



'Adults at Risk' Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding policy aims

As a church, we desire to bring glory to God by knowing Jesus and making him known. To that end, the aims of our safeguarding policy are:

- To uphold the honour of God's Name.
- To keep the gospel from disrepute.
- Designed to be read together with the Church of England's House of Bishops Parish Safeguarding Handbook- Promoting a Safer Church

We do this by:

- Protecting the children, young people, and vulnerable adults in our care.
- Protecting the Leaders who serve in this ministry.

Safeguarding is an important part of our service in the gospel and one which we take seriously, aiming for a standard of excellence as we implement this policy.

The full St Andrew the Great Safeguarding Policy can be found on our website.

This policy will deal with safeguarding 'Adults at Risk'¹.

1. *Care Act 2014*

Key Safeguarding Roles

1. **The PCC** has overall responsibility for safeguarding within St Andrew The Great. This policy is maintained, reviewed, and sanctioned by the PCC.

2. **The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)** is the PCC member given responsibility for safeguarding within the church family and all its various ministries.

Given the size of our church, it is necessary for the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to delegate some of their responsibilities to Staff Ministry Area Leaders who oversee various ministries. However, the Parish Safeguarding Officer (or in her absence the Deputy Safeguarding officer) will retain the sole right to receive and manage disclosures.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer will be responsible in decisions about whether to permit someone to be involved in ministry with children and vulnerable adults where their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is blemished or information is provided about them under the DBS scheme. Similarly, the Safeguarding Team are responsible for undertaking a risk assessment if there is information disclosed on a Confidential Declaration.

3. **The Church Safeguarding Committee** is a source of advice and guidance on safeguarding issues. The committee is made up of members who have some understanding of safeguarding and are aware of its importance. They will advise the PCC on any matters relating to safeguarding, making recommendations for changes in policy and procedure, and hold ministry area leaders accountable for policy implementation.

The Parish Safeguarding Officer chairs the Safeguarding Committee which is tasked to oversee the church's safeguarding policies, compliance and audits.

4. Staff Ministry Area Leaders

Ministry area leaders have the responsibility to ensure that Leaders within their ministry area are recruited, assessed, and trained according to the safeguarding policy of the church (see Safer Recruitment Policy). In this process they will be assisted by the Leaders Review Team and the administrative team. Their role will be supervised by the Parish Safeguarding Committee, chaired by the Parish safeguarding Officer.

Ministry Area Leaders will escalate any concerns or disclosures to the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours. The Parish Safeguarding Officer retains the sole right to receive and manage disclosures.

5. **Leaders** refers to anyone serving in any role within church which involves any oversight of children, young people or vulnerable adults. In the Recruitment Policy, Leaders are further categorised into two groups, 'Pastoral Leaders' and 'Practical Servers'. All leaders (Pastoral and Practical) who have oversight of children and vulnerable adults are subject to the same DBS checks and safeguarding training (see Recruitment Policy)

All Leaders share a particular responsibility for:

- loving the person as Christ loves them
- setting an example of proper Christian conduct
- praying for those in their care

Guidelines for recognising and responding to potential abuse

St Andrew The Great is committed to preventing abuse and neglect taking place and safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable adults within our community. We are committed to ensuring that St Andrew The Great:

- Provides a safe environment for vulnerable adults and actively seeks to prevent harm.
- Identifies vulnerable adults who are suffering.
- Takes appropriate action to see that such vulnerable adults are kept safe from harm.

All Leaders need to know how to respond to signs of abuse or allegations of abuse. The following guidelines are in place to meet that need.

1. Definitions

WHEN IS AN ADULT VULNERABLE? (Care Act 2014)

The term 'vulnerable adult' (recently renamed as 'adult at risk') refers to a person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect himself or herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability, illness, old age, emotional fragility, distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being temporarily or indefinitely impaired.

Please note that some adults may not consider themselves vulnerable but may be vulnerable to being abused by individuals in positions of leadership and responsibility. As adults are not inherently vulnerable and in need of protection it is important to recognise that the factors described below do not, of themselves, mean that a person is vulnerable. It is a combination of these factors and the circumstances that a person finds him/herself in that can make an individual vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

SOME FACTORS THAT INCREASE VULNERABILITY INCLUDE:

- A mental illness, chronic or acute
- A sensory or physical disability or impairment
- A learning disability
- A physical illness
- Dementia
- An addiction to alcohol or drugs
- Failing faculties of old age
- Those who are homeless
- Refugee families or individuals (including those seeking asylum)
- Victims/survivors of domestic abuse
- Significant emotional coercion
- Those who have suffered historic abuse in childhood

- A permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events – for example bereavement or abuse or trauma.

It is also important to note that these factors may not exist in isolation; for example, someone with a drink problem masking underlying dementia; or a frail housebound elderly person with underlying depression.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

The Care Act 2014 provides the following examples of types of abuse. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Physical abuse including assault, hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic abuse that is usually a systematic, repeated and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.

Sexual abuse including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation, or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse including: theft, exploitation, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery including slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude; and traffickers and slave master using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse is maltreatment or harassment that is based on any characteristic of a person's identity, such as their race, sex, or disability. Many of the signs of discriminatory abuse will be the same as for psychological abuse. The impact of discriminatory abuse can lead to significant self-harming and must never be underestimated.

Organisational abuse which can include neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Domestic abuse that is usually a systematic, repeated and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.

Neglect and acts of omission including: ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs; failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services; or the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

Self-neglect which covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. It should be noted that self-neglect may not prompt enquiry. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.

Although not a formal category of abuse, it is important to be mindful of the danger of spiritual abuse. **Spiritual abuse** is the inappropriate use of religious belief or practices to attempt to 'force' religious values or behaviours onto vulnerable people. It applies to occasions when any of the above types of abuse are purportedly done in God's name.

FACTORS THAT MAY LEAD TO ABUSE

Abuse can occur in any setting no matter where a person lives or where they are being cared for. Abuse can occur in residential or day care settings, in hospitals, in other people's homes churches and other places previously assumed safe, and in public places. Abuse is more likely to occur if the vulnerable adult:

- Rejects help
- Has a communication difficulty
- Has challenging/unusual behaviour
- Is not helpful or co-operative
- Is behaviourally disturbed or there are major changes in personality behaviour
- Is socially isolated.

Research has shown that mistreatment is more likely to occur if carers:

- Are lonely or isolated
- Are under stress due to poor income or housing conditions
- Have other responsibilities i.e. work, family
- Are showing signs of physical or mental illness
- Are becoming dependent on alcohol or drugs
- Family relationships over the years have been poor
- Live where family violence is the norm.

2. Recognising signs of abuse

Safeguarding adults is everyone's business. Anyone can witness or become aware of information suggesting that abuse or neglect is occurring. It may not always be obvious that a vulnerable adult is being abused or mistreated, however there may be general indicators that something is amiss: the adult may say or do things that hint that all is not well. In some cases, there may be a marked change in behaviour or a direct disclosure or complaint of abuse.

The government is clear that workers across a wide range of organisations—including faith groups—are often well- placed to notice changes in an adult that may indicate they are being abused or neglected, and therefore need to be vigilant in identifying concerns and understand how to respond appropriately.

This will include:

- Knowing about different types of abuse and neglect and their signs
- Supporting adults to keep safe
- Knowing who to tell about suspected abuse or neglect
- Supporting adults to think and weigh up the risks and benefits of different opinions when exercising choice and control.

SIGNS OF ABUSE TO LOOK OUT FOR

If someone is suffering abuse you may notice one or a combination of the following signs:

- Multiple bruising or finger-marks
- Injuries you cannot give a good reason for
- Worsening health for no reason
- Withdrawal or mood changes
- Tearfulness
- Neediness, wanting affection or being clingy
- An unexplained shortage of money
- Inappropriate, dirty or inadequate clothing
- Covering up or rationalising injuries or demeaning behaviours towards them
- Confusion and/or denial that anything is amiss despite marked deterioration
- Flirtatious, precocious or expressive sexual behaviour out of character
- Indications of unusual confinement e.g. closed off in a room.

Behaviours that may be observed about the carer, family member or the person close to the vulnerable person include:

- Getting the vulnerable person to pay for their (i.e. carer's) shopping/petrol/tickets
- Taking advantage of their naivety or trust
- Attitudes of indifference or anger towards the vulnerable person
- Blaming or chastising them e.g. that soiling themselves was deliberate
- Aggressive or harsh behaviour (threats, insults, harassment)
- Inappropriate display of affection or care
- Social isolation or restriction of activity
- Lack of willingness to let other people have access to the vulnerable person
- Obvious absence of assistance or attendance.

3. Procedures following disclosure or concern of abuse

You should never assume that someone else will report the concern and pass on the information. It is far better that two caregivers raise their concerns and the person is made safe than no-one says anything because they assume someone else will deal with it and the person is significantly harmed.

GUIDELINES FOR WHEN SOMEONE TELLS YOU THEY HAVE BEEN ABUSED

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following general points may be of help:

- Above all else, listen, listen, and listen!

- Keep calm, and show acceptance of what they say, however unlikely it seems
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else—don't promise confidentiality
- Be aware the person may have been threatened
- Never push for information. If they decide not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen
- Avoid leading the person and ask only what is necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said - you might put something into their mind that was not there. If the case were to end up in court, the case could be thrown out if it is thought that the person had been led.

CONCLUDING

- Reassure the person that they were right to tell you
- Explain that you will try to take steps to protect them from further harm
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to social services or the police to prevent the person returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse)
- Reassure them that they will be fully involved in any decisions about what will happen next, and ask them what they would like to be done
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the person talking to you, but always within 24 hours), writing down exactly what the person said and when they said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Record dates and times, including when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place. A copy of these notes must be passed onto the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and always within 24 hours.

4. Responding to concerns of abuse

- Where emergency medical attention is necessary then this should, of course, be sought immediately, informing the doctors of any suspicions you may have.
- You must contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer immediately (for contact numbers see end of this document). Please also contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer if the allegation is against your ministry area leader.
- At all stages in the reporting process, you retain the right to report serious matters directly to Adult Social Care or the police. Even so, as soon as possible (and within 24 hours), you must also contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer. Serious matters must be reported as soon as possible and within one working day to Adult Social Care. (For contact numbers see the section at the end of this policy).
- Under no circumstances should a church volunteer or employee investigate concerns of abuse themselves. Our responsibility is (in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team) to refer concerns to statutory authorities who will do the investigating required.
- Apart from telling the Parish Safeguarding Officer, this information must be treated as confidential. Do not inform/confront any alleged perpetrator under any circumstances.

- You should also consider your own feelings and ask your ministry area leader for pastoral support if needed.
- Even if you may feel the person's story is unlikely, this must not prevent appropriate action being taken.

RESPECTING THE VULNERABLE ADULT'S RIGHTS TO DECIDE IF THEY WANT HELP

The following is quoted in the Statutory Guidance:

BMA Adult safeguarding toolkit: "...where a competent adult explicitly refuses any supporting intervention, this should normally be respected. Exceptions to this may be where a criminal offence may have taken place or where there may be a significant risk of harm to a third party. If, for example, there may be an abusive adult in a position of authority in relation to other vulnerable adults [sic], it may be appropriate to breach confidentiality and disclose information to an appropriate authority. Where a criminal offence is suspected it may also be necessary to take legal advice. Ongoing support should also be offered. Because an adult initially refuses the offer of assistance he or she should not therefore be lost to or abandoned by relevant services. The situation should be monitored and the individual informed that she or he can take up the offer of assistance at any time."

Even without the consent of the individual, the PSO retains the right (extended confidentiality) to seek advice from social services or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser provided they do not use any names or details. It should also be noted that adults have the right to make decisions for themselves some of which we might view as unwise. The 6 priorities to consider are empowerment, protection, prevention, partnership, proportionality and accountability (Care Act 2014). Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

5. Procedures for responding to abuse: outcomes

When a safeguarding concern is reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) by the Parish Safeguarding Officer:

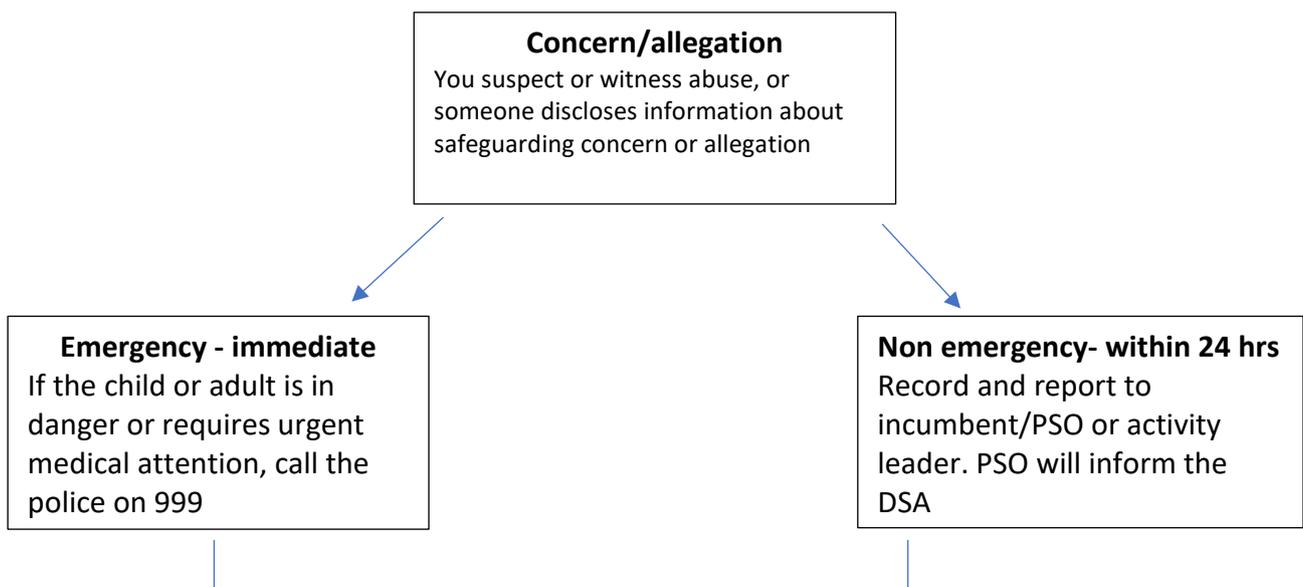
- If the DSA advises **further action**, PSO must act upon all directions given by the Diocese in the timescale given.
- If the DSA advises **no further action** required, this is not the end of the process. The PSO must arrange a further meeting in the parish to discuss whether alternative action should be taken, or support provided.

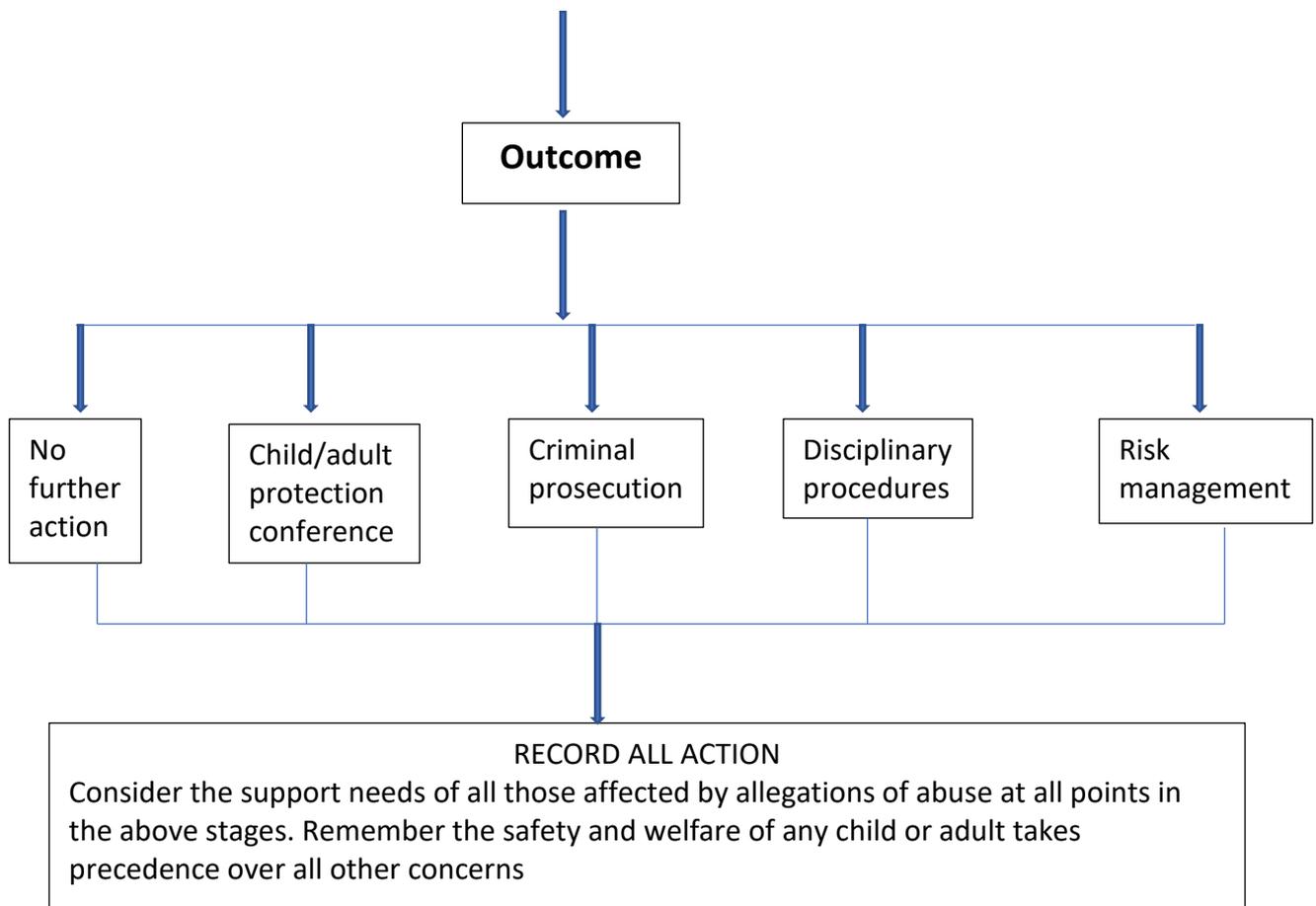
This meeting should include the PSO and the Vicar, and they can involve others as necessary, including church wardens, pastoral counsellors, and the relevant ministry area leader.

Guidelines for responding to a disclosure of historic abuse

In the course of their work ministers and those offering pastoral support may hear disclosure from adults regarding abuse that happened to them when they were children. Historical abuse must be treated as seriously as recent abuse, and each individual must be treated with great pastoral sensitivity.

The church is required to take advice from the diocese and may need to report allegations or disclosures of criminal acts to the Police.





6. Recruitment & Training

Recruitment and training of Leaders is conducted in line with the Church Safeguarding Policy (see Safer Recruitment Policy) and in accordance with House of Bishops Safer Recruitment: Practice Guidance 2016

Supplementary Section

Further indicators of abuse

A fuller list of possible indicators is listed in the Parish safeguarding handbook.

1. Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the act of physical ill treatment. It may include hitting, slapping, pushing, punching, kicking, burning, biting, suffocating, and misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Possible indicators of physical abuse:

- Any injury not fully explained
- untreated or poorly treated injuries
- unexplained bruises or welts, particularly in protected areas
- bruises in various stages of healing, clusters forming regular patterns
- any cuts or abrasions
- injuries to head/face/scalp
- broken eyeglasses or frames
- unexplained burns, fractures or lacerations
- malnutrition and dehydration without an illness-related cause; loss of weight
- lack of personal care
- urinary/faecal incontinence
- inappropriate use of medication, overdosing or underdosing
- history of moving GPs or frequently moving between agencies (agency hopping)

No suspected injury should be ignored; however, care should be taken as not all marks and injuries are caused as a result of abuse.

The key to identifying mistreatment or abuse is noticing unexplained marks, or injuries with unsatisfactory explanations. Where an injury occurs often, you should at least question the safety of the environment and what could be done to minimise further risks. Always note the site and type of injury observed so that patterns can be identified. If however the v or injuries still give cause for concern discuss the issue with the Parish Safeguarding officer (within 24 hours) to decide if a further intervention is required.

2. Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is the use of forms of control and / or maltreatment within an intimate or domestic relationship. Types of domestic abuse include:

Physical: for example: hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining, giving too much medication or the wrong medication, assault with everyday implements such as kitchen knives, kicking, biting, punching, shoving, smashing someone's possessions, imprisoning them or forcing them to use illegal drugs as a way of blackmailing and controlling them.

Psychological: (also called emotional, mental, or verbal abuse) For example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating someone, blackmailing them, threatening harm to children or pets if they misbehave, ridiculing every aspect of their appearance and skills, keeping them deliberately short of sleep, being obsessively and irrationally jealous, keeping them isolated from friends and family, threatening suicide or self-harm.

Sexual: for example, forcing someone to take part in any sexual activity without consent, eg rape or sexual assault, forcing them or blackmailing them into sexual acts with other people, forcing children to watch sexual acts, sexual name calling, imposition of dress codes upon a partner, involvement in the sex trade or pornography, knowingly passing on Sexually Transmitted Infections, controlling access to contraception.

Economic/financial: for example, the illegal or unauthorised use of someone's property, money, pension book or other valuables, forcing them to take out loans, keeping them in poverty, demanding to know every penny they spend, refusing to let them use transport or have money to pay for it.

Spiritual abuse can also be part of domestic abuse.

Stalking and cyber-stalking are also forms of control and abuse. Church workers should remain alert to the use of words, physical or sexual practices to demean and control a vulnerable adult.

Possible indicators of domestic abuse:

- has unexplained bruises or injuries
- shows signs of feeling suicidal
- becomes unusually quiet or withdrawn
- has panic attacks
- has frequent absences from work or other commitments
- wears clothes that conceal even on warm days
- stops talking about her/his partner
- is anxious about being out or rushes away.

3. Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is a sexual act (contact or non-contact) carried out without the informed consent or knowledge of the other individual. Non-contact abuse may include sexual suggestions, salacious exposure to indecent material and indecent behaviour. Contact abuse may include

rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting. Victims suffer emotionally and psychologically. If you believe there is any issue about an individual's capacity to consent to any relationship, you should seek advice from the PSO within 24 hours.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse:

- low self-esteem
- full or partial disclosure
- nightmares

- signs of depression or stress
- unusual difficulty in walking and sitting
- torn, stained or bloody underclothes
- pain, itching or any injury to genital area
- sexually transmitted diseases/infections
- bites, bruising or any marks on inner thighs or arms

- significant change in sexual behaviour/language
- agitation during personal care/examination
- pregnancy in a person who is unable to consent.

4. Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse is the use of threats or fear of the use of 'power over' relationships to deny the vulnerable person's independent wishes. This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation and denial of dignity, blaming, controlling, bullying, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal of services / supportive networks.

Harassment may include name calling, victimization and ostracism, unwanted sexual attention, stalking, compromising invitations or gifts, the display of images that are racially/sexually offensive or the suggestion that sexual favours might be advantageous.

Possible indicators of psychological abuse:

- Possible behaviour by vulnerable adult
- insomnia/sleep deprivation
- change in appetite, weight gain or loss
- ambivalence to carer
- anger without an apparent cause
- deference, resignation, helplessness,
- excessive fears
- unexplained paranoia
- self-harming/suicide attempts emotional withdrawal—the person becomes uncommunicative or nonresponsive
- low self-esteem.

Possible behaviour by abuser

- threats, intimidation, bullying
- threats of abandonment
- promises which are not kept
- punitive approach to incontinence etc. blaming, sanctions
- few visitors or other contact

- locking the person in.

Visible signs may not be evident; however, the impact of emotional mistreatment or abuse should never be underestimated as the deterioration in a victim's physical or mental health may take a long time to recover from and may be irreparable.

5. Financial abuse

Financial abuse is the wilful use or manipulation of the vulnerable person's property, assets, or monies without their informed consent or authorisation. This can include theft or fraud of monies or possessions, exploitation, pressure or undue influence to change wills, financial arrangements, or the misuse of property, possessions or benefits.

Possible indicators of financial abuse:

Signatures on cheques etc. that do not resemble the adult's signature, or which are signed when the adult cannot write

Sudden changes in bank activity including unexplained withdrawals of large sums of money

Inclusion of additional names on an adult's bank account

Issues with Powers of Attorney

Abrupt changes to or creation of wills

Sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming their rights to a vulnerable person's affairs or possessions

Unexplained transfers of assets to family member or someone outside the family

Numerous unpaid bills, overdue rent, when someone should have been paying these for the vulnerable person

A carer asks financial questions about a person, unrelated to their care

Lack of amenities, such as TV, personal grooming items, appropriate clothing, that the vulnerable person should be able to afford

Unexplained disappearance of money or valuable possessions e.g silverware or jewellery.

You should be alert to the deliberate isolation of a vulnerable person from friends and family resulting in the carer alone having total control.

6. Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is maltreatment or harassment that is based on any characteristic of a person's identity, such as their race, sex, or disability. Many of the signs of discriminatory abuse will be the same as for psychological abuse. The impact of discriminatory abuse can lead to significant self-harming and must never be underestimated.

The emotional and psychological impact of discriminatory abuse can cause untold damage to the individual, both physically and mentally and in many cases leads to self-harm and tragically in some cases, suicide. Recent cases and inquiry have borne out the fatal impact of discrimination on the grounds of disability.

7. Neglect

Neglectful behaviour is any pattern of activity or omission which seriously impairs an individual. This includes: ignoring a need for medical or physical care, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care, religious or educational services, or the deliberate withholding of necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Also denying contact with family, failing to intervene in situations where there is danger to the vulnerable person or to others, particularly when a person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk.

Possible indicators of neglect:

- poor physical condition, e.g. rashes, sores, weight loss/gain
- inadequate heating/lighting
- inadequate clothing in poor condition
- malnutrition
- failure to access medical care or give prescribed medication when required

- lack of assistance with eating and drinking
- failure to ensure privacy and dignity
- inconsistent/reluctant contact with health or social agencies
- inappropriate clothing
- sensory deprivation
- poor personal hygiene

8. Institutional abuse

Institutional abuse is when a culture of poor practice or maltreatment within a setting becomes routine at the expense of good professional practice. It may be exercised through defamatory attitudes, negative stereotyping, and abusive behaviours which are not corrected. Local authorities and churches should promote good practice in adult care.

Possible indicators of institutional abuse:

- Lack of respect and dignity
- Name calling– inappropriate ways of addressing people; Inappropriate use of power or control
- Inability to make choices and decisions

- Agitation when routine is broken
- Patterns of challenging behaviour

- Inappropriate use of power or control
- Inadequate staffing levels
- People being hungry or dehydrated
- Poor standards of care

9. Spiritual abuse

Within faith communities harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practices. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership, penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, or intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in both vulnerable adults and children experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual harm.

Churches need to avoid any practice which could be seen as an attempt to 'force' religious values or behaviours onto vulnerable people. Additionally, spiritual abuse may include attempts to direct what people believe and do, and to deny choices.

Principles for 1-to-1 Meetings

Reading the Bible, encouraging and praying one-to-one is a key way in which we fulfil the biblical “one another” commands. Indeed, how we speak to one another is an identifying mark of God’s people (e.g. Malachi 3:16). We will meet with people 1-to-1 in the course of our encouragement and training of other staff and leaders as well as in our pastoral care. 1-to-1s with non-Christians will also be a normal part of our personal evangelism.

It is important, however, that we are above reproach in all of our ministry. Personal work can become “over-intense” and is potentially open to being misunderstood. “Spiritual abuse” is a form of psychological and emotional abuse which can occur within churches and is characterised by coercive and controlling behaviour – 1-to-1 meetings and misuse of the Bible can be features of this form of abuse. So, knowing our own weakness and out of love for others, especially the most vulnerable, we are committed to the following basic principles in our personal work. If in exceptional circumstances we set aside one of the following principles, it is appropriate to keep a written record and to inform our line manager or, if relevant, the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

- Basic records (which we could produce on request) should be kept of who we met, when and where (e.g. a diary entry) and why we met (e.g. “counselling” or “to read 2 Timothy”).
- It is usually not appropriate to meet 1-to-1 with someone of the opposite sex. One exception to this general principle is when we “line manage” a staff member of the opposite sex. In that case, it will be appropriate to meet 1-to-1, though we will work to be “above reproach”, e.g. by meeting in public/visible place and considering carefully what we discuss. This carefulness should be balanced by a willingness, in particular, to train and support female members of staff – maintaining reasonable, godly standards is not to become an excuse for neglecting to properly manage female colleagues (e.g. a male line manager refusing to meet with a woman regularly when he would with a man doing the same job).
- 1-to-1s should not be secret. We should discuss with our line manager/others in our team on a regular basis who we are meeting with and how things are going (not least so we can be praying). See also the staff handbook section on “Confidentiality”.
- We recognize that personal work can lead to the development of an unhealthy dependence or a controlling relationship, especially where one person has a position of “spiritual authority”. As such, we will carefully consider both the topics we address (e.g. not developing an unhealthy focus on sexuality or a “pushy” attitude to financial giving) and the character of any advice we give (carefully distinguishing God’s commands from our opinions by ensuring that the Bible is visibly the authority and not us). We will work hard to get the Bible right and will not misinterpret it or selectively quote from it to get our own way. We will consider carefully how our actions may be understood by others (e.g. as controlling or “favouritism”) and will take all reasonable steps to avoid misunderstanding. We will be aware that others may perceive us as having “authority” (“putting us on a pedestal”), even if we don’t feel authoritative.
- We must show people that what we are teaching comes from the Bible, this avoids a misuse of our power.
- Where we have a concern about a particular relationship, whether with us or between two other people, we will report that immediately to our line manager or Sarah Robinson, Safeguarding Officer. We will train leaders who conduct 1-to-1s as part of their ministry to be

aware of these principles and the danger of manipulative or coercive patterns forming. We will provide oversight and accountability to leaders and work hard to prevent unhealthy relationships from forming (and will respond to that and report it if they do).

- In ordinary circumstances, regular (e.g. weekly) meetings with a person 1-to-1 will be for a limited period (if possible, defined in advance) – the longer we meet for, the more likely the relationship is to become “over-intense” spiritually or emotionally. If someone needs ongoing 1-to-1 support, it may be appropriate that someone else or a Christian counsellor “take over” from us. Ultimately, we are not indispensable to anyone. Clarity about expectations when we start meeting greatly helps, not least because we do not want people to feel “dropped” by us (relatedly, continuing to meet more occasionally may well be a good idea – people are not just short-term projects!). In some cases, e.g. with members of a small group we lead, we will plan to meet with people occasionally over a longer period.
- We are aware that some people need or would benefit from specialist help that we cannot provide (e.g. with addiction, mental illness or an eating disorder), perhaps alongside continued pastoral care by us. In these cases, it is appropriate to recommend that someone see a GP or counsellor. We are, however, aware that adults have a right to confidentiality and to make their own decisions and will not discuss them with others without their permission unless there is an overriding reason to do so.
- If someone expresses suicidal thoughts and we have an immediate concern for their safety (e.g. they have stated definite plans or sound particularly set), we will ring 999. In all cases, we will endeavor to get anyone expressing suicidal thoughts the help they need, putting them in touch with their GP or Samaritans (116 123). If we have any concerns or are uncertain how to respond, Sarah Robinson can offer advice. Confidentiality is not an absolute bar on seeking advice and it is good practice to speak to someone, e.g. a line manager or Sarah Robinson, whenever someone expresses suicidal thinking to you.
- We will take steps to maintain our own safety. Where we are concerned that someone’s behavior is or may become aggressive, it is not appropriate to meet them 1-to-1. If you feel threatened, leave the situation sooner rather than later. It is good practice for someone to know where you are and who you are meeting with. We will also consider carefully where and at what time we meet with people.
- We will abide by our safeguarding policies on the website. If we are concerned that someone may harm themselves or someone else in any way or be harmed by someone else, we may have a duty to disclose this to the relevant authorities (e.g. if someone discloses or we suspect domestic violence or controlling behavior). If the danger is immediate, ring 999; otherwise, Sarah Robinson can advise on the next steps.

Under-18s (i.e. Children)

- It is not appropriate to meet 1-to-1 with someone under 16 except in the most exceptional circumstances.
- With anyone 16-18 (i.e. in secondary education), inform Tom Hutchings, Children’s Team Leader and Sarah Robinson, the Parish Safeguarding Officer **before** meeting. Any meeting with a child should take place in a public place (e.g. a café) or in a very visible place (e.g. a room with the door open or the Ringing Room) and with parental consent. Keep a written record of who you met with, when, where and why – ideally, this should be passed to Tom Hutchings, Children’s Team Leader, immediately.

Last Reviewed by Safeguarding Team August 2020

Ministry Area Leaders:

Sunday Morning Service 10.00am	Rev Tom Hutchings
Sunday Morning Service 11.30am	Rev Robbie Strachan
Sunday Evening Service 5.00pm	Rev Tom Hutchings
Children's Activities	Rev Tom Hutchings
Youth Group	James Townsend
Bounce A Round	Ruth Oakley
Wednesday Outlook	Craig Larner
Morning Groups	Ruth Oakley
Home Groups	Rev Tom Hutchings
Hub	Craig Larner
Focus	Rev Robbie Strachan
Internationals	James Steer
MEMBS	Tom Hutchings
Parish Visiting	James Steer

Contact Numbers

If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, or the care that is being provided

OR

You need to talk to someone about something in our church that isn't right or has upset you

Please get in touch with:

Children's Advocates

Mary Burdett 01223 756435

Gail Featherstone 07940 756435

Safeguarding Officer

Sarah Robinson 01223 756436

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Piyush Jani 01223 756436

If you would rather speak to someone outside of the church, please see the contacts below or visit the Diocese of Ely Safeguarding website

<https://www.elydiocese.org/safeguarding.php>

Diocese of Ely Safeguarding Team

Duty Telephone: 01353 652747

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

Rebecca Boswell

T: 01353 652731

rebecca.boswell@elydiocese.org

Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (Part-time)

Sharon Gage

T: 01353 652706

sharon.gage@elydiocese.org

Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (Part Time)

Lisa Pearson

T: 01353 652738

lisa.pearson@elydiocese.org

Where immediate danger is likely: **Call 999**

To contact the Local Authority:

Children's Social Care

0345 045 5203

Adults Social Care

0345 045 5202

Out of hours Emergency Duty Team Children and Adults

01733 234724

Helplines

24-hour National Domestic Violence helpline	08082000247
Action on Elder Abuse helpline	08088088141
NAPAC - offers support and advice to adult survivors of childhood abuse	08088010331
Cruse - bereavement helpline	08088081677
Family Lives - provides support and advice on family issues	0808800222
MACSAS - for people who have been abused by church officers	08088010340
Samaritans - for people struggling to cope and needing someone to talk to	116123
SupportLine – confidential emotional support	01708 765200

Websites

www.womensaid.org.uk

truefreedomtrust.co.uk

livingout.org

www.restoredrelationships.org

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.stopitnow.org.uk

www.elderabuse.org.uk

www.barnardos.org.uk

www.modernslavery.co.uk

www.spiritualabuse.com

<https://carers.org>

<https://www.safeline.org.uk>

