



## **Safeguarding Policy for the Parochial Church Councils of Christchurch and St Mary's, English Bicknor**

The PCC's accept the Diocesan Policy Statement and Guidelines on working with children and young people:

### **Gloucester Diocese - Diocesan Policy Statement – working with children and young people**

1. Scripture teaches that all people are special because they are made in the image of God. This is therefore true for children and young people, who should be respected and protected. Jesus warned that those who exploited or abused children deserved profound condemnation. Within the Kingdom of God, children matter in their own right and are to be taken seriously.
2. The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Clergy and laity who work for the Church in a paid or voluntary capacity need to exercise the greatest care when working with those for whom they have been given responsibility.
3. The highest standards should be maintained therefore in all pastoral, counselling, educational, worship and recreational circumstances. The exploitation of any relationships for any purpose will not be tolerated.
4. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to creating a culture of informed vigilance which takes children, and adults who are vulnerable, seriously – and will work closely, and in partnership with, the local authority and statutory authorities to ensure that we offer best practice advice and guidance.
5. The Diocese of Gloucester accepts the principle of The Children Act (1989) that the welfare of the child is paramount, and will follow the Home Office Code of Practice: “Safe from Harm”, and the House of Bishops’ “Protecting all God’s Children” and “Safer Recruitment” advice and guidelines.
6. If allegations of abuse are made, then the Diocese of Gloucester will respond without delay and collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with investigating such allegations of child abuse. It will not conduct investigations on its own and will work in partnership with the police, local authority, and others to follow legal compliance, and to ensure we are able to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person, or adult who has suffered abuse.

7. It will be standard practice in the Diocese of Gloucester to require completion of a common declaration form in accordance with guidelines of the Children Act 1989, from the following categories of people prior to selection or appointment for work within the Diocese:
  - all candidates for ordained ministry and accredited lay ministry
  - all clergy and accredited lay ministers moving into and within the diocese
  - employees of the Diocesan Board of Finance who are likely to have opportunities for contact with children and young people
  - volunteers who support the work of the Diocesan Advisory Boards and Committees on a regular basis
8. It is Diocesan policy that all PCCs should have in place a Policy for Safeguarding/child protection – and that this is reviewed annually and a copy supplied as part of the requirements of the Archdeacon’s Visitation.
9. The Diocese will ensure that clergy and nominated local people are kept informed of changes in law, process etc – and that training is available for those who are responsible for/oversee local parish safeguarding practices.
10. The Diocese of Gloucester will seek to ensure that each paid post or volunteer position for which it is asked to act in the disclosure process is assessed for the appropriateness of a DBS disclosure. That any advertisement or other indication of an employment or volunteering opportunity will indicate where appropriate the level of disclosure that will be sought, and that the conditional nature of any offer of employment or volunteering role until the receipt of satisfactory disclosure information is clearly indicated.
11. The Diocese of Gloucester will seek to ensure that a candidate for a paid post or volunteer position for which it acts is asked in writing to list any convictions, or other disqualifying behaviour, that might be revealed in the disclosure process. This is in order to assist the recruitment decision process and in the knowledge that it will only be taken into account when relevant to the post in question. Also, that the candidate should be invited to submit any conviction or related information in writing prior to interview in an envelope clearly marked ‘Private and Confidential’ which should be handed to the person specifically identified for this purpose in the recruitment process.
12. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to a process of five-year rechecking of employees and volunteers for whom this is appropriate, as part of its ongoing strategy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
13. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to the safe storage and disposal of disclosure information in line with such guidance as may from time to time be provided by the Disclosure and Barring Service and in line with Data Protection requirements.

14. The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to the fair and sensitive use of disclosure information and will take every step to ensure that it, and those for whom it acts as an umbrella body, seek to achieve and maintain models of best practice. Where an applicant feels that disclosure information has not been handled in a fair and sensitive way an appeal process will be available, details of which can be obtained in writing from the Diocesan Human Resources Manager at Church House, Gloucester.
  
15. The Diocese of Gloucester will work closely with local churches to care for and supervise through appropriate contracts of behaviour, any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.

The PCC's accept the Diocesan Policy Statement and guidelines on working with children and young people:

- I. The PCC's seek to provide a caring, warm and consistent atmosphere and environment in which children and young people can develop and grow and in which they can learn in safety. Children and young people will be treated as individuals and with equal concern.
  
2. Therefore the PCC's:
  - Recognise the following areas of work with children and young people in the areas of :
    - Messy Church
    - Children and young people joining the 'Ringers' at English Bicknor
    - Provision for children and young people during and in addition to services.
  
    - Vulnerable Adults
    - Pastoral visits to homes of the house bound.
    - Pastoral visits to the sick.
    - Hospital visits
    - Services for those in respite or community homes.
  
- I. Will ensure that everyone involved in the care of children and young people, whether through paid employment or volunteer roles are personally made aware of the diocesan policy and the PCC's policy.
  
- II. Will ensure that everyone involved in the care of children and young people (*existing and in the future from the date the PCC's policy is accepted*) will be interviewed by the parish priest, or appropriate other and asked to complete the disclosure form which will be checked by a diocesan counter signatory. (It will be strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of law will be seen only by the above named person or those acting on the Bishop's behalf).
  
- III. Will ensure that completed forms are appropriately held in church records. All information on workers with children and young people should be kept locked away safely and confidentially.

- IV. Will ensure it reviews its employment and volunteer recruitment practices so that every position sets out clearly what level of disclosure (where appropriate) applies, that no one is active in that role until the required disclosure has been received, and any subsequent risk assessment has been completed satisfactorily.
- V. Will ensure that candidates for a paid post or volunteer position submit in writing any convictions or other disqualifying behaviour that might be revealed in the disclosure process in order to assist the recruitment decision process.  
  
(This information will only be taken into account when relevant to the post in question. It should be submitted in an envelope clearly marked 'Private and confidential' and handed to the person specifically identified for this purpose in the recruitment process).
- VI. Will ensure that it complies with the rolling programme of (DBS) re-checks that are administered through the diocese.
- VII. Will ensure everyone involved in working with children and young people are clear of the nature of the work they have agreed to do and the name of the person to whom they are responsible.
- VIII. Will ensure the parish priest/named person will be responsible on the PCC's behalf for implementing and monitoring the PCC's policy
- IX. Will ensure that training opportunities are encouraged for all members of the PCC's, LMT's and anyone else undertaking work involving children.
- X. Will ensure that the PCC's and the Diocesan Human Resources Manager are informed of the names of those who work with children and young people and will be notified of any changes.
- XI. Nominate Linda James (Church Warden Christchurch) to be the Nominated Person to whom all cases of suspected or alleged abuse must be reported immediately.
- XII. Will make adequate provision for insurance cover for all activities for children and young people in line with the House of Bishop's guidance.
- XIII. Will make a copy of this policy available to all employees and volunteers of this church, and to parents/guardians.
- XIV. Will review this policy annually at the APCM and ensure that a copy of this policy will be presented to the Archdeacon at the Visitation.
- XV. Will ensure that any individual organisation renting/using its' premises for activities involving children and young people, are aware of their own individual responsibilities to have appropriate safeguarding policies and processes in place.

- XVI. Will ensure that any complaint made regarding a child for whom we are responsible who may have been harmed or is in significant danger will be reported immediately and that we will fully cooperate with statutory agencies during any investigation into allegations concerning a member of the church community.
- XVII. Will inform the statutory agency of any suspected criminal offenders or concerns that we are made aware of in respect of our contact with children and will inform and work closely with the Diocesan Human Resources Manager and all statutory agencies throughout.
- XVIII. Will offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse and provide them with details of local and national support agencies.
- XIX. Will work closely with the diocese to ensure that we effectively supervise and support any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.
- XX. Will ensure that we work closely with the diocese to ensure that any required DBS's or other required checks and references including the five year rolling re-check programme are complied with.
- XXI. Will work closely with the diocese in ensuring appropriate people are trained and updated on good practice, legal changes etc.
- XXII. Will ensure that a copy of this policy will be displayed on the Parish Notice Board alongside a Child Line poster which can be downloaded from [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) free of charge.

**By the Incumbent**

Signed:

Name/title: Anthony James Williams - Rector Christchurch

Dated:

**By the Church Wardens**

Signed:

Name/title: Linda James - Church Warden Christchurch

Dated: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Signed:

Name/title: Trevor Harvey - Church Warden Christchurch

Dated: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Signed:

Name/title: Jennie McHattie - Church Warden St Mary's English Bicknor

Dated:

Signed:

Name/title: Fred Altoft - Church Warden St Mary's English Bicknor

Dated: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2015