

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

The policy and procedures detailed were first agreed by the PCC on 9 September 2015 and are reviewed annually. They take account of the *Church of England – Birmingham: Safeguarding Policies* (1st November 2005, Fourth Revision November 2011):
<http://www.cofebirmingham.com/documents/view/gods-children-our-diocese/>

I. STATEMENTS OF INTENT

1. The PCC of the Parish of St Alban and St Patrick, Highgate, gives paramount importance to the nurture and care of young people. For the purpose of this document a child is understood to be any person under the age of 18.
2. We recognise our responsibility to guard against the possibility of physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people by persons who may be acting in the name of our parish.
3. We want to ensure that we can offer a safe environment in which children and young people are valued and feel confident to ask for help.
4. We establish workable procedures to enable all aspects of the policy to be followed.
5. We know that the Incumbent and the PCC are legally responsible for the implementation of child protection policies in each parish, as stated in the *Church of England – Birmingham: Safeguarding Policies. 2011, p. 107-108.*
6. All those who work with children or who have significant contact with them and their families on behalf of the Church are in positions of trust. However, anyone in church who wears robes and/or has a public position or other position of responsibility may be regarded by children, depending on their age and understanding, as someone to trust. These people have a responsibility to work together with the whole congregation to promote the welfare of children in church and in the community.
7. With the Diocese, this church accepts the evidence published by the relevant authorities in the West Midlands, including the Police, that substance misuse amongst children and young people is widespread. It is sensible, therefore, to take precautions and remain vigilant.

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II. PROCEDURES

1. All volunteers who come into direct contact with children will:
 - a. Meet with the Incumbent to discuss this policy.
 - b. Be required to sign the House of Bishops Confidential Declaration Form (2004).
 - c. Comply with any necessary checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
 - d. Provide appropriate identification papers for such checks.
 - e. Provide written references as required.
 - f. Receive an outline description of the role and responsibilities s/he will undertake.
 - g. Undergo mandatory training every three years.
 - h. Volunteers running the Sunday Club (for children) will agree to an appropriate probationary period followed by a review by the Incumbent.
2. This policy will apply to volunteers and workers in a position of authority as well as those working directly with children such as teachers and assistants of the Sunday Club:
 - a. Church Wardens
 - b. Vergers
 - c. Director of Music and any assistants
 - d. Sunday Club teachers and any assistants
 - e. Parish Children Lead Person
3. The Incumbent – whose clearance is responsibility of the Diocese - will hold all declaration forms. During an interregnum the forms will be passed to a Deanery representative and then to the new Incumbent.
4. Diocesan staffing ratios are recommended as follows: 0-2 years 1 adult to 3 children; 2-3 years 1 adult to 4 children; 3-8 years 1 adult to 8 children; 8-17 years children 1 adult to first 8 children, then 1 to 12. Volunteers under 18 years will only assist an adult. They will not be left in charge of a group of children or be included in staff ratios.
6. Health and safety regulations are to be followed. Basic first aid facilities are available and accessible and an accident book is kept.
7. A register of attendance for children activities is kept.
8. Permission to photograph children or young people should be obtained from the parent or person with parental responsibility.

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III. KNOWN OFFENDERS ATTENDING CHURCH

We recognise that there are individuals who abuse children or in other ways act illegally in relation to children, and that these individuals may be members of our church community. However, the safety of children and young people must always be paramount. Though this does not mean that any will be excluded from the love of God through the church, it does recognise that those with a problematic history with regard to children will need support but will also need boundaries to their behaviour to be clearly established. In line with Church of England and Diocesan procedures and in consultation with the *Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser* this church will stipulate a legally binding *Safeguarding Children Agreement* with any such offenders.

IV. SPECIFIC ACTION

1. This church appoints as *Dr Fay Wilson* Parish Children's Advocate.¹
2. This church appoints *Prof Peter Marsh* as The Parish Safeguarding Children Coordinator.²
3. This church appoints *Dr Rachel Smith* as Identity Verifier.
4. **Any person concerned that some abuse of minors may have taken place or may take place on church premises or during church activities – including bullying by other children – or use or exchange of controlled substances involving children may have taken place, should immediately contact any of the people listed below, who will take prompt and appropriate action:**
 - a. The Parish Children's Advocate:
Dr Fay Wilson
Email: faywilson@clara.net
 - b. The Parish Safeguarding Children Coordinator:
Prof Peter Marsh
Email: ptmarsh@powernet.co.uk
 - c. The Incumbent:
Fr Gerry Syles
Tel.: 0121 440 0404
Email: frgerrysykes@gmail.com

¹ A person appointed by a Parish to represent and promote the views and needs of children in decisions made by the church in all aspects of the life and ministry of the church. The person will be a member of the PCC and should be in regular and direct communication with children, young people and those who lead their groups. (*Church of England – Birmingham: Safeguarding Policies. 2011, p. 12*)

² A person appointed by a Parish to co-ordinate all Parish matters relating to the safeguarding of children and to help the Parish develop a culture of 'informed vigilance'. This will involve passing on relevant information, maintaining records, ensuring children and youth workers receive appropriate training, and maintaining an up to date Parish policy. It may also include taking action or being involved in recruitment. (*Ibid.*)

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d. The Churchwardens:

Dr Fay Wilson

Email: faywilson@clara.net

Dr Chris Smith

Tel.: 0121 472 1301

Email: chris.smith-sammons@blueyonder.co.uk

e. The Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser:

Stephanie Haynes

Tel.: 07342 993844

Email: stephanieh@cofebirmingham.com