

PARISH OF THE ASCENSION: CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Church of England is committed to and will champion the protection of children and young people both in society as a whole and in its own community. It fully accepts, endorses and will implement the principle enshrined in the Children's Acts of 1989 and 2004, that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Church of England will foster and encourage best practice by setting standards for working with children and by supporting parents. It will work with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith communities to promote the safety and well-being of children. It is committed to acting promptly whenever a concern is raised about a child or young person or about the behaviour of an adult, and will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse is necessary.

Principles

We are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of children within our church community. We will respond without delay to any complaint that a child or young person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed in our care, taking advice as necessary from statutory agencies, and we will fully co-operate with statutory agencies during any investigation they make. In addition, we will seek to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult whose life has been affected by abuse.

In fulfilling our responsibilities in child protection, we will seek to create a culture of 'informed vigilance' where the welfare of the child is paramount. We will pay particular attention to children with special needs and those from ethnic minorities, to ensure their full integration within the community.

Health and safety policies are in place, and we have provided appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the parish.

The Church wishes to welcome and support all members of its community. Those who have a history of offences against children and/or who may pose a threat to them will not be permitted to work with children but will be supported pastorally. Where necessary, an agreement of appropriate conduct will be drawn up between the member and the ministers with the help of relevant external agencies.

Recruitment

We accept the prime duty of care placed upon the ministers and Parochial Church Council to ensure the well-being of children and young people. Therefore we will carefully select and train ordained and lay ministers, volunteers and paid workers. Recruitment will include Criminal Records Bureau checks for each person involved in working with people under the age of 18. We will follow recommended safeguarding practice in the appointment of all these workers, and for anyone who is in a position of authority. They will be appropriately trained and supported.

Church Premises Users

Each User of church premises is responsible for ensuring that they are meeting the requirements of Child Protection legislation. The hiring body should abide by their own child protection or safeguarding policy if they have one, otherwise by that of the church with whom they have a hiring agreement.

Reviewing and implementing our policy

We will review the implementation of our child protection policy, procedures and practice every year. All staff and volunteers who work with children have been given a copy of this policy and good practice guidelines, and have agreed to follow them.

We have appointed a child protection co-ordinator to take responsibility for supervising our child protection policy: **Rev'd Philipa King, St Luke's House, 2 Stretten Avenue, Cambridge.** We have also appointed an independent children's advocate: **Miss Helen Cunnington, 24 Eachard Rd, Cambridge**

This policy is reviewed annually.