ST ANDREW'S
Kettering

The Diocese of Peterborough

SAFER Church - Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Date agreed and adopted by St Andrew's Church PCC:	**17.4.26**
Date added to Website:	**17.4.26**
Date due to be reviewed:	**April 2028**

Churchwarden Name: Sue Merrifield	Date:
Vicar/Priest in Charge Name: Rev Tom Houston	Date:

This policy follows and is consistent with the Church of England House of Bishops'

- Promoting a Safer Church - Safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults 2017 and the
- Parish Safeguarding Handbook

It also incorporates

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the
- Care Act 2014

Each person who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults[1] will agree to abide by this policy.

It will be reviewed annually, accepted and written in the minutes of the PCC.

[1] *In their policies and procedures our statutory partners have now moved away from the terminology of 'vulnerable adults' towards 'adults at risk of harm', usually shortened to 'adults at risk'*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Church of England House of Bishops' *'Promoting a Safer Church' - Safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults* was formally adopted by the Diocese of Peterborough at the Diocesan Synod in March 2017.

This policy is the recommended Diocese of Peterborough Safeguarding policy and within it adopts and takes into account the House of Bishops safeguarding policies and procedures for children, young people and adults.

The care and protection of children, young people[2] and vulnerable adults/ adults at risk[3] involved in Church activities is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of the Church has a role to play in promoting a Safer Church for all.

Under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, all authorised clergy, bishops, archdeacons, licensed readers and lay workers, churchwardens and PCCs must have 'due regard' to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops (this will include both policy and practice guidance). A duty to have 'due regard' to guidance means that the person under the duty is not free to disregard it but is required to follow it unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so. ('Cogent' for this purpose means clear, logical and convincing.) Failure by clergy to comply with the duty imposed by the 2016 Measure may result in disciplinary action. *(Promoting a Safer Church - safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults 2017)*

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The PCC will embed the Church of England Policy which is based on **5 foundations** and **6 overarching policy commitments** alongside the Diocese Safeguarding policy and procedures**.**

For advice on all safeguarding issues including allegations or suspicions of abuse contact:

The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Team (DSA) 01733 8870 then either 39, 40 or 41

safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

[2] *A child or young person is anyone under the age of eighteen years*
[3] *In their policies and procedures our statutory partners have now moved away from the terminology of 'vulnerable adults' towards 'adults at risk of harm', usually shortened to 'adults at risk'*

2. PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

Adopting the Church of England House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults – 2017

Safeguarding means the action that we take to promote a safer culture. This means we will: promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, working to prevent abuse from occurring; seek to protect those that are at risk of being abused and respond well to those that have been abused.

We will take care to identify where a person may present a risk to others, offer and support them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks.

Our church will take appropriate steps to maintain a safer environment for all and to practice fully and positively Christ's Ministry towards children, young people and adults. To respond sensitively and compassionately to their needs in order to help keep them safe from harm.

We are guided by the following **5 foundations:**

1. Gospel – being faithful to our call to share the gospel compels us to take with the utmost seriousness the challenge of: preventing abuse from happening and responding well where it has
2. Human Rights and the Law – safeguarding work is undertaken within a legislative framework supported by government guidance
3. Core Principles – welfare of the child, young person and vulnerable adult is paramount
4. Good Safeguarding Practice – includes: leadership commitment; safeguarding policy; clear lines of accountability; clear reporting procedures and record keeping and effective information sharing/ working with partner agencies
5. Learning from the past – statutory reports and independent reviews into abuse that have involved the Church of England highlight past errors and significant lessons learnt to improve safeguarding

Based on the 5 foundations outlined above we commit to the following **6 overarching policy commitments:**

1. Promoting a Safer environment and culture
2. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church
3. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
4. Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
5. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
6. Responding to those that may pose a risk to others

A copy of the Church of England's 'Promoting a Safer Church' - Safeguarding policy statement for children, young people and adults can be found here: Click on the below and press the option 'open hyperlink'

https://www.churchofengland.org/media/17545

3. DIOCESAN, PARISH AND CATHEDRAL CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Our 6 overarching safeguarding policy commitments are:

1. Promoting a safer environment and culture

We will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our Church Officers will respect all children, young people and vulnerable adults and promote their well-being.

2. Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the Church

We will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church, in accordance with the House of Bishops safeguarding policy and practice guidance. We will train and equip Church Officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse.

3. Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation

Anyone who brings any safeguarding suspicion, concern, knowledge or allegation of current or non-current abuse to the notice of the Church will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner, in line with statutory child and adult safeguarding procedures and the House of Bishops safeguarding policy and practice guidance.

4. Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons

We will endeavour to offer care and support to all those that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred. Those who have suffered abuse within the Church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously.

5. Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons

The Church in exercising its responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal, civil and ecclesiastical law of an accused Church Officer including the clergy. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and Church inquiry processes. The Church will take responsibility for ensuring that steps are taken to protect others when any Church Officer is considered a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

6. Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others

The Church, based on the message of the gospel, opens its doors to all. We will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member of the church community whom may present a known risk. The Church will ensure that any risk has been assessed and is being managed in a safeguarding agreement in accordance with House of Bishops policy and practice guidance.

This page can be printed and displayed within church premises – in high footfall areas

4. RESPONDING PROMPTLY TO EVERY SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 7

We will respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation where: there is a concern that a child, young person or adult is, or may be, being abused or that a church officer[4] is, or may be, abusing a child, young person or adult.

We will ensure that people within our church know how to make a disclosure or raise a concern by:

- Attending appropriate safeguarding training relevant to our roles
- Ensuring safeguarding arrangements are clearly visible on the front page of our parish website
- Displaying contact details of our Parish / Benefice Safeguarding Officer and the incumbent[5] and how you can contact them to raise a concern or disclose a safeguarding matter
- Displaying the contact details of your Diocesan Safeguarding Team and how you can contact them to raise a concern or disclose a safeguarding matter
- Displaying other organisations who provide support and advice on safeguarding matters
- Displaying the independent NSPCC helpline for Children and Adults for those effected by church related abuse: **0808 800 5000**

Where there is a safeguarding concern / allegation, we will follow the procedure below:

- Respond well to the victim / survivor – listen and take what is being said seriously
- Emergency – if someone is in immediate danger of significant or serious harm we will contact the emergency services on 999
- Non-emergency – we will contact the Parish/Benefice Safeguarding Officer or incumbent in the first instance. They **must** then contact the DSA team
- If the incumbent is implicated, inform the DSA team
- Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSA team **within 24 hours**
- If the Parish/Benefice Safeguarding Officer, incumbent or DSA team are not available within 24 hours then we will contact directly: for children and young people the local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub[6] (MASH); for adults the local Adult Social Care team or the police for our area. These are our statutory agency partners (you can find their contact details on an internet search). We will advise the Parish/Benefice Safeguarding Officer or incumbent if we have made a referral in this way and they will inform the DSA team. **If in doubt don't delay – seek advice from your statutory agencies for your area**
- We will not contact the person who the allegation / disclosure has been made against (alleged respondent), or anyone else implicated in the allegation or disclosure until advice has been sought from the DSA or our statutory agencies
- We will record the details of the concern / allegation. Where notes cannot be taken at the time a written record will be made as soon as practicable afterwards. *(See notes below about what will be recorded)*
- The DSA will offer advice, support and guidance to signpost those affected by the concern / allegation to other agencies. Pastoral support will also be identified and offered to all those affected by the concern / allegation

Recognise

[4] Church Officer – anyone appointed or elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid (Examples – priest, church warden, bell ringer, organist, youth activity leader)

[5] 'Incumbent' – Vicar / Rector / priest-in-charge. This means the senior clergy person responsible for the Church / Benefice / Cathedral

[6] MASH - are structures designed to facilitate information-sharing and decision-making on a **multi-agency basis** often, though not always, through co-locating staff from the local authority, health agencies and the police.

We might find out about abuse by:

- A child, young person or adult tells us what has happened or we witness abuse directly
- We see an injury or behaviour consistent with abuse and which is unlikely to have been caused another way
- Abuse is disclosed by someone else who knows the child, young person or adult
- Indications of abuse are seen in artwork, play or creative writing
- Through posts on social media or the internet
- Anonymous sources tell of abuse

When we are listening to a child or adult who may be disclosing abuse:

Respond

Do

- Listen carefully and take what is said seriously
- Only use open questions (*open questions begin with words like: who, what, where, when and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'*).
- Remain calm
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture everything accurately
- Clarify if necessary – clear up any ambiguities
- Make an accurate record as soon as possible
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader / Parish or Benefice Safeguarding Officer / DSA what is believed to have happened, when and where
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of their disclosure
- Say what we will do next *(see below under record and refer)*

Don't

- Promise confidentiality
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations
- Investigate
- Contact the person about whom the allegation has been made
- Ask leading questions
- Repeatedly question/ask the child or adult to repeat the disclosure over and over

Record

- Make written notes at the time, if appropriate, or as soon as practicable after the disclosure. Contact the DSA for advice is needed on how to complete the notes
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the DSA or the statutory authorities
- The notes will include a record of:
    - Date, time and place the disclosure / concern was raised
    - Who was present and how the information was received (by telephone, face-to-face, email, letter etc.)
    - Details of the information provided – using the actual words used including any swear words or slang
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations, assumptions or opinions
- Always sign and date the record. A copy will need to be provided to the DSA

Refer

- **If there is immediate danger to a child or adult contact the police – 999**
- Report to your activity leader or Parish/Benefice Safeguarding Officer or incumbent immediately. If you report to your activity leader, they should inform the Parish/Benefice Safeguarding Officer or incumbent
- Within 24 hours the Parish or Benefice Safeguarding Officer or incumbent reports the concerns to the DSA
- Alternatively, you can seek advice from the local MASH / Adults Care team or the police for your area (you can find their contact details on an internet search). If you take this option inform the DSA team. The information the statutory agencies will need is:
    - Details about the event or disclosure
    - Information about the child, young person or adult and family – name / date of birth or approximate age / address
    - Information about whom the concern / allegation has been made against - name / date of birth or approximate age / address
    - The statutory agency should provide you with their reference number – ensure this is provided to the DSA team
    - Remember that the child and family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral ***unless this would put the welfare of the child or vital interests of the adult who may be vulnerable, or another person at further risk.*** *If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral.* The statutory agency you are speaking with will give you advice over this if necessary

Do not delay your referral. Incumbents and Diocesan Officers are NOT authorised to investigate any allegations and must never attempt to do so. Only the Police and the Local Authorities are granted such powers in law. Most situations are not emergencies.

If it would be dangerous for the child, young person or adult to return home, or he / she does not want to return home and you are sufficiently concerned for their safety, contact the MASH teams or Adults Social Care teams or the police for your area.

Non-recent abuse

Non-recent allegations of abuse, will be treated as seriously as recent allegations. A victim/ survivor needs to be aware that, if the person they are making the disclosure about is known to be currently working with children, young people or vulnerable adults in either a paid or voluntary capacity then a referral to the statutory services will be made. In all circumstances where there are concerns about non recent abuse, then the DSA will be contacted. The DSA will make this referral and will provide advice on how this will be done and offer reassurance to the victim / survivor. This includes any allegation made about a church officer who has died.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is contrary to the will of God and an affront to human dignity. The welfare of the adult victim of domestic abuse is important, but where there are children in the family it must be understood that they too are victims of domestic abuse. In all circumstances where there are concerns about domestic abuse then the DSA will be contacted. The DSA will make this referral and will provide advice on how this will be done and offer reassurance to the victim / survivor.

5. WHO TO CONTACT WHERE THERE IS WORRY ABOUT A CHILD OR ADULT

DSA Office hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm

If a child or adult is in serious danger, then phone 999 / 101

If you are submitting a safeguarding referral directly to your statutory partners

In the event of any other safeguarding concern then please contact: Children and young people – MASH for your area; for vulnerable adults: Adult Social Care team for your area or the police for your area (999 / 101). You can also find the referral forms on their websites:

Northants:

Children's MASH: 0300 126 1000 or out of hours 01604 626938
Website: Report a concern (nctrust.co.uk)
Adults Social Care: Refer to their on-line referral or out of hours 01604 626938
Website https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/adult-social-care/contact-adult-social-care

If any of these options are taken, then please email the details to the DSA team safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

Other useful numbers:
Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 13

Childline for children and young people: 0800 1111

NSPCC for adults concerned about a child: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC for those wanting to report church related abuse: 0808 800 5000

Action on Elder Abuse helpline: 0808 808 8141

24-hour National Domestic Violence helpline: 0808 2000 247

Samaritans helpline for people struggling to cope and needing someone to talk to: 116 123

Stop it Now helps prevent child sexual abuse: 0808 1000 900

Cruse bereavement helpline: 0808 808 1677

Family Lives provides support and advice on family issues: 0808 800 222

MACSAS for people who have been abused by church officers: 0808 801 0340

MIND mental health charity: 0300 123 3393

Thirtyone:eight: Organisation who completes our DBS checks: 0303 003 11 11

6. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 6

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states that the Church '*will train and equip church officers to have the confidence and skills they need to care and support children, young people and vulnerable adults and to recognise and respond to abuse'.*

The Parish will make every effort to ensure that clergy, licensed workers and lay ministers, volunteers and employees working with children, young people and vulnerable adults regularly seek and obtain safeguarding training to the level of their responsibility. Clergy should attend the relevant Diocesan Safeguarding training, if they do not then the Bishop will not grant / renew their license. Refresher training should be undertaken once every three years.

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7. SAFER RECRUITMENT

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 5

A key way of protecting children, young people and adults from harm is to ensure the careful recruitment of those working with them. The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states: *'The church will select and vet all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church'.* The PCC is responsible for the appointment of those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, paid or unpaid.

The following processes should be followed:

- All church workers working with children and adults, including volunteers, will complete and sign an application form and a confidential declaration form
- Written references and identification will be required and will be carefully checked
- All church workers working with children and adults will be interviewed in relation to a role/job description or person specification
- A Disclosing and Barring Service (DBS) check will be required in relation to all eligible roles - they must not start their role until the check has been completed and the result returned
- Any blemished DBS check, or information declared in the confidential declaration form that causes a concern, must be referred to the DSA and advice sought
- After appointment induction to the role and support will be given to the individual
- They must complete the on-line safeguarding training or attend the safeguarding training that is relevant to their role

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8. THOSE WHO POSE A RISK TO CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 10

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states: *'The Church, based on the message of the gospel, opens its doors to all. It will therefore endeavour to offer pastoral care and support to any member if the church community whom may present a known risk'.*

When it is known that a member of the congregation, or someone wishing to join the congregation, has sexually abused a child, young person or adult, or is not a sexual offender against children but nevertheless may pose a risk, we will consult with the DSA.

This is to ensure that a safe course of action can be pursued in conjunction with the relevant statutory agencies.

9. CARE OF SURVIVORS OF ABUSE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 8

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states: *'The Church will endeavour to offer care and support to all those that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, where or when it occurred….Those who have suffered abuse within the church will receive a compassionate response, be listened to and be taken seriously'.*

We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.

10. RECORD KEEPING AND STORAGE

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 7

Notes will be made of all safeguarding incidents involving children or adults. They will be treated confidentially and will be securely stored by the incumbent or designated person. They will be retained even if the information received was judged to be malicious, unsubstantiated or unfounded. During an interregnum, the designated person will be responsible for all safeguarding records which will be passed to the incoming incumbent.

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11. SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND ACTIVITIES

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 11

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy states: *'The church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safe for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults……The Church will strive to support all church officers to adhere to safer working good practice and the challenge the abuse of power'.*

We will ensure our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is carried out in a 'safe' environment:

- Ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults know who they can talk to about a concern
- The ratio of leaders to children will comply with the NSPCC guidelines
- Each group will have a minimum of two adults and a gender balance will be maintained if possible
- Adults will not work alone with children
- We will seek to ensure meeting places are safe, secure and suitable for purpose and that health and safety risk assessments are completed
- We will be clear about boundaries with regard to touching always related to the child's needs and normally initiated by the child
- We will obtain parental/guardian permission for attendance at groups, trips, use of images and transporting children in private cars
- All those who drive children on church-organised activities should be over 25, have held a full driving licence for over two years and, if their license is endorsed with 6 points or more, should inform the incumbent or Parish/ Benefice Safeguarding Officer
- All cars that carry children should be comprehensively insured for both private and business use. The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities

12. UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

If children attend our church services without their parents' or carers' knowledge we will welcome the child(ren) and try to establish whether their parents are aware of where they are. We will make sure an adult recruited for work with children takes care of the child and try to discover when they are due home and encourage them to keep to that arrangement. Depending on the age and competence of the child, we will ring the parents or ask the young person to ring to gain the parents' consent to the child remaining. If the child comes regularly, we will endeavour to establish regular contact with the parents or carers.

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13. VISITING ADULTS WHO MAY BE VULNERABLE, IN THEIR HOMES

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 11

It is important that we ensure that our parishioners and church officers are as safe as they can be, and that there is accountability and transparency in the manner in which our church officers engage in lone workings or visits to homes.

Church workers will, if possible, undertake a risk assessment before an initial visit, especially if we do not know the person. They will not call unannounced but by appointment, if appropriate telephoning just before visiting. They will always carry a mobile phone on a home visit, and ensure that someone knows where they are and when they are expected to return.

They will be clear about what support can be offered and the purpose and limitations of any pastoral care / support that is offered.

Where our workers need to refer the person to another agency we will talk this through with the vulnerable adult, seeking his/her permission before passing on personal information. Our workers will always endeavour to be clear about what behaviour from the vulnerable adults is acceptable and what is not.

Make a note of the date when you visit, report back about the visit to the agreed named person and say what is concerning / what is going well.

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14. BELL RINGING

The PCC will appoint the tower captain and others who are likely to be in charge of ringing at any time. All Tower Captains and ringers are expected to abide by the Diocesan Guidance "Safeguarding Children and Young people who are Bell Ringers" which follows the Child Protection policy of the Central Council for Bell Ringers. In particular, no adults will work alone with children and young people, at least one adult should be in calling distance at all times and instruction should be given with minimum physical contact as set out in paragraph 6 of the Diocesan Policy.

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15. ORGANISATIONS HIRING CHURCH BUILDING OR PREMISES

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 1

In relation to all activities and events which are not run directly by the church, but which take place in church buildings or grounds, the responsibility for implementing safeguarding policies rests with the hiring organisation and not with the PCC.
The PCC will require visiting groups to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, follow safe recruitment procedures, and are aware of health and safety issues

in the building. Visiting groups will be required to sign a hire agreement and abide by the Parish Safeguarding Policy.

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16. USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Parish Safeguarding Handbook – Chapter 12

Social media sites enable users to create and share content and keep in touch with other users. For many, especially young people, using social media is an extension of physical face-to-face relationships. It is therefore important that churches also engage with their community and worshippers through these platforms, and that it is done in a safe way.

The PCC must approve the use of social media and mobile phones by the church. All of the below should be shared with young people.

E mails on line chat and texting

- Parental agreement should be obtained before communicating with young people
- Language should be clear and unambiguous
- All conversations must be made available for viewing by a worker's supervisor
- Workers may provide advice and support, but avoid counselling

Mobile Phones

- Workers will be allocated a dedicated work phone
- They should use group texts wherever possible
- There should be an agreed length of time for conversations and a curfew e.g. no communication between 1000pm and 700am
- Conversations causing concern should be saved and passed to supervisor
- Photos should only be taken in accordance with safeguarding guidance
- Images should only be downloaded to a church computer

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17. WHISTLEBLOWING

To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, all organisations that provide services for, or work with, children, young people or vulnerable adults are required to have appropriate whistle-blowing procedures, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed.

Members of a congregation should be encouraged to acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of unacceptable practice, performance or behaviour to the attention of the incumbent. It is often the case that a co-worker or co-voluntary worker may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express concerns, feeling that this would be disloyal; he or she may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however, natural, must never result in a child, young person or adult who may be vulnerable continuing to be unnecessarily at risk.

How to raise a concern about unacceptable safeguarding practice:

- Concerns, suspicions or uneasiness about practice or behaviour of an individual should be voiced as soon as possible to the Incumbent

- If the concern is about the Incumbent inform the Archdeacon and DSA
- If the concern is about the Dean of the Cathedral inform the Bishops Chaplain and DSA
- Be specific about what practice is concerning, what has been heard or what has been observed
- Ideally put concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, and providing dates and times
- People are encouraged to put your name to any disclosure; however, any concern raised anonymously should be considered at the discretion of the church, taking into account the seriousness of the issue raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources

18. DIGNITY AT WORK

All our churches are advised to adopted the Diocese of Peterborough's dignity at work policy. We are committed to creating a respectful and harmonious workplace, which is free from harassment and bullying of any kind, and one in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity.

It is committed to ensuring that individuals do not feel apprehensive because of their religious belief (including theology or church tradition), gender, marital status, sexual orientation, race, age, pregnancy and maternity, or disability[7], or through any inappropriate behaviour towards them.

The policy can be found below:

https://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/content/pages/documents/190214-dignity-at-work-policy.pdf

If you are concerned that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others please seek advice from a Safeguarding Adviser or if necessary report the matter to the statutory agencies without delay

[7] *Equality Act 2010 – Protected characteristics*