

# EAST+LEIGH PARISH

**Eastleigh Parish Church  
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy & Practice**

**This Version: Jan 2021**

**Approved by PCC on: 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 2021**

**Review Date: No later than Jan 2022**

**Signed:**

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**Revd Ian Fletcher, Vicar**

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**Phil Watson, Deputy Chair of PCC**

## 1. Oversight and Legal Responsibilities

- 1.1. The PCC of Eastleigh Parish will ensure that a Safeguarding Officer is appointed to oversee safeguarding policy and practice.
  - 1.1.1. The current Safeguarding Officer post appointed by PCC is Abigail Taylor. Sue Fletcher is the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.
- 1.2. The Safeguarding Officers will:
  - 1.2.1. Ensure that the PCC are aware of and fulfilling all of their legal obligations in relation to Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
  - 1.2.2. Seek to identify areas of Eastleigh Parish that need to be brought under the influence of this document or reviews in view of this document.
  - 1.2.3. Report directly to the Vicar - particularly during the Monthly Welfare Review meetings to report on whether or not this policy and the procedures contained within it are being fully implemented.
    - 1.2.3.1. Monthly Welfare Review Meetings take place 10 times per year and are held during the first week of each month, except January and August.
    - 1.2.3.2. The Churchwarden with responsibility for Safeguarding<sup>1</sup>, Safeguarding Officer, Deputy Safeguard Officer<sup>2</sup>, Vicar, and other persons at the discretion of these named people are invited to attend these meetings.
    - 1.2.3.3. The monthly review is an opportunity to raise and address any welfare/safeguarding issues.
  - 1.2.4. Ensure all necessary persons have up to date DBS checks and have attended appropriate safeguarding training.
    - 1.2.4.1. Current best practice is for training to be undertaken once every 3 years.
  - 1.2.5. Enable the PCC to fulfil their duty of care towards Vulnerable Adults and Children in regards to best safeguarding practice within the scope of the activities and operations of Eastleigh Parish Church.

## 2. Definitions of Terms Within this Policy

- 2.1. All references to: '*child*', '*children*', '*young person*', '*young people*': whether singular or plural are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to those under 18 years of age.
- 2.2. '*Vulnerable adult(s)*': refers to anyone who is over the age of 18, but who has a reduced capacity to protect herself/himself against significant harm, abuse or exploitation – whether due to homelessness, disability, learning difficulties, mental health problems, substance misuse, illness, old age, or other factors.
- 2.3. '*Workers*', '*staff*', '*volunteers*', '*helpers*' are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to anyone interacting with children and/or vulnerable adults on behalf of Eastleigh Parish Church (EPC).
- 2.4. '*Abuse*' refers to any of the recognised forms of abuse –
  - 2.4.1. Physical

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<sup>1</sup> Currently Phil Watson

<sup>2</sup> Currently Sue Fletcher

- 2.4.2. Emotional
- 2.4.3. Sexual
- 2.4.4. Neglect
- 2.4.5. Financial (or Material)

### 3. Nature and Purpose of Document

This document seeks to fulfil the following objectives:

- 3.1. To help protect **children and vulnerable adults**
  - 3.1.1. A safeguarding policy helps to create a safe and positive environment for children and vulnerable adults. Although no procedures or processes can offer complete protection, following these procedures and implementing this policy minimises the risk to children and vulnerable adults from abuse and exploitation.
- 3.2. To help protect **workers**
  - 3.2.1. A safeguarding policy clarifies what the PCC requires in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. It sets out standards of behaviour to protect staff and volunteers when they are working with children or vulnerable adults and what to do if they notice, or are told about, inappropriate behaviour in others.
- 3.3. To help protect the **organisation**
  - 3.3.1. This safeguarding policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates the PCC's commitment to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from harm. This safeguarding policy, and future amendments, will help move the PCC towards best practice in this area and will help deter those who would wish to abuse children or vulnerable adults from seeking to do so under the auspices of Eastleigh PCC activities.

### 4. Statement of Intent

- 4.1. Eastleigh Parish is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and considers that their safety and wellbeing is of paramount importance.
- 4.2. Eastleigh Parish expects everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults to:
  - 4.2.1. Be attentive to the needs of children and vulnerable adults, doing whatever is needed to maintain their safety and wellbeing.
  - 4.2.2. Treat children and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity, defending their innocence and upholding their trust.
  - 4.2.3. Treat everyone in a way which demonstrates their high value as individuals, regardless of gender, background, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
  - 4.2.4. Be aware of potential risks to children and vulnerable adults, and do what we can to minimise these risks.
  - 4.2.5. Listen to children and vulnerable adults, taking their concerns seriously.
  - 4.2.6. Attend appropriate training to understand and be updated on safeguarding practice.
  - 4.2.7. Follow the procedures set down below to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

- 4.3. This policy aims to provide a realistic framework upon which Eastleigh Parish can build safe environments and offer appropriate support to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- 4.4. This policy applies to everyone who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults under the auspices of Eastleigh Parish Church whether they are paid or voluntary (even if they themselves are not yet 18).
- 4.5. A statement reaffirming our commitment to safeguarding will be reviewed every year and included in any annual report.
- 4.6. This policy is approved and endorsed by the PCC of Eastleigh Parish. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures which outline more specifically our expectations within specific settings in order to deliver the highest possible quality of care. The fundamental principles and policies contained within this document must not be changed without further PCC approval.
  - 4.6.1. Areas for complementary policy include: Health & Safety, One-to-One Working, Good Practice, Lone Working, etc.

## 5. Definitions of Abuse

Within this policy the following general definitions of abuse can be described and understood as:

- 5.1. **Physical Abuse** is when a child or vulnerable adult is deliberately hurt or harmed. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, suffocating, or inducing/fabricating an illness. This may also include female genital mutilation (FGM).
- 5.2. **Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact (such as penetration or sexual touching), non-contact activities (such as encouraging inappropriately sexual behaviour, or involving children in watching pornography or sexual activities), or grooming in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by men or women, or by other children.
- 5.3. **Emotional Abuse** is the consistent maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, causing adverse effects on their emotional development. This may include a child or vulnerable adult being made to feel unloved or inadequate, being shamed, taunted, humiliated or bullied, suffering from over-protection, or being given responsibility beyond their years or capability.
- 5.4. **Financial Abuse** (also known as **Material Abuse**) is the misuse of money and assets belonging to a child or vulnerable adult. This may include theft, fraud, exploitation, exerting pressure regarding inheritance, misappropriation of property or benefits, controlling how they use their money or assets, or using these in ways which are not in their best interests.
- 5.5. **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet the basic needs of a child or vulnerable adult. This may include not being given the care needed to maintain their health, safety, and wellbeing.

## 6. Signs of Abuse

- 6.1. All workers have a responsibility to be aware of signs of abuse and neglect, so that they are able to identify cases where children or vulnerable adults may be in need of help or protection. Signs of abuse or neglect may include:

- 6.1.1. Physical injuries.
- 6.1.2. Aggressive behaviour towards children or vulnerable adults (physical or verbal).
- 6.1.3. Very young children being left unsupervised.
- 6.1.4. Fighting or bullying behaviour.
- 6.1.5. Unexpected change or oddness in behaviour.
- 6.1.6. A child or vulnerable adults disclosing their experience (perhaps via writing, drawing, or speaking).
- 6.1.7. An adult spending an inappropriate amount of time alone with children or vulnerable adults.
- 6.2. The above points are just a few of the more obvious indications of abuse. All staff and volunteers should be vigilant in looking out for these and other indications.
- 6.3. *Further guidance about child sexual exploitation, cyberbullying, domestic violence, fabricated illness, faith abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, radicalisation, sexting, teenage relationship abuse, trafficking, and violence against women and girls (VAWG) can be found at [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) and via the [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) website.*

## 7. Understanding and Responding to Abuse

- 7.1. As relationships with children and vulnerable adults in the care of EPC develop some may choose to begin telling those supporting them about personal issues in their life. There is the possibility that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may wish to tell someone about abuse they have experienced.
- 7.2. ***Any mention or allegation of abuse must be taken very seriously.***
- 7.3. The alleged abuse may have happened a long time in the past, it might be a recent event, it may be an ongoing issue. The allegation may be against a person involved with EPC. The abuse may have been self-inflicted.
- 7.4. Don't panic. Follow the procedure outlined below:
  - 7.4.1. **Upon being alerted to possible abuse workers must:**
    - 7.4.1.1. Under no circumstances carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse.
    - 7.4.1.2. Discuss concerns with the Safeguarding Officers (SO) (Abigail Taylor and Sue Fletcher) or Vicar (Ian Fletcher).
    - 7.4.1.3. Not discuss any suspicions with anyone other than those nominated above.
    - 7.4.1.4. Make a written record of the concerns. This written record must then be passed on to either the Vicar or SO.
  - 7.4.2. The PCC will support the SO and Vicar in their safeguarding roles and will accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
  - 7.4.3. **Helpful guidance on how to respond to disclosure of abuse by a child or vulnerable adult:**
    - 7.4.3.1. Never promise to keep anything a complete secret. You must instead explain that anything shared will be treated in the strictest of confidence, but that there are certain people who will need to be told.

- 7.4.3.2. Show acceptance of what they say, however unlikely it seems.
- 7.4.3.3. Keep calm and maintain an open mind.
- 7.4.3.4. Look at the child or vulnerable adult directly.
- 7.4.3.5. Be honest, let them know that you will need to tell someone else.
- 7.4.3.6. Even if they have broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- 7.4.3.7. Be aware they may have been threatened with reprisals should they tell anyone.
- 7.4.3.8. Never push for information. If the child or vulnerable adult decides not to tell you after all, then you should accept their decision. Pushing for information at this point can later be construed as pressing the person and can hinder appropriate investigations.
- 7.4.3.9. Let them know that you are always ready to listen again in the future.

**7.4.4. *Helpful things you can say include:***

- 7.4.4.1. I take what you're saying very seriously.
- 7.4.4.2. It isn't your fault and you are not to blame at all.
- 7.4.4.3. I am pleased that you have told me.
- 7.4.4.4. I'm sorry that it happened to you.
- 7.4.4.5. *We'll* help you (implies a wider network of support and reduces dependency).
- 7.4.4.6. Eastleigh Parish Church operates with confidentiality and accountability – not privacy and secrecy.

**7.4.5. *Unhelpful things not to say include:***

- 7.4.5.1. Why didn't you say something before?
- 7.4.5.2. I really can't believe it! Are you sure this happened?
- 7.4.5.3. Why? Where? When? Who?...
- 7.4.5.4. Make sure you don't tell a soul.
- 7.4.5.5. You can trust me, I won't tell anyone...

**7.4.6. *Concluding the conversation***

- 7.4.6.1. Reassure the child or vulnerable adult that they were right to tell you.
- 7.4.6.2. Inform them of what you are going to do next, and that you will let them know what happens. (Your next steps are to write notes and report everything as outlined below).
- 7.4.6.3. Let them know that these concerns and allegations will be taken seriously, and that referrals to relevant agencies and/or the police will be made when/where appropriate.

**7.4.7. *Making Notes:***

- 7.4.7.1. As soon as possible - preferably within an hour- write down the following:
  - 7.4.7.1.1. Date/time of the disclosure and date/time of the record.
  - 7.4.7.1.2. How/where the conversation took place, who else was there? etc.
  - 7.4.7.1.3. Exactly what the child or vulnerable adult said, and what you said.

- 7.4.7.1.4. You may find it helpful to use a “body map” to indicate areas of injury/abuse.
- 7.4.7.1.5. Keep all handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed. All records once given to the Vicar or SO will be kept in a secure place.

## 7.5. Further Detail Upon Responding to Possible Signs of Abuse

- 7.5.1. Disclosure can be given in one or more of several ways. It can be shown through physical symptoms, heard on ‘the grapevine’, as well as being openly expressed from one person to another. It is not always obvious, but whenever there is evidence to suggest a disclosure of abuse the procedure is as follows:
  - 7.5.1.1. If the person is in imminent danger, contact the Police immediately.
  - 7.5.1.2. The person learning of the suspected abuse makes a written record and reports directly to the Vicar or the SO.
  - 7.5.1.3. The Vicar or SO will make contact with either the Police, Winchester Diocese Safeguarding Team (led by Jackie Rowlands), Hampshire Children’s Services or Adult Services.
  - 7.5.1.4. Where the Vicar or SO or an individual within the disclosure process may be in question they are bypassed and the next person mentioned within the chain will be contacted.
  - 7.5.1.5. A template document will be provided to all individuals, which may be accessed in the case of a disclosure. This will include what the individual has said as well as the response given. Any observations including injuries or individual’s demeanour at the time should be recorded.
  - 7.5.1.6. Please note that a flowchart of the referral procedure is included as an appendix to this policy.

## 7.6. Responding to Allegations of Historic Abuse

- 7.6.1. All workers should bear in mind that, as well as children and vulnerable adults, disclosures might also be made by adults who suffered from abuse or neglect as a child. This still counts as child abuse, and the same above guidelines should be followed.
- 7.6.2. *All information must be handled in accordance with good Data Protection principles; confidential information should only be shared as appropriate.*

## 8. Staff and Volunteers

- 8.1. We will always **verify the identity** of and **check references** for all workers (paid and voluntary; clergy and lay). This process will be undertaken by the Safeguarding Officer.
- 8.2. **DBS checks** (Disclosure and Barring Service, formerly CRB) will be undertaken for all eligible workers before they start any regular role with children or vulnerable adults. **DBS checks will:**
  - 8.2.1. be monitored and processed via [Safeguarding@eastleighparish.com](mailto:Safeguarding@eastleighparish.com)

- 8.2.2. <sup>3</sup>be renewed according to nationally recognised best practice (currently every 3 years).
- 8.2.3. be processed on behalf of the PCC under the auspices of Winchester Diocese.
- 8.3. **Records** of application forms, references, identity verification information, DBS check reference numbers/applicant names and dates may be kept in secure long-term storage (for a minimum of 50 years).
- 8.4. **Appropriate Supervision and Training** in safeguarding will be given to all workers on an ongoing basis. Regular refresher training will be given.

## 9. Making the Safeguarding Policy Available

The Safeguarding Policy will be made available:

- 9.1.1. At [www.eastleighparish.com](http://www.eastleighparish.com)
- 9.1.2. As a printed copy in a visible location at each of our buildings, and,
- 9.1.3. As a printed copy given to all of our workers.

## 10. Further Policy

### 10.1. The Safeguarding Golden Rule: Accountability and Line of Sight

- 10.1.1. Workers and Volunteers will maintain a line of sight between at least two trained and DBS checked workers when working with under 16s.
- 10.1.2. When working alone with those aged 16 & 17 or with vulnerable adults (e.g. one to one meetings) all workers will ensure that the meeting is properly recorded.
  - 10.1.2.1. Lone working with those aged 16 & 17 or with vulnerable adults will be recorded by the sending of an email to [safeguarding@eastleighparish.com](mailto:safeguarding@eastleighparish.com) **before** the agreed appointment. The email will include date, time, location, and purpose of meeting.
  - 10.1.2.2. Notes must be made of the content of regular 1-2-1 meetings with those aged 16 & 17 or with vulnerable adults and must be sent to [safeguarding@eastleighparish.com](mailto:safeguarding@eastleighparish.com) for the purpose of accountability within 7 days of the meeting taking place. The notes can be very brief, so long as they convey the general purpose of the conversation/meeting. This process helps protect both the worker and those aged 16 & 17 or vulnerable adults.

### 10.2. Appropriate Touch

The following guidelines describe the PCC's policy on physical contact between workers and children/vulnerable adults.

- 10.2.1. If a child or vulnerable adult approaches for a 'hug' don't refuse, rather attempt to ensure it's 'open' and in no way sexual in nature. A sideways-on hug or an arm around the shoulder allows them to feel comforted without full body contact.
- 10.2.2. Kisses are inappropriate within a ministry context within Eastleigh Parish Church.

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<sup>3</sup> Currently managed by Safeguarding Officer, Deputy Safeguarding Officer



- 10.2.3. Adults should refrain from developing exclusive relationships with under 18s or vulnerable adults
- 10.2.4. Adults should not engage in 'horseplay' with children or vulnerable adults

### 10.3. Driving

- 10.3.1. Our work with children and vulnerable adults also includes the driving to-and-from activities when lifts are given under the banner of Eastleigh Parish Church. All Safeguarding Policy therefore applies to lifts in cars, etc. as much as it does in a church hall, for example. Therefore:
  - 10.3.1.1. Only workers who have been DBS checked and trained in safeguarding should drive under 18s or vulnerable adults.
- 10.3.2. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that appropriate insurance, MOT, tax etc. is in place if using their own vehicle in connection with EPC activities.
- 10.3.3. On occasion it might be necessary for a worker to provide transport to a child or vulnerable adult on their own. In this instance **always let another trained worker** know where you are going and how long you expect to be. You must also log this by sending an email to [Safeguarding@eastleighparish.com](mailto:Safeguarding@eastleighparish.com) Make note of 10.1.2.
- 10.3.4. If using the *One Community* bus the *One Community* policy and procedures must also be adhered to (a copy of these can be found in the appendix to this document).

### 10.4. Electronic Communication and Social Media

Workers must communicate with children and vulnerable adults online according to the same guidelines as we have 'in the real world'.

- 10.4.1. Workers must not engage in any private communication with under 16s. (This is the 'line of sight' rule).
- 10.4.2. Workers must be encouraged to make the most of electronic communications; but to remain whenever possible in public forums (e.g. any of the EPC Facebook groups).
- 10.4.3. All 'private' communications (e.g. email, texts, FaceBook Messenger, etc.) between workers and those aged 16 & 17 or with vulnerable adults must be conducted under the same guidelines of 10.1. i.e. they must be shared with [Safeguarding@eastleighparish.com](mailto:Safeguarding@eastleighparish.com) if another worker is not part of the communication. Always. It is therefore best practice to CC another worker in your communications.
- 10.4.4. Workers must avoid encouraging children or vulnerable adults developing the idea that there is a "special relationship" developing beyond that of staff and child/vulnerable adult.
- 10.4.5. Workers must not share the contact details of any children or vulnerable adults without the express permission of their parent or carer.
- 10.4.6. More information on safe internet use can be found on the CEOP website. The Safeguarding Officer can also direct staff to information which helps people understand how to keep safe online.

### 10.5. Video and Other Images

- 10.5.1.** Eastleigh Parish Church uses video and other images for numerous purposes, e.g. website, FaceBook, Outlook, etc.
- 10.5.2.** The PCC will make it possible for any person to choose for their own image, or the image of their child/client, to not be used by Eastleigh Parish Church.
  - 10.5.2.1.** Details of how to 'opt out' will be made available alongside all other safeguarding information online and 'in the real world' as in section 9 above.

## **11. Data Protection**

- 11.1.** Individuals mentioned in any of the above-mentioned records (e.g. worker records of 1-2-1 meetings) should be notified that this information may be held for a long time. All such records should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the storage of such information is still appropriate in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
- 11.2.** All paper records will be kept securely in lockable storage containers. Access is strictly limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.
- 11.3.** The PCC of EPC recognises the changes in law that came into effect with GDPR legislation. Further details of how we handle data can be found in the relevant section of the Parish Handbook.

## **12. Review**

- 12.1.** This Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed every year, ideally during the first PCC meeting after the APCM.