations.
7. Safeguarding concerns are acted upon appropriately, transparently, with accountability and in a timely fashion.

Principles for responding well

1. Clarifying early that information might be shared

A relational approach involves honesty and transparency by church staff and volunteers receiving disclosures. This will involve clarifying that the information disclosed might be shared with others (such as the PSO, DSA and statutory authorities) for safeguarding purposes.

2. Providing a safe space for disclosure

Church staff and volunteers should listen to disclosures where confidentiality and privacy can be guaranteed and interruptions avoided. Some victims and survivors may want a quiet place while others may need suitably public places which are visible to others because this makes them feel safe. If the conversation is planned then it is preferable to allow victims and survivors to choose the location and time. Care should be exercised to avoid locations which might trigger negative emotions for the victim or survivor. If the disclosure is spontaneous, the person disclosing abuse should be asked if they would like to speak in a more private space.

3. Making a record of the disclosure

Church staff and volunteers should make an accurate record of what the victim or survivor discloses. To ensure accuracy, it may help for them to show the notes they have made to the victim and survivor and ask them to confirm that it is an accurate record of the conversation.

4. Reflective listening

Research suggests that victims and survivors “*want to be actively listened to when they tell their story...*” Listeners can show “active listening” by reflecting back what the speaker says and what they hear, not in parrot-fashion, but by clarifying points and checking the meaning of phrases, words, or even events. This will enable the listener to understand what the disclosure means to the victim or survivor, while also showing empathy, humanity and care about recovery and healing.

5. Understanding the victim’s or survivor’s position

Survivors disclosing abuse may feel as if they are reliving, rather than just remembering, some truly awful events. Victims disclosing recent or ongoing abuse may still be fearful of their abuser. How they are responded to at the point of disclosure can have a profound effect on whether they trust the Church to protect and/or support them. Church staff and volunteers can assure victims or survivors of their safety by explaining that they will immediately inform the parish safeguarding officer who will determine and take the required safeguarding measures. For some victims and survivors a response that recognises their humanity, their right to care, safety and the support of the Church can be powerful first steps to their healing.

6. Going at the victim’s and survivor’s pace

Victims and survivors should be allowed the space to disclose at their own pace and discretion. Church staff and volunteers listening to disclosures should avoid pressing for information and provide the required time for the conversation to unfold without either participant feeling rushed. They should also not ask leading questions. The extent of disclosure should rest with

the victim or survivor, who should feel in control of their story – within the boundaries of good safeguarding practice – and what is going to happen with it.

7. Checking on well-being

While disclosing abuse is difficult for victims and survivors, they may feel more cared for if the church staff member or volunteer regularly checks on their wellbeing during the disclosure. Also with the victims agreement, make arrangements to check on their wellbeing afterwards.

8. Remaining non-judgmental and being self-reflexive

Listeners should be aware of their own emotions during disclosure. They should demonstrate appropriate empathy and avoid overt displays of shock and upset. The focus should be on the survivor's emotions, not the listener's, who should express deep concern for the victim or survivor whilst remaining calm themselves. If the listener is struggling to manage their emotions in the course of a disclosure, they should inform the victim or survivor disclosing to them and connect them with another person who is able to hear the disclosure – for example, the PSO.

Church staff and volunteers should remain non-judgmental during a disclosure. They must take what they are being told seriously, respond empathetically and then act by speaking with those with safeguarding responsibility in the Church Body. It is not their role to judge whether disclosures are “true” or “credible”. The response must therefore not be one of disbelief.

Next Steps In Responding To A Disclosure Or Concern Of Abuse

1. Respond

If it is a direct disclosure respond to the victim/survivor according to the guidance outlined above

Explain what will happen next - that you will seek advice from your ministry area leader and the parish safeguarding officer who will determine the required safeguarding measures.

If there is any current risk to children or adults, they should be informed that their identity and the identity of the respondent will be shared with the ministry area lead and the PSO and may be shared with the statutory agencies.

Assure the victim that you will let them know the outcome of that discussion.

2. Record

Make an accurate record of the disclosure (preferably within one hour, but always within 24 hours)

Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Record what was said and when, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity/situation).

The safeguarding concern form is available to staff members on Trellis for this purpose.

Keep all handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place.

3. Report

Emergency: If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm, contact the police. Ring 999.

Non-emergency: Contact your ministry area leader as soon as possible. If the allegation is against your ministry area leader, contact the PSO. If neither are available, contact the DSA directly. Contact details are at the end of this document.

The ministry area leader/PSO will then seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSA) within 24 hours.

The ministry area leader and PSO will act upon all directions given by the Diocese in the timescale given. They will also consider whether any additional action is required.

You retain the right to report serious matters directly to Social Services or the police. Even so you must also contact either your ministry area leader or the PSO.

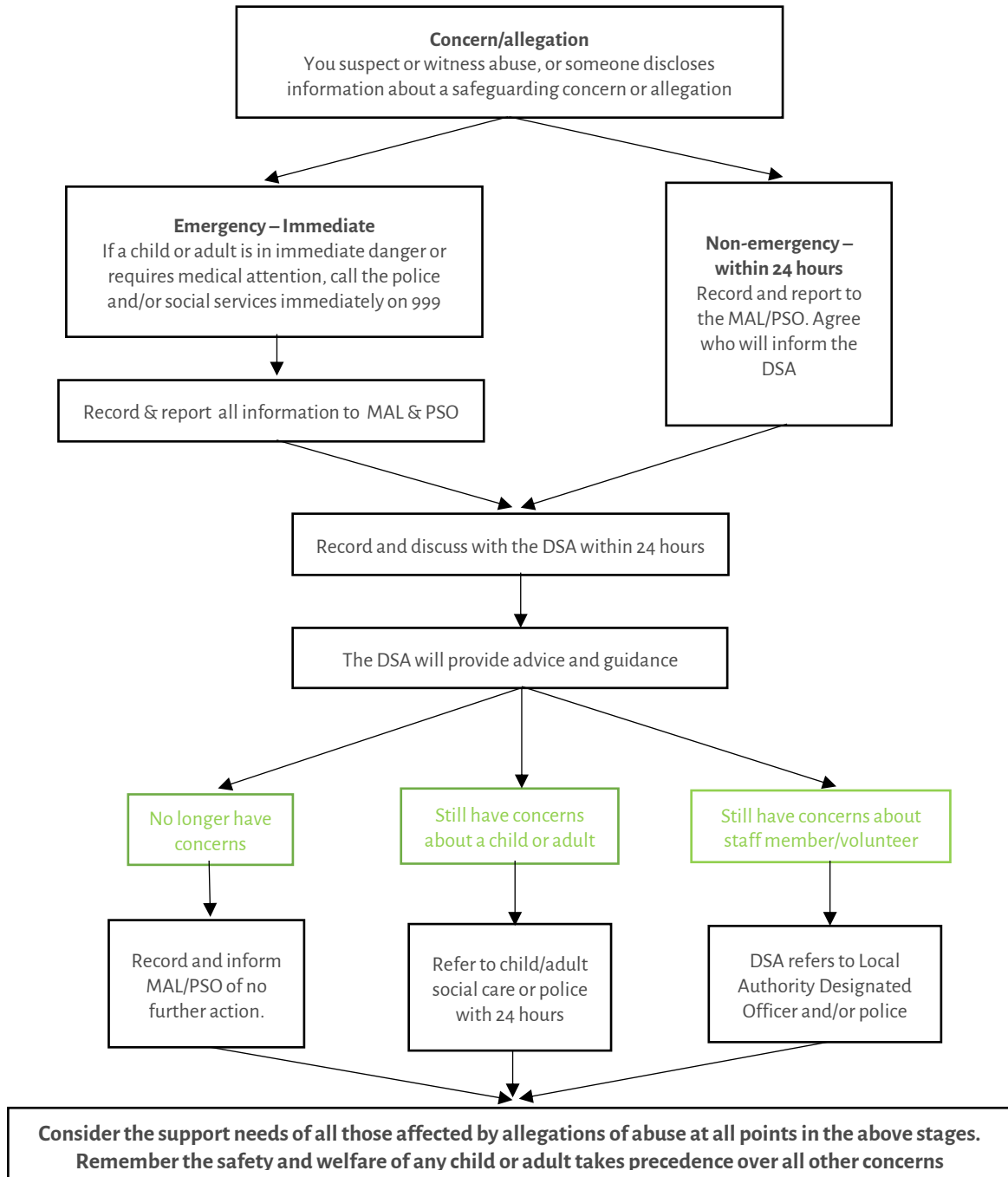
If you are not sure whether this is a concern that needs reporting or not, it is always best still to check with your ministry area leader or the PSO. You don't need to mention names initially unless advised to do so.

Apart from telling your ministry area leader/PSO, the information must be treated as confidential and not shared with other church members.

Do not investigate the concerns of abuse yourself. Do not contact anyone who may be implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure, until advice has been sought from the DSA or statutory agencies.

Consider your own feelings and ask your ministry area leader for pastoral support if needed.

Ensure that you follow up with the person once you have received advice on how to respond.



Guidance for Small Group Leaders

Thank you for helping us to serve the church family as small group leaders. Safeguarding is an important aspect of all ministry at St Helen's and is the responsibility of everyone, whether you are leading groups of adults, young people or children. As small group leaders, you may encounter vulnerable adults or become aware of issues of recent or historical abuse raised by adult group members.

Historical abuse is any allegation or disclosure of abuse committed in the past against a child or young person who is now an adult. If anyone reports any of the above abuse to you, whether recent or historical, and whether they were the abused or the abuser, you must follow the action points in the previous section.

Remember:

- Historical abuse must be treated as seriously as recent abuse.
- 'Children and young people' means anyone aged under 18.
- Illegal activity includes sex with someone aged under 16, child pornography and sharing explicit images of children.
- The church is required to take advice from the Diocese and, if necessary, may need to report allegations or disclosures of criminal acts to the police.

We are conscious that abuse, whether recent or historical, is a sensitive matter and pastorally challenging. If you are concerned about your own wellbeing, please seek support by speaking to your Small Group Leaders' Own Bible study (SLOB) leader or ministry area leader. A list of ministry area leaders can be found at the end of this document.

Please refer to this guidance during the RML/IGG year. More information on supporting vulnerable adults can be found in the St Helen's safeguarding policy part C Vulnerable Adults, found on the Safeguarding page of the St Helen's website: www.st-helens.org.uk/about/safeguarding.

Key contacts

Church safeguarding sub-committee

Chair of Safeguarding Sub-committee

Aneirin Glyn

a.glyn@st-helens.org.uk

Youth Worker & St Peter-upon-Cornhill

Church Safeguarding Officer

Will Waugh

w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk

Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO)

Paul & Sue Harrison

safeguarding.officer@st-helens.org.uk

Children's Worker

Matt Bridges

m.bridges@st-helens.org.uk

Safeguarding Administrator

Rachael Adegbemiso

safeguarding.admin@st-helens.org.uk

Women's Worker

Anna Lamb

anna.lamb@st-helens.org.uk

Children's Champion

Sam Fox

childrens.champion@st-helens.org.uk

Dr Beccy Scott

Ministry area leaders

Church activities that make formal provision for children and young people (CYP church activities) are as listed under each ministry area.

Sunday morning 10 am meeting CYP Church activities: creche, Sunday school, Weekend Away, Weekend not Away	Drew Balch d.balch@st-helens.org.uk
Sunday morning 10.30 am meeting CYP Church activities: creche, Sunday school, 10.30am weekend, Long weekend, occasional seminars e.g. marriage or parenting days	Phil Hudson p.hudson@st-helens.org.uk
Sunday Mandarin meeting CYP Church activities: creche, Sunday school IGG, IGG weekends	Henry Eatock-Taylor h.eatock-taylor@st-helens.org.uk
Sunday afternoon meeting CYP Church activities: creche, Sunday school, Food at 5s, 4pm weekends	Aneirin Glyn a.glyn@st-helens.org.uk
Sunday evening meeting	Luke Cornelius l.cornelius@st-helens.org.uk
City ministry CYP Church activities: City Summer School, City weekend	Wes Illingsworth w.illingsworth@st-helens.org.uk
Little Pickles CYP Church activities: morning stay and play group and any additional activities Women on Wednesday (WoW) CYP Church activities: Central WoW creche, any WoW event with advertised childcare or activities	Rachel Anderson rachel.anderson@btinternet.com
Student ministry	Tim Sheppard t.sheppard@st-helens.org.uk
Youth CYP Church activities: Bridge, Junction, Youth RML, Youth weekend, Sorted, Sorted Nano, socials	Will Waugh w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk
East End outreach - Shantir Boi bookshop	Rob Scott r.scott@st-helens.org.uk

DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR (DSA)

Claire Meaney

Email: Claire.Meaney@london.anglican.org

Tel: 020 3837 5097

[Diocesan Safeguarding Team](#), 020 7932 1224

The Archdeacon of London: [The Ven Luke Miller](#), 020 3837 5204

National contacts

- [City of London - Worried about a child?](#) Children & Families Team: 0207 332 3621 / children.duty@cityoflondon.gov.uk or for out of hours (5pm-9am), please contact the Emergency Duty Team: 0208 356 2710
- [City of London - Safeguarding adults](#) Adult Social Care Services: 020 7332 1224 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm) 020 8356 2300 (weekdays after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays)
- [Childline](#) a free 24 hour confidential counselling service for children and young people (up to age 19) 0800 1111
- [Family Lives](#) (previously Parentline) 0808 800 222 / support@napac.org.uk
- [NAPAC – Supporting Recovery From Childhood Abuse](#) 0808 801 0331
- [Respect](#) supports men experiencing domestic abuse 0808 8010327 / info@mensadvice.org.uk
- [Safe Spaces](#) a confidential, personal and safe space for anyone who has been abused through their relationship with either the Church of England, the Catholic Church of England and Wales or the Church of Wales 0300 303 1056 / safespaces@firstlight.org.uk
- [Samaritans helpline](#) a free support service if you feel you are struggling to cope and need someone to talk to. 116 123 / jo@samaritans.org
- [The Silver Line Helpline](#) a free support service for older people suffering abuse, neglect or loneliness 0800 470 8090
- [Victim Support](#) provides specialist help to support people who have experienced crime and traumatic incidents 08 08 16 89 111
- [Women's Aid](#) work to support women and children who are victims of domestic abuse helpline@womensaid.org.uk / chat online via their website 0808 2000 247
- [Your GP](#) Speaking to your own doctor is a good way to get support for your well-being and mental health

FURTHER RESOURCES

- 'The Church of England, House of Bishops, Parish safeguarding handbook' – promoting a safer church, 2019
- 'The Care Act 2014, and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2016' (Chapter 14)
- Church of England Responding Well to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Practice Guidance, March 2017
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Safeguarding e-manual | The Church of England](#)
- [Policy and practice guidance | The Church of England](#)
- [Code of Safer Working Practice 02.07.2021.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#)
- [Safer Environment and Activities Oct19_o.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#)
- [Safeguarding Training Portal \(cofeportal.org\)](#)
- www.london.anglican.org/support/safeguarding

GLOSSARY

DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DSA	Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor
MAL	Ministry Area Leader
NST	Church of England's National Safeguarding Team
PCC	Parochial Church Council
PSO	Parish Safeguarding Officer
SRPM	Safer Recruitment and People Management Policy