



STB Safeguarding Policy

Contents

1.	Version Control	3
2.	Policy Statement/Purpose.....	4
3.	Contacts	4
4.	Code of Behaviour	4
5.	Acceptable Touch	6
6.	Children’s Activities	7
7.	Safer Recruitment	8
8.	Visiting Adults	8
9.	Procedure to be followed where there are concerns that someone may be committing abuse.....	9
10.	Procedure to be followed where people with convictions for offences against children or people under investigation are attending church	10
11.	Child-on-child Abuse	10
12.	Allegations or Concerns about Clergy.....	11
13.	Implementation of the Policy.....	11
14.	Procedure for Regular Reporting to the PCC.....	12

1. Version Control

Policy Title:	STB Safeguarding Policy
Version:	Version 2024
Date Issued:	02/12/24
Date to be reviewed:	September 2025

2. Policy Statement/Purpose

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy Statement states that:

'The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Church will strive to support all church officers to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge the abuse of power'.

A copy of these procedures will be made available to all clergy, staff (whether employed directly by the Trustees), volunteers and lay workers who have the responsibility for children or young people. They should sign a declaration afterwards saying that they have read and understood them.

3. Contacts

Our Safeguarding Officer is: Ian Craig

Tel: 07955 335844

Email: safeguarding@stbgrangepark.org

Our Safer Recruitment Lead is: Charlotte Faulconbridge

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Our STB Kids Pastor is: Helen Gardner

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Email: kids@stbgrangepark.org

4. Code of Behaviour

All those working on behalf of the STB with children, young people and adults must:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.

- Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer. Sign and date the record.
- For those on our database we annually obtain written consent for photographs/videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored by STB.
- Attendees at STB will be made aware that our gatherings are live-streamed and where our 'out of camera' areas are.
- Attendees at STB gatherings will be made aware of the STB photographer and asked to notify us if they do not wish to appear in these photos.
- Administer any First Aid with others around.

In addition, for those working with children and young people must:

- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and its nature before the activity takes place.

All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not:

- Invade an individual's privacy whilst washing and toileting.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one individual or group.
- Allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking.
- Allow unknown adult's access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person.
- Allow strangers to give children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group, lifts.
- Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media.
- Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

In addition, for children and young people, you must not:

- Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).
- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people.
- Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include adult family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

5. Acceptable Touch

Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, is wholly appropriate.

The following guidelines regarding touching are suggested:

- Always ask permission.
- Be mindful of your body position.
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be in response to a child's needs and not related to the worker's needs. It should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the church officer.
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual and/or abusive/offensive.
- Allow the child to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention).

In addition:

- You can allow people you support to give you brief hugs if you feel comfortable with this.
- You can allow people you support to hold hands or link arms with you to help with travel and stability.
- You should discourage people you support from touching your face. You can offer your hand instead.
- You should discourage people you support from sitting on your lap. You can offer to sit side by side.
- You should avoid using touch if the person you support is very distressed and is unlikely to tolerate it.

Ensure that staff and volunteers at all levels must take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be encouraged to challenge one another if necessary. Concerns about possible abuse or inappropriate behaviour should always be reported.

6. Children's Activities

Church groups that involve children need to ensure good practice standards across a wide range of areas including: recruitment of activity leaders; DBS checking; staffing ratios; suitability of premises; health and safety arrangements; and facilities for children with special needs.

The minimum staffing levels for groups should be as follows. Each group should have at least two workers, even for smaller groups, and if possible one male and one female. Staff ratios for all groups should always be based on a risk assessment. For example, staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered higher risk, potentially dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved.

- 0 – 2 years 1 adult to 3 children 1:3
- 2 – 3 years 1 adult to 4 children 1:4
- 4 – 8 years 1 adult to 6 children 1:6
- 9 – 12 years 1 adult to 8 children 1:8
- 13 – 18 years 1 adult to 10 children 1:10

For all groups and activities:

- Undertake a health and safety risk assessment, use template [HERE](#)
- A registration form must be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities, which should include up to date information on parents' contact numbers, medical information (e.g. allergies) and any special needs (see Model Registration Form – Activities and Trips*).
- An attendance register must be kept and be available at all group meetings.
- A First Aid kit must be available on any premises that are used by children.
- An accident and incident logbook must be available, and all accidents recorded. The logbook should be stored in the welcome box under the welcome table. Any significant incidents must be recorded (e.g. a fight between children).
- There should be access to a telephone, if possible.

- In premises where children's groups meet, the Childline and Family Lives telephone numbers should be displayed.
- Parents must sign a consent form before children are transported in a private car, and before any photography or images are taken.

In addition, when taking children offsite:

- The church leadership must be informed and agree to the activity.
- Details of the activity and any itinerary must be given in advance to parent/s and consent forms received in advance of the activity taking place.
- Details of the activity and a list of contacts must be left with someone in the church.
- Details of the activity and arrangements must be given to the incumbent and/or PSO.
- A risk assessment must be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the activity is covered by PCC insurance.
- A leader must be designated to take responsibility for First Aid.

Many of these items are equally applicable to groups involving vulnerable adults.

7. Safer Recruitment

When appointing/recruiting leaders and helpers for work with children, young people and vulnerable adults the Trustees will follow the guidelines set out in our Safer Recruitment Policy which will shortly be available [HERE](#).

8. Visiting Adults

Visiting vulnerable adults in their homes is an essential element of many church officers' roles. Many parishioners will be well known to the church officer and where there have been no previous concerns, the level of risk to the church officer or parishioner during visits will usually be low. However, unexpected circumstances can be encountered, some of which may place a church officer at risk. For example, the unexpected presence in the home of a relative or friend with a history of violence or threatening behaviour. Unfortunately, case histories also show that a parishioner maybe at risk from a church officer. For these reasons it is very important for parishes to ensure their church officers and parishioners are as safe as they can be, and that there is accountability and transparency in the manner in which church officers engage in lone working or visits to homes.

To assure the person you are visiting of their safety, and for your own as a church officer:

- If possible, undertake a risk assessment before an initial visit, especially if you do not know the person. If there are any concerns or risks known before a visit is made, you are advised always to undertake a risk assessment (see Model Risk Assessment Checklist for Home Visiting*). In these circumstances, consider whether the visit is necessary, or whether you should be accompanied by another church officer. In addition, visiting in pairs may be advisable, especially if the adult is perceived to be vulnerable.
- Do not call unannounced; call by appointment, if appropriate telephoning the person just before visiting.
- Be clear about what support you can offer and the purpose and limitations of any pastoral care/support that is available.
- Do not make referrals to any agency that could provide help without the adult's permission, and ideally encourage them to set up the contact, unless there are safeguarding concerns.
- Never offer 'over-the-counter' remedies to people on visits or administer prescribed medicines, even if asked to do so.
- We do not accept cash donations but will encourage those who want to give STB to give via the website.
- Make a note of the date when you visit people, report back about the visit to the agreed named person and say what is concerning or going well. They will report safeguarding concerns to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and/or incumbent or directly to the DSA if they are not available.

9. Procedure to be followed where there are concerns that someone may be committing abuse

If you are concerned, or it comes to your notice that someone may be committing abuse:

- Make notes of your concerns and discuss them with your Church Leader or Safeguarding Officer.
- The Church Leader or Safeguarding Officer must then report the concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser by the end of the next working day.
- Do not contact the Church Leader or Safeguarding Officer if the allegation concerns them or anybody related to them. Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) directly if necessary.
- Dates and times should be recorded of any observations which have been made and of the referral to the DSA.
- The DSA will act in line with Practice Guidance and will decide whether to

- Report the concerns to Social Services and/or the Police, who will then investigate while the DSA liaises with the parish; or
- Continue to observe closely – the process will be repeated in the event of any more concerns.
- There should be close communication between the priest/coordinator, the DSA and the appropriate Archdeacon until the situation is resolved.
- In the absence of the DSA, the appropriate Archdeacon should be contacted.

10. Procedure to be followed where people with convictions for offences against children or people under investigation are attending church

Where someone attending the church has been convicted of offences against children (or they have received formal police caution) an agreement will need to be drawn up to minimise any risk to the safety of children within the church. An agreement may also be necessary where a person who has not been convicted is reasonably regarded as posing a risk (eg he/she is subject to investigation for alleged child abuse).

- The Church Leader or, in the absence of the Church Leader, the Safeguarding Officer, must inform the DSA of the situation.
- The DSA will act in line with Practice Guidance and will decide whether an agreement needs to be in place. A risk assessment may be necessary.
- The DSA will be responsible for producing any risk assessment and/or agreement.
- If the person is a convicted offender, there will need to be liaison with the person's Supervising officer (police or probation) who should be consulted about the agreement and, ideally, be a signatory to it.
- The offender or person under investigation will be asked to sign the agreement, which will then be reviewed annually.

Any blemished DBS check must be referred to the DSA who will follow up in line with Practice Guidance. The extent of the DSA's involvement will vary according to the nature of the information on the DBS check.

11. Child-on-child Abuse

At STB, we believe that child-on-child abuse is never acceptable. It will never be passed off as 'banter', 'just having a laugh', 'part of growing up', 'girls being girls',

or 'boys being boys.' We will respond appropriately to all signs, reports and concerns of child-on-child abuse, including those that have happened outside of our church gatherings and/or online. We recognise that children are vulnerable and capable of abusing their peers; we take such abuse as seriously as abuse perpetrated by an adult. We recognise that even if there are no reports it does not mean it is not happening; it may be the case that it is just not being reported. We acknowledge that children who have allegedly abused their peers or displayed harmful behaviour are themselves vulnerable. We are committed to a whole church approach to ensure the prevention, early identification, and appropriate management of child-on-child abuse within our church and beyond. All adults working with children will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here,' and this is especially important when considering child-on-child abuse.

Definitions

Child-on-child abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children (sometimes known as 'teenage relationship abuse')
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens or encourages physical abuse)
- Sexual harassment (including online), such as jokes, remarks, comments which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern.

Recognition

We recognise that behaviours associated with child-on-child abuse take place on a spectrum. Understanding where a child's behaviour falls on this spectrum is essential to responding to it appropriately. We recognise that all children grow and develop at their own pace, and we will use our knowledge of this to respond appropriately.

12. Allegations or Concerns about Clergy

If an allegation involves the Church Leader, it should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

13. Implementation of the Policy

The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for monitoring the policy to see that it is being put into practice. He/she will be supported by the Operations Manager and Trustees, who have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding.

14. Procedure for Regular Reporting to the PCC

The Safeguarding Officer will report bi-monthly to the Trustees on Safeguarding matters or after any incident with Safeguarding protection implications (taking care to preserve confidentiality as necessary). The Trustees will be kept informed on at least an annual basis of all regular and one-off children's activities as this is necessary for them to fulfil their duties as charity trustees and for insurance purposes.