

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

1. We are committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church: we aim to ensure that the 5 foundations and 6 overarching policy commitments of the House of Bishops Policy for children, young people and adults, 'Promoting a Safer Church' (2017), are promoted and adhered to by all those who serve God within our church.

2. Our safeguarding practice is founded on the following principles:

- o The Gospel: A welcome for all, with a particular regard for those who are most vulnerable, into a church community where the value and dignity of every human being is affirmed and where those in positions of responsibility and authority are truly trustworthy. Sharing the Gospel compels us to take with the utmost seriousness the challenge of preventing abuse and responding well when it has occurred.

- o Human Rights and the Law: A recognition of the personal dignity and rights of all children, young people and adults and the statutory duties enshrined in law and safeguarding practice guidance.

- o Core Principles of safeguarding: An endorsement of the Church's approach to safeguarding practice which:

- holds the welfare of the child, young person and vulnerable adult as paramount
- shows integrity, respect and an ability to listen to all
- takes accountably seriously
- promotes transparency and openness
- collaborates effectively with key statutory authorities and other partners
- uses professional support and guidance from inside and outside the Church
- commits to preventing abuse and managing risk
- promotes a culture of informed vigilance
- regularly evaluates to ensure best practice

- o Good safeguarding practice: A leadership commitment to:

- promoting safeguarding in all areas of church life, with clear lines of accountability and reporting procedures for safeguarding, clear roles for church officers and comprehensive policy and practice guidance available to all church officers.
- ensuring that safer recruitment procedures are followed and there will be clear arrangements for support and/or supervision and training of everyone with safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with House of Bishops practice guidance.

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Date of next review March 2027

- working effectively with statutory and voluntary sector partners.
- ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults know how to access an independent person who will listen to their concerns.
- publicising complaints and whistleblowing procedures.
- effective information sharing.
- good record keeping.

o Learning from the past: ensuring that lessons from failures in safeguarding are learned and result in changes.

3. Our policy commitments are that we will:-

- (i) Promote a safer environment and culture.
- (ii) Recruit safely and support all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults within the church.
- (iii) Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- (iv) Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse (including domestic abuse and coercive control) and other affected persons.
- (v) Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse (including domestic abuse and coercive control) and other affected persons.
- (vi) Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others, ensuring that risk has been assessed and is being managed in accordance with the House of Bishops policy and practice guidance.

4. Governance and oversight:

- The Parochial Church Council (PCC) will regularly review our safeguarding practice and endorse or revise our safeguarding policy annually.
- We will provide to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) a report in relation to safeguarding and progress made over the last year.
- The management and development of safeguarding practice in this parish will be coordinated by the Safeguarding Development Group led by the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Anne Hignell (anne.hignell@stpaulslethworth.co.uk)

Signed: ~~Incumbent~~ Associate Minister



Date: 23/06/2025

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