

**The Draycot Benefice Safeguarding Policy
(Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults)**

This policy has been adopted by the Parochial Church Councils of each of the following parishes within the Draycot Benefice, part of the North Wiltshire Deanery in the Diocese of Bristol:

**All Saints', Christian Malford
St Peter's, Kington Langley
St Mary's, Seagry
All Saints', Sutton Benger
St Giles', Tytherton Kellaways**

The parishes in the Draycot Benefice are committed to encouraging an environment where all people, and especially those who may be vulnerable, are able to worship and pursue their faith journey in safety. As a Christian community it is the responsibility of every one of us to protect those who are less able to protect themselves.

In accordance with the *Safeguarding and Clergy Disciplinary Measure July 2015* a duty is placed on clergy and church officers to pay due regard to the safeguarding policies of the Church of England. Therefore, each parish commits to following the safeguarding policies of the Church of England, safeguarding policy and guidance as issued by the Diocese of Bristol and commits to working within legislation and statutory guidance relating to Children, Young People and Adults. In addition, each parish must comply with any safeguarding guidance issued by Wiltshire Council, the Charity Commission and their Insurers. A failure to do so could invalidate any insurance cover and place the parish in breach of Charity Commission requirements.

Each parish is committed to working individually and together to implement this policy across the whole of the Benefice, and to ensuring that this policy is implemented in relation to all church led activities.

Each parish will display a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Statement in their church entrance, with contact details of the Benefice Safeguarding Officer (BSO) and Children's Safeguarding Representative, and will ensure the 'green folder' of policies and guidance is freely and easily available in each church.

Each parish will review this policy annually, check that it is up to date, and then the BSO will supply an updated copy to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. A copy of this policy will be shared with the Archdeacon at the time of the Visitation.

SIGNED AND AGREED:

Incumbent:

Church Warden:

Adopted by the PCC of..... at the PCC meeting held
on.....(date)

Safeguarding Policy Commitments

“Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from their creation in God’s own image and likeness. Christians have a duty to value, understand and respect the rights of children and adults as people of faith in the life of the Church”

Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Policy 2018

Confidentiality

The parishes of the Draycot Benefice accept the principle that only those with a need to know should be made aware of safeguarding concerns or other confidential information. All staff, ministers and volunteers are expected to share confidential information appropriately and to ensure that written records and verbal information is shared responsibly and stored securely. Records will be retained in accordance with ‘Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church’ 2015

Each parish is committed to:

The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all children, young people and adults.

This includes paying due regard to the beliefs and wishes of children, young people and adults, both when a safeguarding concern arises, and in the development and delivery of church led activities, including worship. This includes creating an environment in which people of all faiths and none are respected, and where extremist views are not tolerated.

The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable.

The PCC is responsible for safeguarding practice within the parish, and agrees to undertake the responsibilities outlined in the Diocese of Bristol document ‘*Parish Safeguarding Responsibilities*’ which can be found in the ‘green folder’ and on the diocesan website. All PCC members are required have a DBS check and attend safeguarding training run by Bristol Diocese.

The parish will appoint one or more Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the parish to implement this policy and associated procedures, as outlined by the Diocese of Bristol and the Church of England. The PSO agrees to undertake the key responsibilities of the role as outlined in the Diocese of Bristol document ‘*Role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer*’, including oversight of the annual Parish Safeguarding Audit.

Our **Benefice Safeguarding Officer** is

Katherine Bloomer

Our **Children’s Safeguarding Representative** is

The PSO’s will have the right to attend PCC meetings and will be requested to review and report, at least annually, on the implementation of this policy, the procedures and good practice within the parish. In addition, ‘Safeguarding’ will be a standard agenda item at every PCC meeting.

The PCC recognises the following activities, groups or events with children, young people and vulnerable adults that fall under the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and Procedures:

Pastoral Team Visitors, Home Communion Visitors

Establishing of safe and caring communities, which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of ‘informed vigilance’ as to the dangers of abuse.

The safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility, not just parents, guardians and carers. Procedures and formal processes alone, though essential, will not protect children and vulnerable adults at risk. The community, including all its members, needs to be aware of the dangers and prepared to report concerns and take action if necessary. To aid this commitment, each church will display the Childline poster in an appropriate place at child eye level. Copies of the Benefice Code of Conduct will be made available in each church.

The child's welfare is the paramount consideration in matters of private and public law affecting children which come before the family courts. The parish accepts and extends this principle in all areas of its work with children. Where conflicts of interest arise between the welfare of children and that of adults, it is the welfare of children that will be given priority.

We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

The parish is committed to implementing safer recruitment practice in the recruitment of all volunteers and employees, following the Church of England Safer Recruitment Policy 2016. All those who work with children and/or vulnerable adults on a regular basis will be made aware of and should familiarise themselves with the Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, and will be encouraged to attend diocesan safeguarding training every three years.

Accordingly, the Safer Recruitment guidelines will be used to determine the suitability of a candidate for a role – these can be found on the Diocese of Bristol website and in the ‘green folder’. All those who work with children and/or vulnerable adults who are eligible for a DBS check will be required to undertake that check and receive a clear certificate prior to starting any role within the parish, whether employed or voluntary.

Any person refusing a DBS check will not be allowed to work with or have unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults within any church led activities.

The relevant vetting scheme is the Disclosure and Barring Service. The Draycot Benefice will seek to ensure that a DBS check is only requested when it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. All confidential self declaration forms will be held securely by the PSO. DBS checks must be undertaken every 5 years, or sooner if the individual moves to a new post.

In addition, the parish will also adopt and follow the principles and guidelines issued by the Diocese of Bristol '*Fair Recruitment of Ex Offenders*' and '*Handling of Disclosure Information*', which can be found on the diocesan website and in the ‘green folder’ in each church.

We will respond without delay to every concern raised which suggests that a child, young person or adult may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and the local authority in any investigation.

The parish accepts that it has responsibilities, through its employees and volunteers, to take all reasonable steps to safeguard children and vulnerable adults when on church grounds, taking part in church led activities off site and when travelling between sites (when organised by the Church). The parish cannot be responsible for incidents or concerns

arising outside of the church or church led activities, but will nevertheless endeavour to provide appropriate advice and refer any concern raised to the appropriate authorities in order to ensure that the community as a whole is safeguarded appropriately.

The term ‘concern’ covers allegations, disclosures and/or complaints of a safeguarding nature, whether made in writing or verbally.

The parish will follow the process outlined in the Diocese of Bristol’s guidance on ‘*How to Make an Alert*’ and the ‘*Allegations Management Procedure*’, which can be found on the diocesan website and in the ‘green folder’ in each church.

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

The parish will not (and should not) investigate current allegations of abuse or harm of children, but will refer them to the appropriate statutory authorities for investigation, in line with multi agency safeguarding procedures. The parish may complete internal investigations (in consultation with Bristol Diocese Safeguarding Team) once statutory authorities have completed their own investigations.

If it comes to the attention of the parish that a child has experienced abuse in their past, that information will be passed to the statutory authorities for their records and consideration.

If it comes to the attention of the parish that an adult has experienced abuse in their past, the adult’s wishes will be taken into consideration and that adult encouraged to report the matter to the statutory authorities. Where there is a reasonable belief that others may be at risk of harm, the parish will refer the matter to the statutory authorities within the Diocese of Bristol guidance ‘*Information Sharing and Storage*’, which is found in the ‘green folder’ and on the diocesan website.

In accordance with ‘*Responding Well to Domestic Abuse 2017*’ the parish has adopted a statement with regards to its approach to Domestic Abuse, which can be found in the ‘green folder’. Guidance is also available on the Diocese of Bristol website about ‘*Responding Well: to those who have been sexually abused 2011*’

We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

The parish is aware that those in positions of trust and responsibility, in the Church, as elsewhere, may be subject to temptation to abuse their power and exploit or harm others. We will seek to take action to deal with any abuse, following the Diocese of Bristol policies.

The parish will seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and follow the Diocese of Bristol ‘*Allegations Management Procedure*’, which can be found in the ‘green folder’ and on the Diocese of Bristol website.

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

If a member of our church community comes to notice as having a conviction or caution for offences against children or vulnerable adults, or has been barred from working with children or vulnerable adults, or is considered a potential risk to either group, the parish will inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and follow the guidance set out in ‘*Ministering to those who may Present a Risk*’ published by the Diocese of Bristol, which can be found on

the diocesan website and in the ‘green folder’. The parish will work closely with Diocesan staff and all appropriate statutory agencies to supervise and support those who may present a risk, ensuring adequate risk assessment and management of any written agreement.

Additional Issues

Hire of Church Premises (whether a fee is chargeable or not)

Organisations and individual users using the church or grounds’ will be expected to adhere to this safeguarding policy or where they work regularly with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable, to have their own safeguarding policy.

All those who book or use the church or grounds shall be required to sign a copy of the parish ‘*Safeguarding Conditions of Hire*’, a copy of which can be found in the ‘green folder’.

Insurance

Each parish will make adequate provision for insurance cover for all activities for children, young people and vulnerable adults, and record a written risk assessment in PCC minutes. A check should be made with the insurers before arranging trips or special events that may be beyond usual arrangements.

Benefice Website

The Benefice will ensure there is clear information regarding our safeguarding arrangements on the Benefice website, including a copy of this safeguarding policy and other relevant information.

Photographs and Videos

It is the policy of The Draycot Benefice that no one should take photographs of children or young people without the written consent of that child’s parent or carer, and the consent of that child where they are old enough to give consent.

Where an event may be photographed and is open to the public; it will be made clear that photographs and or video may be taken and inviting anyone not wishing to be in any photos or video used to make this known to a named person.

February 2020