

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

This policy and procedures should be used alongside the diocese 'God's children, our diocese'

This policy applies to paid employees and volunteers equally

The Parochial Church Council of All Saints Kings Heath agreed to adopt the House of Bishop's safeguarding policy, Promoting a Safer Church, and all of the accompanying safeguarding practice guidance and The Church of England – Birmingham's procedures for their implementation on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016

The All Saints Companies and the PCC of the parish of All Saints Kings Heath (All Saints) give paramount importance to the nurture and care of children and young people. Accordingly we recognise:-

The All Saints Companies and the PCC have the responsibility to ensure safeguarding procedures and practices are followed. The safeguarding and child protection coordinator (SCPC) has the responsibility to remind and support them in this.

The need to create a safe environment in which all children and young people are valued and feel confident to ask for help and support, and to have policies and procedures that support this.

To ensure that all workers and volunteers work within accepted good practice guidelines in their work with children and young people.

The need for all workers and volunteers working on our behalf to be interviewed and selected according to the 'Safe Recruitment and DBS Application Procedures' and legal requirements as laid out in the procedures.

Our responsibility not to collude with abuse wherever it is happening. We will report it to the appropriate authority. We will support children and young people who are suffering abuse.

Our responsibility to guard against the possibility of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people by persons who may be acting in the name of our parish.

The need for all members of All Saints organisations and our church to know about, understand and take responsibility for the welfare and protection of children and young people. Those directly involved with children and young people will receive relevant training. To this end we will appoint a safeguarding and child protection coordinator and introduce procedures.

As a community or as individuals we cannot deal with child protection or an investigation. Therefore we will use the statutory agencies, following the House of Bishop's and Diocese guidelines, wherever the abuse takes place. We recognise the responsibility to ensure that the matter is reported, lies with the person who identifies the concern.

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We will seek advice from the Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor

That no offence can put any person beyond the love of God and that there must therefore be a place in the fellowship of the church for those who have abused children. However their offence disqualifies them from being a leader in any group involving children and young people and their place in the church must be within agreed boundaries that ensure that the safety of children and young people is paramount.

That sexual abuse takes place and can have negative and long term effects on those abused.

That we have a responsibility to make known that listening support for an individual is available and to be alert to occasions when adults may wish to make known they would value some support.

The need to inform all members of All Saints Companies and church including children and young people, about our policy and procedures.

The need to have a safeguarding group that reviews the safeguarding practices annually in consultation with those who work with children and young people in our church and with an external consultant if deemed necessary, in conjunction with a policy review group

We require that all children's and young people's organisations using any part of our premises must have their own child protection policy and procedures.

**All Saints acknowledges that sexual abuse takes place and can have negative and life-long effects on those abused.**

**As a church and companies, we have responsibility to make known that listening support for an individual is available and to report and refer as appropriate to statutory bodies.**

### **Child Protection Procedures**

It is the responsibility of , All Saints companies, the PCC, their staff/leaders to ensure that they are compliant with the safeguarding processes and practises and to inform the SCPC if there are any relevant changes or difficulties.

#### **Safeguarding and Child Protection Co-ordinator**

The SCPC will be selected and appointed by All Saints organisations and the PCC. S/he will be required to have an interview, reference(s), a DBS check and sign the declaration before appointment. S/he will work to a job description as agreed by All Saints organisations and PCC and will be supervised by the Incumbent. This post is currently held by Mary Miles (0121 449 0851)

#### **The role of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Coordinator:**

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- To work in partnership with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Coordinator and the Incumbent and the DSL of each section of All Saints.
- To assist in the process of DBS checks
- To update and review the policy
- To ensure all those working with children and young people, either through activities or targeted work, have the policy and understand it
- To assist leaders in charge with the recruitment of staff and volunteers
- To promote safeguarding throughout All Saints
- To inform the Board(s) of new, relevant legislation
- To support workers and volunteers when they have to deal with allegations, disclosure or concerns and to make reports/referrals if necessary
- To seek advice from Children's Services and the police and the diocese and pass this on appropriately
- For PCC activities report all concerns and allegations of abuse to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser
- To report serious safeguarding incidents to the Charity Commission
- To keep all records

The diocese requires all parishes to have an Identity Verifier to check the ID for DBS checks. This person will be appointed by the PCC. For job description see Diocese guidelines

### **DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead)**

Each All Saints organisation will appoint a DSL to ensure that safeguarding policies are carried out in that organisation. They will deal with any safeguarding issues or incidents but will report these directly at the time to the SCPC and give a written report that is kept by the SCPC. They should go to the SCPC for support and advice and the SCPC should intervene if procedures aren't being followed. The DSL should maintain confidentiality.

The SCPC will be the DSL for the PCC and is currently Mary Miles

Each Board or committee of the sections will notify the SCPC of their DSL with contact details

### **Safeguarding Group**

A safeguarding group will be formed, comprised of the Incumbent (chair), the SCPC, the safeguarding vulnerable adults coordinator, the chair of each organisation and the PCC, the manager/leader of any services delivered, one church warden, the chairs of any subcommittees whose work is with children, young people or vulnerable adults and the chair of the pastoral team. This group will work in conjunction with a policy review group.

### **Appointment of Children's and Young People's Workers**

See our Recruitment and Selection Policy for full details of how to recruit paid staff safely

The persons responsible for leading groups/activities in the church will be appointed by the PCC. The managers in All Saints organisations will be appointed by the Boards of directors or equivalent.

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The person responsible for the service or activities within the church or All Saints company where vulnerable adults may be present will ensure that all staff and volunteers working within the church or the All Saints company should have a DBS check where the role is eligible. The check is carried out by the SCPC and the ID verifier through the Diocese of Birmingham and Thirty One:Eight:

Any adverts for job positions should state that a DBS check will be asked for, where the role is eligible

The person responsible for the service or activity should:

- Ensure the worker/volunteer fills in an application form (paid staff)/volunteer form. This should include self disclosure of any criminal charges, where the role is eligible for a DBS check
- Apply to to the SCPC o for a check to be carried out
- Send two references to check their suitability, followed up by the manager/leader and given to the SCPC

The worker/volunteer will:

- Have an interview with the SCPC Mary Miles that explains the safeguarding implications of their role and ensures their suitability for the job or role.
- Fill in the Diocese self disclosure form at this interview, where the role is eligible for a DBS check. If something is revealed on the self-disclosure form then advice will be taken from the diocese
- Have an enhanced DBS disclosure (see Making a DBS check), where the role is eligible. Where a DBS check discloses information, a risk assessment will be required to assess suitability for the role. This is done in conjunction with the diocese. This will involve an ID check with the ID verifier.
- Have a job or task description that states their safeguarding responsibilities in the role.
- Have a named supervisor
- Have a probationary period of 3 months that is monitored by their supervisor
- Receive an induction that includes this policy and an explanation of it.
- Receive appropriate training into aspects of this policy.

All records around DBS s will be kept by the SCPC, will be kept confidential and must be kept indefinitely and in safe place.

All other staff and volunteer records will be kept by the Manager/leader

If the worker refuses to sign the declaration form or any issues are raised on it them the Bishop's advisor should be notified.

Under 18's, if their role is eligible for a check, they will follow the same process but with parent/guardian present if applicable

DBS checks will be renewed every 5 years. It is the responsibility of the manager/leader to ensure the review of DBS is completed following the same process. For reviews of DBS checks references are not needed

All Saints is committed to the fair and sensitive use of disclosure information, and where an applicant feels that this has not happened an appeal process will be available, details of which will be obtained, if necessary, by the SCPC from Diocesan office

Church wardens, church officers, directors, trustees and committee members when their companies and committees are managing activities for children, young people or vulnerable adults will follow the DBD check procedures.

Once the DBS process has been started workers and volunteers can work under supervision, unless there are reasons where this is not applicable.

**For further information see ‘Selection and recruitment policy’ and ‘Volunteers policy’**

### **Confession**

Disclosure may take place in a pastoral setting outside formal confession. While a person’s right to confidentiality is of the highest importance, it is not absolute. There are occasions when confidentiality should not be maintained. If children may possibly be at risk from the person making the disclosure, a report must be made to social services or the police.

It is therefore most important for the priest to make clear to the person concerned whether what is taking place is formal or sacramental confession on the one hand or spiritual or other counsel on the other. In the latter case, the rules on confidentiality outside formal confession should be explained at the outset, together with an assurance that no matter what is disclosed the person will be helped, within the constraints imposed by the law and subject to the paramount need to safeguard the welfare of children. The priest should consult the Bishop’s Safeguarding Adviser in order to obtain expert professional advice about how the person concerned can best be helped.

### **Reporting Suspected Abuse**

It is the duty of all workers and volunteers to report any information relating to any child, young person or vulnerable adult who is thought to be being abused or to be at risk of abuse or who tells you that they are being abused (see appendix one). This applies whatever the situation in which the abuse or suspected abuse is thought to take place. If you have concerns about a child but are not certain whether it is abuse or not then you should discuss these concerns with the manager/leader of the group you work or volunteer in or with the SCPC Mary Miles who may seek further advice. You should keep records of these concerns. Advice can be sought from the NSPCC. If your concerns become such that you decide this is a safeguarding issue you should then report this information to the flow chart, which is attached to the policy and procedures. It is not the role of worker or volunteers to do any further investigation. All workers and volunteers should inform their manager/leader or their All Saints organisation’s DSL and the SCPC before reporting, unless the allegation is against them. The responsibility to report rests with the person who has received the concern or disclosure. This should be done in conjunction with the manager/leader, the DSL and/or the SCPC. Reporting should be done either to children’s services or the child protection unit of the police immediately. If there is concern that the child or young person is at risk of immediate serious harm then children’s services should be

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informed of this. Workers should only discuss this with parents if this does not put the child or workers at risk. It should not be discussed with the parents if it is thought to be sexual abuse. Good records must be kept and stored confidentially in the child protection file with the SCPC. All discussion must be kept confidential. Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor must be informed immediately if the issue is in the church.

### **Dealing with allegations**

Allegations against a worker or volunteer must be reported immediately to the manager/leader, SCPC Mary Miles or the Vicar. All allegations/incidents must be reported immediately to Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor. All allegations should be taken seriously. An allegation is when someone says that a worker or volunteer (or someone in a position of trust) has done something that has caused, or could have potentially caused, damage to a child or young person. This could be neglect, physical, sexual or emotional damage. All information concerning allegations or suspicions of abuse regarding children, families and workers will be confidential to the person initially involved in the concern, the manager/leader and the Incumbent/SCPC. The worker or volunteer will not, in any circumstances, approach the alleged abuser. This will be dealt with by the Incumbent or SCPC with the manager/leader. The manager/leader or SCPC will inform the police, children's services or relevant person at the Safeguarding Board (the LADO). Detailed records should be kept.

An internal investigation cannot take place. Advice re suspension should be taken from the Police and / or Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor. If suspension does not take place immediately a risk assessment should be done by the SCPC.

The suspended worker, other workers and volunteers and the person making the allegation should all receive appropriate support, following advice. Workers and volunteers should not be in contact with the suspended person without permission of the manager/leader. If, as a result of the external investigation, the worker or volunteer returns a risk assessment should be carried out by the manager/leader and the SCPC, following guidance from Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor. Disciplinary procedures should be followed as appropriate. Any advice given should be followed.

All written documents concerning allegations or concerns must be kept with the SCPC in a confidential child protection file under lock and key only disclosed to the agencies responsible for child abuse investigation. This must be retained indefinitely.

Before an interregnum the Incumbent, the SCPC and the church wardens must meet with the Bishop's Safeguarding team to discuss safeguarding arrangements and storage of record during the interregnum.

We should work at all times in cooperation with children's services, the safeguarding board representative and the child protection unit of the police. If we have concerns about their actions we should discuss this with the person our manager/leader and if felt necessary with the incumbent. A course of action can then be decided. This should not effect our on going cooperation with the relevant services.

It is a legal condition that all serious safeguarding incidents (against workers/volunteers) are reported to the Charity Commission. This will be done by the SCPC with the Diocesan Secretary – for further guidance see Identifying and Reporting Safeguarding Serious Incidents to the Charity Commission – Birmingham Diocese

### **Reporting of misuse of images and on-line abuse**

Any misuse of images, photographs, films, use of internet, should be reported to your manager/leader and the SCPC who will take advice from the Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor

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**(See Photograph and Filming and IT policy)****Whistle blowing**

It is the responsibility of all workers and volunteers to ensure that the children and young people are safe when they are in the care of the Church or All Saints organisations. If you have any concerns about the behaviour of any staff, volunteers or any one within the church that you feel is putting children or young people at risk through either deliberate or ignorant bad practice then you should report this either to the incumbent, the SCPC or to the manager/leader. If it is these people who you are concerned about you should report to the Chair of the relevant Company.

If you do this then you will be protected from any repercussions whatever the outcome. Confidentiality should be maintained by all parties. Malicious reporting will be taken seriously and if proven, in the case of paid members of staff, will result in disciplinary action.

**See Whistle Blowing Policy****Publicising the Policy**

Information will be displayed on the notice boards in Church and in the Centre by the SCPC.

Any hirer's agreements will require hirers to have a safeguarding policy.

Groups will be responsible for ensuring that children and young people have knowledge of the policy, presented in a way, which is appropriate to their age and understanding. In addition the telephone number of Child line or a similar organisation will be displayed prominently on notice boards in the Church and Centre by the SCPC.

The policy will be on our website

**Non Church Based Organisations or non Company Organisations working with children and young people hiring rooms on site.**

Non Church based organisations or Companies are required to have their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, this, if deemed necessary) should be seen by the SCPC. If they do not have such a policy then the SPCP should sign post them to where they can get support. The Parish administrator/booking secretary will inform the SCPC of any such organisations.

**Creating a Safe Environment**

All groups working with children and young people will develop their own 'Creating a Safe Environment' Guidelines in order to create a child/vulnerable adult centred environment, this should include issues of Health and Safety. These should be written using the House of Bishop's Safer Environment and Activities Practice Guidance. These guidelines should be written, and reviewed regularly.

**Support**

Children and adult survivors of abuse should be recognised as individuals who may require specific pastoral care either within their congregation /own group or from a more appropriate person. This also applies to abusers and suspected abusers. If it is necessary to provide pastoral care to an alleged abuser and their alleged victim, the same person must not provide to both.

Adult survivors of sexual abuse should be offered the support of a diocesan listener for more information on this role and how to contact them see appendix two.

It is recognised that staff and volunteers who become involved in issues of child protection will need support. This should be offered initially through their manager/leader, but if necessary specialist support should be made available.

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Children's service may involve workers or volunteers in discussions around support for the child or young people. We should offer full cooperation in these.

### **Known Child Abusers in the Church**

We recognise, with regret, that there are individuals who abuse children and that they may be part of our church community. However, the safety of children and young people must always be paramount. This is not to exclude people from the love of God through the church but to recognise that these people will need support and boundaries.

Abusers in the church may range from: Those who have been convicted or cautioned. Those who are known to the criminal justice system. Those who are known to others but where no action has been taken. Those who are not known. They may or may not be still abusing.

Remember – abusers are practised in deception, and may be attending church in order to gain access to children by building relationships with them.

The incumbent might learn about the abuser from:

The police, probation service, social services or a rehabilitation clinic. The prison service or the courts. The Archdeacon or Bishop. The incumbent of a previous church. The DBS. The abuser in person. A member of the congregation. The Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality of this sensitive information is of prime importance for everyone involved. The boundaries need to be set with the Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor and these will be different in every situation. Outside formal sacramental confession these boundaries may need to be broken if the incumbent thinks children or young people are at risk. It is imperative that children and young people are safe. Consideration also has to be given to the safety of the abuser.

Because of the changing face of church officers and congregations the issue of 'who knows' will be constantly reviewed.

It is important to recognise that such knowledge is a burden for those who hold it and they will need support.

It is important that anyone involved in the process seeks advice and guidance on the nature of abuse and abusers.

What the incumbent must do immediately

- Find out from the person giving you this information what contact they have with the abuser and what safeguards have been put in place
- Ensure that the abuser is not doing any work in the church that brings them into contact with children and young people and if they are, stop this immediately
- Consider whether children and young people outside the church context are at immediate risk – if so contact children's services
- Contact the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser who will advise you on the future action you will need to take.
- Don't try to deal with it on your own. Get support and help for yourself
- If the abuser tells you they are still abusing you must follow child protection procedures

What happens next

Every situation may be different. When the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser is contacted he/she will offer appropriate advice and support and a way forward.

The Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser will carry out an assessment of the risk and a written contract with the abuser may result.

The Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor may also have contact with the statutory authorities.

If an allegation is made against the abuser, child protection procedures should be followed.

If an abuser leaves the congregation

If the abuser leaves the church the incumbent and Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser will consider whether to:

- Inform any agency that has been involved
- Inform any referring agency.
- Inform the incumbent/minister of any new church that the abuser may be attending

The incumbent will inform the Bishop and seek advice from the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser. All of the above apply to abuse, whether current or historical

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of the highest importance in child protection cases. The issues should only be discussed with those who have a need to know. Any records will only be shared with children's services, the child protection unit of the police and those within the All Saints organisation with a need to know. All written records should be kept securely and indefinitely.

No one involved in working or volunteering with children or young people should indulge in gossip.

**Media** – no worker or volunteers or members of the congregation should talk to the media about child protection issues. In the case of staff this would be considered a disciplinary offence. All media communication should be referred to the incumbent, the diocese or the chair of the relevant All Saints organisation. All advice given from the diocese should be followed.

### Training

All worker and volunteers will have the opportunity for appropriate on-going training to support this work. Everyone should have basic training in a Church context as soon as possible after they start working or volunteering. This training should be refreshed every 3 years. This training can be accessed through the Diocesan or on site as applicable to the role. This is to include special training for under 18's. Managers/leaders are responsible for ensuring this training takes place and recorded on the database kept by the SCPC. Extra or specialist training can be organised by the managers/leader and/or the SCPC

### Duty to refer

All Saints PCC and All Saints companies are providers of regulated activities and as such they now have a statutory duty to refer information to the DBS regarding employees or volunteers They will need to consider when an individual's behaviour has:

- Caused concern

The type of behaviour which would cause concern is referred to as '**relevant conduct**'.

Raised concerns in respect of harm they have caused or potentially could cause in the future to a child or vulnerable adult

The type of harm which may cause concern is detailed in what is referred to as the

**'Harm Test'** and is defined in Appendix A of the Church of England

Birmingham Safer Recruitment and DBS Application Procedures.

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- And / or an individual has:  
received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence  
A relevant offence is a serious criminal offence which qualifies a person for automatic inclusion in the 'barred' lists (e.g. the rape of a child having gathered sufficient evidence to suggest on the balance of probabilities that any one of the above criteria have been met, then All Saints has a duty to make a referral.

A referral must be made where an employee of, or a volunteer appointed by All Saints is removed from regulated activity for any of the above reasons irrespective of whether that person subsequently resigns, retires, is made redundant, transfers to other activity or leaves the parish.

This duty is unlikely to arise very often but it is important when it does occur, because failure to comply is a criminal offence.

### **How to refer**

If All Saints believes that a referral may be necessary, they should contact the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser . Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser will then advise All Saints on what appropriate action should be taken.

The SCPC, and the vicar or another member of the clergy, will deal with any instances which might trigger a referral they will be empowered to act without reference back to the PCC or Boards but are required to report to the PCC and Boards from time to time on the exercise of its delegated powers (without, of course, disclosing personal information that should remain confidential to those who need to have it).

Although it is the PCC and All Saints companies statutory duty to make a referral it is important to remember that safeguarding vulnerable groups is the responsibility of us all and that anyone can and should report an individual if their behaviour is such that they believe that the individual has caused or is likely to cause harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Such referrals should be made directly to social services or to the police

### **Review of Policy**

The Policy and Procedures will be reviewed annually by SCPC. Every 3 years this review will include consultation with managers/ leaders of children's and young people's groups. The managers/leaders will be expected to review with their groups. This is the responsibility of the PCC and All Saints organisations to be undertaken in conjunction with the SCPC. Revised copies containing any changes will be approved by the PCC and All Saints organisations and given to all workers and volunteers.

### **Guidelines for reporting suspected abuse from**

#### **If you suspect abuse or an allegation is made to you.**

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- **DO NOT DELAY**
- The responsibility to report children thought to be at risk rests with the individual who identifies the concern, regardless of their position within the church or companies, the church and companies have a responsibility to report. All Saints organisations has a responsibility, through its own procedures, to ensure that the matter is reported to Children's Services. Final responsibility for this rests with the PCC and the incumbent and All Saints companies.
- Consult the person to whom you are responsible, or the person you are authorised to inform. You should know who this is and be able to contact them. (see enclosed flow chart)
- **DO NOT** inform any unauthorised people.
- **DO NOT** do any investigating yourself. This is the role and responsibility of the statutory agencies. They will work in partnership with parents to support them in carrying out their parental responsibilities. Where this conflicts with the child's welfare, it will be necessary to set limits to parents' participation and direct involvement with the child. The child's involvement in the protection process will be encouraged in accordance with their age and level of understanding.
- Children's Services are legally the only body allowed to deal with reported abuse, and they will follow up every report. The police will always be involved. The great majority of investigations do not result in the removal of the child from home. The emphasis is on seeking to support and rebuild the family as a whole unit, rather than breaking it up.
- Make an accurate note of your suspicions, recording dates, times and places. Use the actual language used by the child or young person, not a tidied-up version.
- Once reported, you will have no control over what happens. If you wish to continue to be involved, continue your contact with Children's Services. If this is by telephone, follow it up in writing.
- You may be asked to attend a case conference or provide information.
- You must not take responsibility for making a judgement about the allegation. The child or adult will have needed much courage to get this far. The protection of the young person is the priority.
- Expect to have to handle your own strong feelings. You will need support. Clergy can contact the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser for persons outside a situation who could provide support to a reporting person.

Children's services, the NSPCC and other similar organisations are trained for this work to apply professional judgement in pressurised and difficult circumstances, and to treat children and parents with sensitivity. With this in mind, if you are unhappy about the way in which a case has been handled, speak to someone in Children's services if you feel necessary, and make a formal written complaint. Remember that you won't know all the details and you may not necessarily be kept in touch, social workers are busy people and their priority is the child.

### **If a child or young person wants to talk about abuse (make a disclosure)**

If a child reaches this point, then abuse is already happening. They may have tried to tell other peers or adults and they approach you as a trusted person.

- Allow the child to speak in their own words
- Keep calm, do not look shocked
- Accept what is said
- Look at them directly and take in what is said
- Don't push for information or ask leading questions
- Reassure them they were right to tell you

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- Tell them you believe them
- Pass no judgement
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Tell them you need to tell someone else who needs to know.  
(This may be the start of quite an ordeal for the child or young person)

### ***Policies that support Safeguarding Children***

*Safe guidelines*

*Equal Opportunities policy*

*Behaviour policy/Bullying*

*Health and safety policy*

*Volunteer's policy*

*Drugs and alcohol policy*

*Smoking policy*

*Inclusion policy*

*Confidentiality policy*

*Medication policy*

*Photographs and Filming, and IT policy*

*Lone working policy*

*Recruitment and selection policy*

*Employees' handbook*

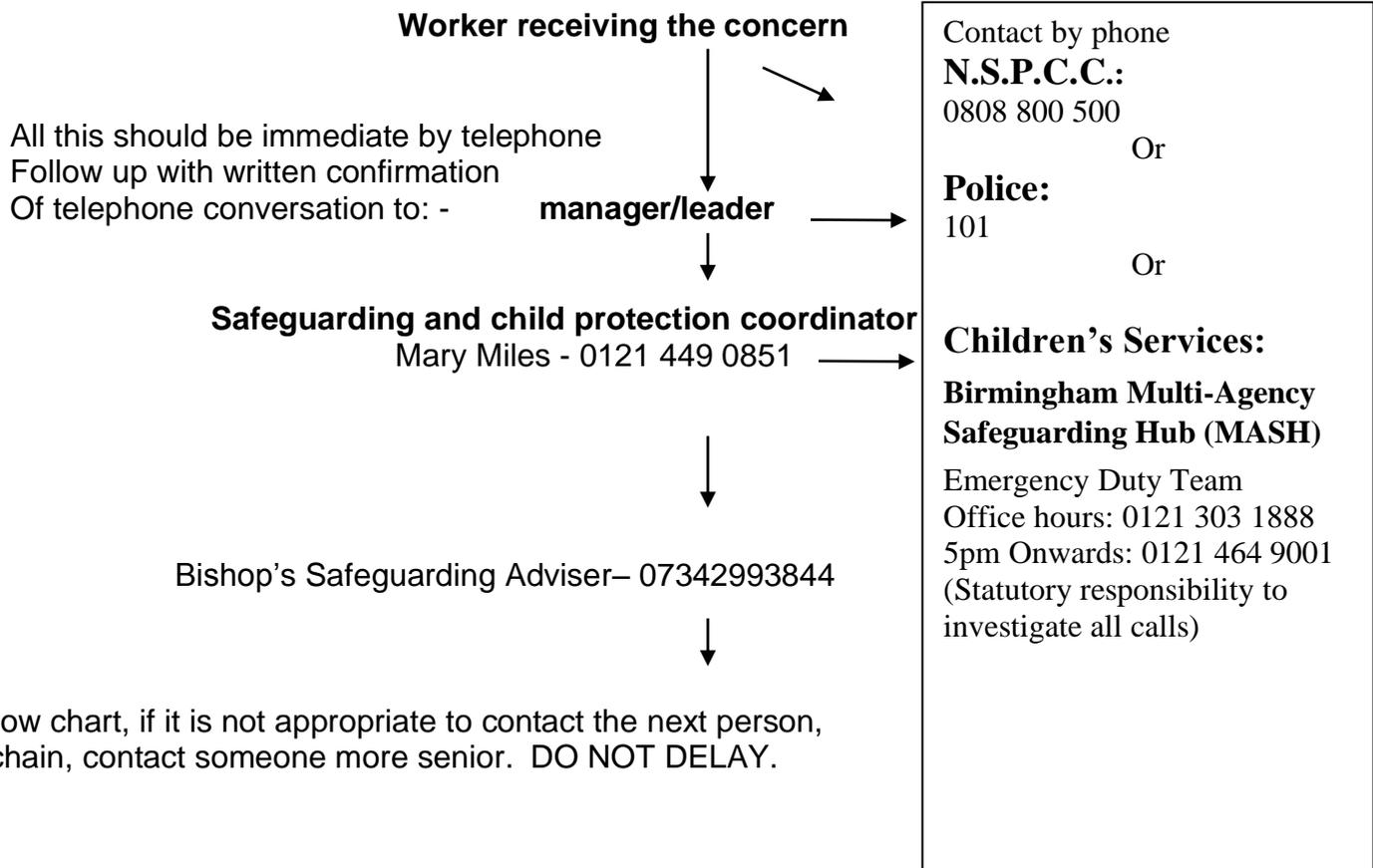
*Domestic Abuse*

In our policies:

- 'All Saints organisations' refers to the 5 members of the All Saints family
- 'Board' refers to the Boards, committees or legal entities that govern those All Saints organisation.
- 'Manager/leader' refers to people who are in charge of various activities across the All Saints organisations. They may be paid staff or volunteers

**Flow Chart for Children at risk**

From first point of concern **inform manager/leader** (unless inappropriate)



In this flow chart, if it is not appropriate to contact the next person, In the chain, contact someone more senior. DO NOT DELAY.

**For confidential help or support call: -**

**CHILDLINE – FREE PHONE 0800 1111**



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### 1. Children & Young People

This document contains information about the types of abuse which can occur and how to recognise them, including physical signs and symptoms as well as behavioural changes that you might observe. Bear in mind that children and young people may be subject to one type of abuse or a combination of types of abuse.

The lists of signs and symptoms below are not exhaustive – there may be other signs or symptoms which are not listed below which could be indicators of abuse. Similarly, some of these signs and symptoms will not always be indicators of abuse. The following lists under each category of abuse contain examples of possible indicators. The presence of one or more of these signs or symptoms does not necessarily confirm abuse.

Please note that many types of abuse are also criminal offences and should be treated as such.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 defines abuse as:

*A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.*

Abuse is defined as four categories:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Emotional

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may or may not cause injury and includes physical ill treatment, causing unjustifiable physical discomfort, for example injury, pain or impairment.

Abusive Actions	Signs and Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cuts, lacerations, puncture wounds, open wounds, bruising, welts, black eyes,</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slapping</li> <li>• Pushing</li> <li>• Kicking</li> <li>• Shaking</li> <li>• Inappropriate restraint</li> <li>• Withholding or misuse of medication</li> <li>• Squeezing</li> <li>• Biting</li> <li>• Suffocating</li> <li>• Poisoning</li> <li>• Drowning</li> <li>• Killing</li> <li>• Physical abuse may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. This is called Fabricated or Induced Illness.</li> <li>• Involuntary isolation or confinement,</li> <li>• Inappropriate application of techniques or treatments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>burns, bite marks, broken bones and skull fractures</li> <li>• Untreated injuries in various stages of healing or not properly treated</li> <li>• Poor skin condition or poor skin hygiene</li> <li>• Dehydration and/or malnourishment without an illness-related cause</li> <li>• Loss of weight</li> <li>• Soiled clothing or bedding</li> <li>• Broken eyeglasses or frames</li> <li>• Physical signs of being subjected to punishment or signs of being restrained</li> <li>• Inappropriate use of medication, overdosing or under dosing</li> <li>• Cowering and flinching</li> <li>• Emotional distress, low self-esteem, untypical self-harm</li> <li>• Telling you they have been hit, slapped or mistreated</li> <li>• Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts</li> <li>• Reluctance to get changed, for example in hot weather</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Withdrawn behaviour</li> </ul> <p>Remember: Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough-and- tumble of daily life. However, important indicators of physical abuse are bruises or injuries that are either unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given, or visible on the ‘soft’ parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely, e.g. cheeks, abdomen, back and buttocks.</p> <p>A delay in seeking medical treatment when it is obviously necessary is also a cause for concern.</p> <p>Children may also display:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear of parents being approached for an</li> </ul>
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	<p>explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running away from home</li> </ul>
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Sexual Abuse

A sexual act carried out without the informed consent (see below) of the other individual is abuse. Such behaviour includes contact and non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse may include rape, indecent assault, being forced to touch another person, sexual intercourse or being pressurised into consenting to sexual acts.

It is also important to remember that it is not just adult men who sexually abuse children – there are increasing numbers of allegations of sexual abuse of children against women and sexual abuse can also be perpetrated by other children or young people.

Abusive Actions	Signs and Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rape</li> <li>• Sexual assault</li> <li>• Kissing</li> <li>• Fondling/caressing</li> <li>• Involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities,</li> <li>• Downloading child abuse images</li> <li>• Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways</li> <li>• Sending sexualised texts and emails and transmitting sexually explicit images through social media</li> <li>• Grooming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruises around the breasts or genital areas</li> <li>• Unexplained STI or genital infections</li> <li>• Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding</li> <li>• Vaginal discharge or infection</li> <li>• Torn, stained or bloody underclothing</li> <li>• The child telling you they have been sexually assaulted or raped</li> <li>• Pain or itching in the genital area</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted disease</li> <li>• Stomach pains or discomfort when walking or sitting down</li> <li>• Pregnancy</li> </ul> <p>Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn</li> <li>• Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Having nightmares</li><li>• Running away from home</li><li>• Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age, or developmental level</li><li>• Sexual drawings or language</li><li>• Bedwetting</li><li>• Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia</li><li>• Self-harm, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts;</li><li>• Substance abuse</li><li>• Suddenly having unexplained sources of money</li><li>• Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)</li><li>• Acting in a sexually explicit way, specifically children towards adults</li></ul>
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## Age of consent

The age of consent (the legal age to have sex) in England is 16 years old. This applies to both heterosexual and homosexual sex.

The laws are there to protect children from abuse or exploitation, rather than to prosecute under-16s who participate in mutually consenting sexual activity. Underage sexual activity may be a possible indicator of child sexual exploitation.

Statutory agencies have agreed that if 13 - 16-year-old sexual activity is discovered then an assessment of risk should be carried out.

Risks to be considered include:

- Whether the child is competent to understand, and consent to, the sexual activity they are involved in
- Whether the sexual activity is with someone of a similar age, ability and aptitude
- Whether there is a power imbalance
- Whether there any coercion or bribery, overt aggression, misuse of alcohol or other substances acting as a disinhibitor
- Whether the sexual partner is known by one of the statutory agencies

To help protect younger children the law says anyone under the age of 13 can never legally give consent. This means that anyone who engages in any sexual activity with a child who is 12 or younger is breaking the law. Sexual activity with a child who is under 13 should always result in a child protection referral. The law gives extra protection to young people who are over the age of consent but under 18. It is illegal:

- To take, show or distribute indecent photographs of a child (this is often called sexting).
- To pay for or arrange sexual services of a child.
- For a person in a position of trust (for example teachers or care workers) to engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18 who is in the care of their organization.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 applies in England and Wales. It gives more information about specific offences and the related penalties.

## Age of criminal responsibility for children

The age of criminal responsibility in England is 10 years old.

This means a child is considered capable of committing a crime and old enough to stand trial for a criminal offence. Their case will be dealt with by a youth court and if they are convicted, their sentence will take their age into account.

## Grooming

Grooming is a form of sexual abuse. It is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Grooming may also include threats or bribes, which persuade the person that it would be impossible to ask for help. It may appear as an unhealthy close friendship which stretches or breaks approved boundaries. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.

Methods of making contact online via social networking and chat-based applications (often used on mobile phones) are often used for this, although grooming can take place face-to-face. When grooming takes place online it is easy for potential abusers to disguise their identity, including their gender, location and age.

### Signs of grooming

The signs of grooming aren't always obvious, and groomers will often go to great lengths not to be identified. If a child is being groomed they may:

- Be very secretive, including about what they are doing online
- Have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Go to unusual places to meet friends
- Have new things such as clothes or mobile phones that they can't or won't explain
- Have access to drugs and alcohol

In older children, signs of grooming can easily be mistaken for 'normal' teenage behaviour, but you may notice unexplained changes in behaviour or personality, or inappropriate sexual behaviour for their age.

### How grooming happens

Grooming happens both online and in person. Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child's trust. Groomers may try to gain the trust of a whole family to allow them to be left alone with a child and if they work with children they may use similar tactics with their colleagues.

Groomers do this by:

- Pretending to be someone they are not, for example saying they are the same age online
- Offering advice or understanding
- Buying gifts

- Giving the child attention
- Using their professional position or reputation
- Taking them on trips, outings or holidays

### **Child Sexual Exploitation<sup>1</sup>**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

The definition of child sexual exploitation is as follows:

*Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.*

Like all forms of child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation:

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<sup>1</sup> [Child sexual exploitation: definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation February 2017](#)

Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17-year olds who can legally consent to have sex

Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual  
Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity

Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both  
Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence

May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (through others copying videos or images they have created and posting on social media, for example)

Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse

Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources

### **Possible indicators of CSE**

The following list of indicators is not exhaustive or definitive, but it does highlight signs which can assist in identifying possible CSE:

- Keeping secrets
- Inappropriate sexual or sexualised behaviour
- Sexually risky behaviour
- Repeat sexually transmitted infections
- Repeat pregnancy, abortions, miscarriage
- Receiving unexplained gifts or gifts from unknown sources
- Having multiple mobile phones and worrying about losing contact via mobile.
- Having unaffordable new things (clothes, mobile) or expensive habits (alcohol, drugs)
- Changes in the way the person dresses
- Going to hotels or other unusual locations to meet friends
- Contact with known perpetrators
- Involved in abusive relationships, intimidated and fearful of certain people or

situations

- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality – e.g. mood swings, volatile behaviour, emotional distress
- Self-harming, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, overdosing, eating disorders
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Getting involved in crime
- Injuries from physical assault, physical restraint, sexual assault
- The adult may create special relationships with a particular person or have difficulties in keeping to boundaries. They may try to have secrets from others in the group.

### Neglect

Neglectful behaviour is any pattern of activity by another person, which seriously impairs an individual.

Abusive Actions	Signs and Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neglect involves persistently failing to provide necessities, for example:</li> <li>• Adequate food</li> <li>• Clothing</li> <li>• Shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)</li> <li>• Personal care</li> <li>• Failure to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical or emotional harm or danger</li> <li>• Failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers</li> <li>• Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment</li> <li>• Deliberately withholding essential aids – for example visual or hearing aids</li> <li>• Denying social, religious or cultural contacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dirt, faecal or urine smell, or other health and safety hazards in the vulnerable person's living environment</li> <li>• Rashes, sores, lice on the vulnerable person;</li> <li>• Inadequate clothing</li> <li>• Untreated medical condition</li> <li>• Poor personal hygiene</li> <li>• Over or under medication</li> <li>• Lack of assistance with eating or drinking</li> <li>• Unsanitary and unclean conditions</li> <li>• Constant hunger, this may sometimes lead to the person stealing food</li> <li>• Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight or obesity</li> <li>• Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:</li> <li>• Complaining of being tired all the time</li> <li>• Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denying contact with family</li> <li>• Lack of appropriate supervision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having few friends</li> <li>• Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised</li> </ul>
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## Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of an individual causing severe and persistent effects on the person's emotional and psychological wellbeing and for children impacting negatively on emotional development.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of abuse although emotional abuse may occur alone.

Abusive Actions	Signs and Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats and verbal abuse</li> <li>• Humiliation</li> <li>• Blaming</li> <li>• Controlling</li> <li>• Pressurising and coercion</li> <li>• Intimidation and causing fear</li> <li>• Ignoring the person</li> <li>• Not giving the person a chance to express their views</li> <li>• Lack of love or affection</li> <li>• Making someone feel worthless</li> <li>• Lack of privacy or choice</li> <li>• Causing/forcing isolation/ withdrawal from family/friends and support networks.</li> <li>• Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations e.g. interactions beyond the child's developmental capability, overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning, preventing the child from participation in normal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feelings of helplessness</li> <li>• Hesitation in talking openly</li> <li>• Implausible stories</li> <li>• Confusion or disorientation</li> <li>• Anger without an apparent cause</li> <li>• Sudden changes in behaviour</li> <li>• The person becoming emotionally upset or agitated</li> <li>• Unusual behaviour (sucking, biting or rocking)</li> <li>• Unexplained fear</li> <li>• Denial of a situation</li> <li>• The person becoming extremely withdrawn and non-communicative or nonresponsive</li> <li>• Telling you they are being verbally or emotionally abused</li> </ul> <p>Changes in a child's behaviour which can indicate emotional abuse include:</p>

<p>social interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causing children to feel frightened or in danger e.g. witnessing domestic abuse, seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being unable to play</li> <li>• Fear of making mistakes</li> <li>• Sudden speech disorders</li> <li>• Self-harm</li> <li>• Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour</li> <li>• Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress</li> </ul>
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### Domestic abuse

Included in the four categories of child abuse and neglect above, are a number of factors relating to the behaviour of the parents and carers which have significant impact on children such as domestic violence. Research analysing Serious Case Reviews has demonstrated a significant prevalence of domestic abuse in the history of families with children who are subject of Child Protection Plans. Children can be affected by seeing, hearing and living with domestic violence and abuse as well as being caught up in any incidents directly, whether to protect someone or as a target. It should also be noted that the age group of 16 and 17-year olds have been found in recent studies to be increasingly affected by domestic violence in their peer relationships.

### Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

### Modern slavery

Modern slavery encompasses:

- Human trafficking
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography

- Debt bondage – being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to

### **Possible indicators of modern slavery**

- Signs of physical or emotional abuse
- Appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn
- Isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others
- Living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address
- Lack of personal effects or identification documents
- Always wearing the same clothes
- Avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers
- Fear of law enforcers

### **Further Home Office information on identifying and reporting modern slavery**

#### Additional Vulnerabilities

There are certain risk factors that may place individuals at particular risk of being abused. The presence of one or more of these factors does not automatically imply that abuse will result but increases the likelihood:

- Where there exists an imbalance of power and control
- Where there is a dependency on other(s)
- The need for help with intimate personal care e.g. managing incontinence, washing and dressing
- Strain of prolonged caring at the expense of care-giver's own needs/high stress levels
- Difficult carer/service-user relationship
- Role reversal and the need for intimate personal assistance, e.g. daughter or son providing personal assistance for a parent
- Living in the same household as a known abuser
- Where there is a history of family abuse
- People with a history of alcohol, drug or other substance abuse
- Unsuitable or dangerous environment, e.g. lack of personal space
- People who have independent support (i.e. no-one/no outside body monitoring this)
- Absence of support
- Lack of awareness of the rights of a service user or of what constitutes abuse or dignity
- Staff shortages, lack of staff awareness, training and supervision
- Lack of privacy
- Financial problems

- Where there is a change in the lifestyle of a member of the household, e.g. employment, unemployment, illness
- Cultural differences and language barriers
- Emotional or social isolation
- Communication difficulties
- Where the individual's behaviour is challenging or unpredictable or difficult to manage
- Revenge and/or anger
- A reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity caused by external events, such as bereavement or previous abuse or other traumatic incidents

### Additional Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Other indications that abuse may be occurring:

- The vulnerable adult or child may not be allowed to speak for themselves, or see others, without the parents or caregivers being present
- Attitudes of indifference or anger towards the child or vulnerable adult
- Family member or caregiver blames the child or vulnerable adult (e.g. accusation that incontinence is a deliberate act)
- Aggressive behaviour (threats, insults, harassment) by the parent or caregiver towards the child or vulnerable adult
- Previous history of abuse of others on the part of the caregiver
- Inappropriate display of affection by the caregiver
- Flirtations, coyness, etc. which might be possible indicators of an inappropriate sexual relationship
- Social isolation of the family or restriction of activity of the child or vulnerable adult by the caregiver
- Conflicting accounts of incidents by the family, caregivers or the child or vulnerable adult
- Inappropriate or unwarranted defensiveness by the caregiver
- Indications of unusual confinement (closed off in a room, tied to furniture, change in routine or activity)
- Obvious absence of assistance or attendance

Additional Specialist GuidanceComplex abuse

Complex abuse, sometimes also known as 'organised' or 'multiple' abuse, is abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related children or vulnerable adults. The abusers may be acting in networks to abuse or may operate in isolation. They may use an institutional framework or position of authority or trust to children or vulnerable adults for abuse. They may use children or vulnerable adults themselves to recruit others.

Such abuse occurs both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community and within institutions such as residential settings, in day care and in other provisions such as voluntary groups. There may also be cases of people being abused via the use of the Internet.

Honour based violence or abuse<sup>2</sup>

The Forced Marriage Unit at the Home Office defines this as:

*'So-called honour based violence is a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community'*

Honour Based Violence can manifest in many different ways and often presents with accompanying criminal offences, domestic abuse or the civil offence of forced marriage. If incidents include domestic abuse, child abuse or other serious crime then it should be read in conjunction with the relevant policies and procedures on these subjects.

Honour Based Violence can include:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional and Psychological Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation

'Honour' is normally associated with cultures and communities from Asia, the Middle East and Africa as well as the Travelling Community. However, it is important to note that in reality it cuts across all cultures, nationalities, faith groups and communities and transcends national and international boundaries.

The 'honour code' means that females generally, but sometimes males, must follow rules that are set at the discretion of the male relations and which are interpreted according to what each male family or community member considers acceptable.

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<sup>2</sup> Please see [the Halo Project](#) for more information

Any suspicion or disclosure of violence or abuse against a vulnerable adult in the name of honour should be treated as seriously as any other suspicion or disclosure of significant harm against a vulnerable adult, however there are differences in the immediate response. A child at risk of abuse in the name of honour is at significant risk of physical harm (including being murdered) and/or neglect and may also suffer significant emotional harm through the threat of violence.

It must be noted that in most cases, the Police will take the lead for any Honour Based Abuse incidents. It is important that you do not 'turn the individual away'. Try to ensure their immediate safety and support them to make urgent and safe contact with the Police. It is important to remember the 'one chance' rule. That is, that there may only be one chance to speak to the potential victim and thus only one chance to intervene.

### Forced marriage

The Home Office definition of forced marriage is:

'A marriage without the consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor'.

The Court of Appeal clarified that duress is:

'[When] the mind of the applicant has been overborne, howsoever that was caused'

An arranged marriage is very different from a forced marriage. An arranged marriage is entered into freely by both people, although their families take a leading role in the choice of partner.

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in some cases of people with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.

Marriage without consent is not valid in UK law and a child under 16 years old is not considered to be competent to consent to marriage.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.

Marriage within communities that believe protecting the 'honour' of their family is a significant event. Marriage contracts will often be drawn up when children are young and are seen as a binding arrangement between the two families. If one or both parties then seek to disengage from the contract it is seen as bringing great shame on the family and very contentious.

Involving family members in cases of forced marriage is dangerous as it may increase the risk of serious harm to the victim as the victim may also then be punished for seeking help.

Forced marriages can occur in this country or abroad, often in their country of origin. There is further information available regarding Forced Marriage on the [government webpages](#).

### Female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation<sup>3</sup> (FGM) is a collective term for illegal procedures which include the removal of part or all external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is not required by any religion and is medically unnecessary, painful and has serious health consequences at the time it is carried out and in later life.

The procedure is typically performed on girls of any age but is also performed on new born infants and on young women before marriage/ pregnancy. A number of girls die as a direct result of the procedure, from blood loss or infection.

FGM may be practised illegally by doctors or traditional health workers in the UK, or girls may be sent abroad for the operation.

FGM is illegal in this country by the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, except on specific physical and mental health grounds<sup>4</sup>.

The victim may be seriously at risk if any knowledge of the disclosure is mishandled.

Further information is available on the [government webpages](#)

### Spiritual abuse<sup>5</sup>

Spiritual abuse is not covered by the standard statutory definitions of abuse but is of concern both within and outside faith communities including the Church of England.

Churches need to be sensitive so that they do not, in their pastoral care, attempt to 'force' religious values or ideas onto people, particularly those who may be vulnerable to such practices. Within faith communities harm can be caused by the

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<sup>3</sup> [www.fco.gov.uk/fgm](http://www.fco.gov.uk/fgm)

<sup>4</sup> Section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 introduces a mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s which they identify in the course of their professional work to the police. 'Known' cases are those where either a girl informs the person that an act of FGM has been carried out on her, or where the person observes physical signs on a girl appearing to show that an act of FGM has been carried out and the person has no reason to believe that the act was, or was part of, a surgical operation.

<sup>5</sup> Please note the Church is currently working on additional guidance in relation to spiritual abuse.

inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; this can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, or intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in vulnerable people experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. If such inappropriate behaviour becomes harmful it should be referred for investigation in the usual way. Careful supervision and mentoring of those entrusted with the pastoral care of adults should help to prevent harm occurring in this way. Other forms of spiritual abuse include the denial to vulnerable people of the right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.'

A particular aspect of Spiritual Abuse relating to children has been addressed in the Department of Health Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession (2007).

The term 'belief in spirit possession' is defined as the belief that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling him or her. Sometimes the term 'witch' is used and is defined as the belief that a child is able to use an evil force to harm others. There is also a range of other languages that is connected to such abuse. This includes black magic, kindoki, ndoki, the evil eye, djinns, voodoo, obeah, demons, and child sorcerers. In all these cases, genuine beliefs can be held by families, carers, religious leaders, congregations, and the children themselves that evil forces are at work. Families and children can be deeply worried by the evil that they believe is threatening them, and abuse often occurs when an attempt is made to 'exorcise', or 'deliver' the child. Exorcism is defined as attempting to expel evil spirits from a child. Whilst the number of identified cases is small, the nature of the child abuse can be particularly disturbing and the impact on the child is substantial and serious. (DoH Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession, 2007).

Abusive Actions	Signs and Symptoms
<p>Mistreating a person in the name of God, faith or religion – the exact nature of the mistreatment may fall within the definition of one of the other abuse types.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special relationships, especially where there is an imbalance of power</li> <li>• Inappropriate or untrained exercise of exorcism and/or deliverance ministry</li> <li>• Misuse of authority e.g. by dictating exactly what a person should believe</li> <li>• Extreme pastoral interference in personal issues including how someone should express their faith</li> <li>• Telling someone that if they pray harder/believe more they will be healed</li> <li>• Making someone feel inferior in their faith</li> </ul>

## Appendix Two

### The Parish and Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused

#### *Introduction*

A report of the House of Bishops called **Responding Well** has highlighted how sexual abuse can mark a person for life. A survivor of sexual abuse may become an apparently capable and confident adult, able to handle demands and challenges most of the time; but they can find that suddenly this ease slips and they feel unsure and overwhelmed when meeting challenges and conflict. It is not easy to predict when this unease may surface. At such times, adults can value and be strengthened by the opportunity to speak in depth and in confidence to a sensitive listener. There will be people with this need in our churches.

It is vital to remember that if there are concerns in a parish that a child or adult has been or is being abused, this concern is to be referred to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser

#### ***How we will respond well***

i) The PCC to adopt the policy statement as part of the church community becoming more aware of the issues involved in the ways recommended in what follows.

The policy statement:

***All Saints acknowledges that sexual abuse takes place and can have negative and life-long effects on those abused.***

***As a church and companies, we have responsibility to make known that listening support for an individual is available and to report and refer as appropriate to statutory bodies.***

Those who have suffered sexual abuse may first make this known within the life of their local parish church. This means that the church needs to be aware and understanding, with a healthy culture of welcome and support in which all feel valued as people and where no one feels judged in an inappropriate way. This will help to make sure that there is an ethos of trust.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

All Saints Community Projects  
All Saints Community Development Company  
The Robin Centre  
All Saints Parish Church  
All Saints Community Catering

There will be times when we will need to be self-critical. We can always do even better and it helps if we remain open to criticism and do not deny the reality of sexual abuse. When we acknowledge (rather than deny) the existence of sexual abuse and its effects, then we will be better able to respond well if a complaint were ever made. There should certainly be a healthy refusal to accept behaviour that falls short of valuing people.

Well informed and self aware congregations become safer and more caring communities.

To assist in building and strengthening this awareness of the prevalence of sexual abuse and its effects, a set of supporting papers taken from the report is attached. It would be beneficial for a small group of the PCC to work through these papers and to ensure that the main points are presented to the full PCC.

**The essential feature of abuse** is that it is *not welcome or mutual or consensual or permitted by law*. Sexual abuse can involve the use of power to *force a child or adult to have sexual activity*. The Government guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) defines sexual abuse as *forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware that it is happening*.

The definition explains the range of sexual activities that will fall under this definition, including activities which involve making contact with the other person and those which do not involve direct contact with people (for example, viewing images). The definition reminds us that sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males because women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

This definition identifies only *sexual* abuse. Abuse is wider than this. For further information on other types of abuse and the prevalence and impact of sexual abuse see Appendix One

If an adult tells you about abuse as a child or adult then you can offer them support from;

The Safeguarding and Child Protection coordinator

The Pastoral team leader

The Incumbent

A Diocesan listener

There may also be a need to assess current risk to other children.

If a parish working group or individuals wish to consult the full House of Bishops report, this is entitled **RESPONDING WELL to those who have been sexually abused, Policy and guidance for the Church of England**, Church House Publishing, 2011: <http://www.ch.bookshop.co.uk/books/9780715110577/>

The role of a diocesan listener

An individual can reasonably expect the following from meeting a diocesan listener:

- a listener who shows sensitivity and help to the person to share their experience and that this experience is taken seriously
- a listener who values the person as someone of worth to God and to others
- guidance if there is a need to find help from professional counseling
- information about how to raise concerns about the perpetrator of the abuse if the person chooses to report concerns
- permanent confidentiality that is restricted only by the requirements of the law

How the parish can arrange for someone to meet with a diocesan listener: the priest or chosen lay person contacts the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser in the first instance with the name, contact details and permission of the person concerned. Arrangements will then be made for one of the Diocesan Listeners to make direct contact with the person concerned and arrange a time for meeting.

In some cases, following an initial or meetings, the diocesan listener may need to suggest that the person asks for further help from a professional counsellor.

The Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser should be informed by parishes through the Bishop's Office of those cases which may give rise to the need to refer to statutory bodies or which involve clergy and employers.

Information about the Diocesan Listeners will be publicized on notice boards

**FLOW CHART FOR DIOCESAN LISTENERS**

