



# St. Andrew's Church Buckland Monachorum with the Church of the Holy Spirit Milton Combe Safeguarding Policy

*Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. -  
{Matthew 18:4 ESV}*



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**Policy General Statement**

‘...Jesus called the children to him and said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.’  
(Luke 18:16 NIV)

‘Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God’s own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God’s re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.’

To this end, St. Andrew’s Buckland Monachorum with the Church of the Holy Spirit, Milton Combe recognises its’ moral duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

**Who this Policy Applies to**

Throughout this policy reference is made to "children and young people". This term is used to mean all those under the age of 18. We recognise that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse and, accordingly, the procedures may also be applied to the protection of vulnerable adults. For the purposes of this policy a vulnerable adult is deemed an individual over 18yrs who is unable, for reasons of age, illness or disability, to make choices and decisions concerning their personal safety.

Although we at St. Andrew's, Buckland Monachorum with the Church of the Holy Spirit, Milton Combe, would like to believe that all those who work with children and young people in a church setting do so with the very best of intentions, sadly this is not always the case. As a church we will take all possible steps to avoid contact between known abusers and those at risk, but neither will we assume that all others are automatically safe.

The principles set out in this policy and the procedures set in place and described here, apply to all those in close contact with our children and young people i.e. all those under the age of 18 yrs. This does not mean to treat anyone as though under suspicion, but more to take sensible and transparent measures to protect both our children and those who come into contact with them.

Authors

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Approved on behalf of the PCC

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Graham Cotter – Parish Vicar

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ David Oliver – Churchwarden

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Robert Barnes - Churchwarden

**Important Telephone Numbers**

Police emergency Devon & Cornwall Police (non-emergency)	Telephone: 999 Telephone: 101
Local Child Protection Unit contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Telephone: 0345 155 1071 (Available 24 hours)
Local Emergency Social Work Team	Telephone: 0845 6000388
Devon County Council Domestic Violence and Abuse (ADVA)	Telephone: 01392 382233

Derriford Hospital, Accident & Emergency, Derriford Road, Plymouth, Devon PL6 8DH	Telephone: 01752 792511
CHILDLINE	Telephone: 0800 11 11
NSPCC helpline	Telephone: 0808 800 5000
PARENTLINE PLUS	Telephone: 0808 800 222

### **Church Contacts**

St Andrew's Church Parish Vicar	Graham Cotter	Tel: 01822 852227
St Andrew's Church Safeguarding Representative	Bill Houldsworth	Tel: 01822 854322
Safeguarding Children Deputy	Jane Oliver	Tel: 01822 853960
Youth Work Coordinator	Portia Crossley	Tel: 01822 854708
Youth Group Leader	Reuben Crossley	Tel: 01822 854708
Children's Group Co-ordinators	Bryony Griffen	Tel: 07152 767237
Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor for Exeter	Charlie Pitman	Tel: 01392 345909
Diocesan of Exeter Safeguarding Assistant	Sarah Millar	Tel: 01392 345910

## **Safeguarding Principles**

St. Andrew's Buckland Monachorum with the Church of The Holy Spirit Milton Combe are committed to:

- The care, nurture of and respectful pastoral ministry with all children and all adults
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.

In pursuit of these aims, we will

- Issue, implement and make available a 'Safeguarding Policy'. This will be reviewed annually against current practice and guidance and, if required, updated and reissued.
- Implement the safeguarding procedures described in the policy, reviewing these at least termly.
- By following the policy and procedures, provide a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles.
- Respond without delay to any suggestion that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed; co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- Establish procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff.
- Seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with him or her appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- 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.
- In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognized good practice.
- We fully accept, endorse and implement the principle enshrined in 'The Children's Act, 1989' and 'The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006' that the welfare of the child and vulnerable adult is 'the paramount concern'.

## **Adult Code of Conduct**

At St. Andrew's Church, Buckland Monachorum we want to provide a warm, caring environment for all our children, whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or risks of allegations being made. It is our policy that all those working with children (paid and volunteer) will be aware of, sign up to and seek to follow this code of behaviour.

### **Setting an example**

- Set good examples of conduct and behaviour for children to follow.
- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that our language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.

### **Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults**

- Always remain within sight of another adult when working with a group.
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed.
- Make children, young people, vulnerable adults and parents/carers aware of the nature of any activity requiring physical contact.
- Never use any form of physical punishment, but recognise that occasionally it may be necessary to restrain, using the least possible force, those who are harming themselves or others; informing parents/carers as soon as possible.
- Ensure visitors are always accompanied by a known person.
- Never allow an unknown adult access to children. Ensure parent/guardian's permission for anyone else to collect their child.
- Share information concerning an accident with the Group Leader to ascertain if it was preventable. In the case of serious accidents, inform the Safeguarding Representative in order to review and if necessary update practices.
- Ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.
- Record any concerning incidents in the incident book or form and share the information with the Group Leader and, if necessary, the Safeguarding Representative. Sign and date all records and inform the parent/carer.
- Share any concerning adult behaviour with the group leader and or Safeguarding Representative.

### **Avoiding situations with risk of allegation**

- Inform another adult if a child needs to be taken to the toilet and ensure children's privacy while washing or toileting.
- If possible, arrange to have more than one passenger when providing transport.
- Never invite children to our home alone or arrange social occasions outside organized group occasions.
- Respond warmly to those who need comforting, providing reassurance e.g. light arm around shoulder, pat on back, holding a hand, sitting small child on lap. Do not initiate inappropriate physical contact.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around, record all details in the accident book or form, sign and date all records and inform parents/carers.
- Support colleagues, but be prepared to also act or speak out if we think any adult is behaving inappropriately, sharing our concerns with the Group Leader and Safeguarding Representative.
- Always act on any concerns following recognised procedures.

## **Safer Working Practices**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The PCC will nominate a member of the Church to perform the duties of a **Safeguarding Representative** who will undertake appropriate training through the Diocese of Exeter and commit to keeping up to date with safeguarding issues. The Safeguarding Representative will report to the PCC, including a written report at the AGM. Key responsibilities include:

- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Promotion of a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring safer recruitment procedures are followed for paid and volunteer workers, including administration of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (formerly Criminal Records Bureau).
- Making all staff aware of the Safeguarding Policy and procedures.
- Acting as the main contact point for safeguarding issues.
- Making available contact details of relevant organisations and provisions.
- Maintenance of both paper and electronic records relating to safeguarding.

**Paid church employees** will have job descriptions which indicate clearly their responsibilities for the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults in their care.

**Volunteer helpers** will be made aware of their own responsibilities for the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults in their care, and the responsibilities of other adults, at the time of their recruitment. A written statement of these responsibilities, the '**Adult Code of Behaviour**', will be kept in each group's Registration File.

It is expected that all leaders and helpers of regular activities will meet at least termly to share good practice and to keep up to date with safeguarding issues. When leaders and helpers meet to plan for one off activities, safeguarding issues will be included in the agenda.

### **Child and Vulnerable Adult Safety**

Everyone involved with children and vulnerable adults will be made aware of what they should do in case of emergency. Leaders are responsible for ensuring their teams are familiar with procedures.

#### **In case of fire**

Those leading activities will know the fire drill instructions for the location in which the activity is taking place. For any location the following will apply

- Leave by the safest and quickest route
- Ensure all children and vulnerable adults leave with you.
- A leader is last to leave after checking that no-one has been left behind.
- Take the register.

- Ensure all children and vulnerable adults stay with you in the designated assembly location.
- Do not re-enter the building or allow anyone else to do so until given official clearance.

### In case of accident

At any church organised meeting or activity, at least one trained first aider will be present. This includes regular meetings and one-off offsite activities where church employees and/or volunteers are the only adults present.

All leaders and helpers will:-

- Play a part in making sure the environment is safe and secure
- Ensure that those they are responsible for do not behave in a way which endangers themselves or others.
- Consider safety aspects when planning activities (see 'Risk Assessments')
- Know how to locate any pertinent medical details for those in their care.
- Know where the first aid box is for treatment of minor injuries.
- Ask the first aider to check the injury.
- If necessary, know how to contact the parent/carer immediately
- Enter the details in the accident log book
- Inform the parents/carers.

### Risk Assessments

The PCC, who are responsible for ensuring the appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place, will ensure that a risk assessment has been carried out for all regular activities with children and young people. For Church organised offsite activities, the designated Children's or Youth Group leader will perform a risk assessment (using the standard format in 'Safeguarding Guidance and Procedures'). This will need to be approved by the Safeguarding Representative and PCC, and read by all adults involved prior to the activity taking place.

### **Safer Recruitment**

#### Recruitment to a paid position

For recruitment to a paid position the role will be clearly defined and the requirement for safeguarding checks as part of the selection process will also be made clear. This will include; obtaining professional and character references, verifying previous employment history and submitting an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (see below).

#### Recruiting volunteers: regular activities

At St. Andrew's Church we welcome volunteers who feel called to help in our children's ministries (regular activities) e.g. Sunday morning groups and Youth Groups. All our volunteers must be church members, aged 16 years or over, who have been worshipping with us (or worshipping elsewhere and known to us) for at least a year. Those interested will undergo an informal interview with a Sunday School Leader, Youth Worker or the Safeguarding Representative. This will be

followed by the candidate attending a session(s) in order for both the Leader(s) and candidate to make an informed decision as to whether to proceed.

### Probationary period

We ask all new volunteers to complete a probationary period, during which time they will be required to be supervised by a CRB/DBS checked adult, read the Child Protection Policy and associated Safeguarding Guidance and Procedures and to meet with the Safeguarding Representative to discuss safeguarding issues relevant to their role.

### Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Checks

Once offered a paid position or registered as a volunteer, there is a standard and robust vetting and checking process under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012:-

- An individual working unsupervised with children is considered to be engaged in regulated Activity and must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which will involve a check of the children's barred list, in order to perform their duties.
- An individual working in a directly and permanently supervised position is not considered to be engaged in regulated activity but should still have an enhanced DBS disclosure check. However, because they are working in a supervised role the enhanced check will not include a check of the children's barred list.
- If a person is volunteering for an 'infrequent' task i.e. less than 4 days in a 30 day period, they will not require a DBS check but will need to be supervised at all times by another CRB/DBS checked adult as if they were undertaking a probationary period (see below).
- Young people (14-16yrs) who volunteer as 'helpers' and are at all times supervised by a CRB/DBS checked adult do not require a DBS check themselves.

The Safeguarding Representative will organise and check the application before forwarding it to the Diocese of Exeter Safeguarding Children's Adviser for processing. DBS checks are renewed every 3-5 years, or earlier where safeguarding concerns arise and a check is required for assessment.

### Recruiting Volunteers: non-regular activities

When recruiting volunteers to work with our children and youth for non-regular activities e.g. Parish Camp, Soul Survivor, Heatree House, every effort will be made to allow time before the activity to follow the safer recruitment procedures described for those volunteering for regular activities. At the very least, the Safeguarding representative will make contact in order to informally interview the volunteer. They will then be required to read our Safeguarding Policy, sign the Adult Code of Behaviour and complete the volunteer registration. If there is not enough time to perform a DBS check, the volunteer will be asked to provide evidence of a DBS check for another role.

## Personnel Records

Paper records will be kept in secure files by the Safeguarding Representative. Pertinent information for all those who work/volunteer with our children e.g. CRB/DBS checks, groups worked with & time period, courses/training attended, will be kept in an electronic, secure file. This is a legal requirement.

## Training

Paid employees will be expected to attend those courses provided by the Diocese, or other recognised Authority, that is relevant to their role. The Safeguarding Representative will organise regular training which Volunteers for regular activities will be expected to attend. Volunteers for one-off activities will be briefed in the relevant safeguarding procedures prior to the activity.

## Administration: regular activities

### Safeguarding Notice Board

A Safeguarding notice board will be displayed in St. Andrew's Church. This will include; our statement of safeguarding principles, important telephone numbers, church contacts and photo identification of the Safeguarding Representative and Children's/Youth Group Leaders.

### Registration forms

Parents/carers will be required to complete a registration form for each child. The original will be retained by the Safeguarding representative in a secure file and copies will be provided for each group the child attends.

### Group File

All our children's and youth groups will have a file which contains

- A register of all children and all adults present at each session.
- A safety check list to be completed at the start of every activity session
- A copy of the 'Adult Code of Behaviour'.
- Registration forms containing information including who to contact in emergency and medical needs, for every child who attends the group.
- What to do in the event of a fire or accident emergency and a list of first aiders.
- What to do in the event of suggestions and disclosures of child abuse.

### Ratios of Children to Adults

The following ratios apply:-

- 0-2 years – 1 adult : 2 children
- 2-3 years – 1 adult : 4 children
- 3-8 years – 1 adult to 8 children
- >8 years – 1 adult : 10 children

However, unless working within view of another adult, each group will always have two adults (preferably male and female) however small the group.

Additional adults will be used when groups of children are divided and are not working within sight of each other e.g. when supervised play or the Hub involves some children being taken outside for activities. There must also be enough adults to safely escort children across the road between Buckland School/Chapel and the church if required. Depending upon the risk involved in the activity and its location, higher ratios of adults to children may be required. Additionally, the specific ages of the children and any special needs will be assessed at the beginning of each session. Extra adults may be required if those present do not feel they could cope in an emergency. If those leading express any concerns over their ability to cope and extra adults are not available, the session will be cancelled.

### Accident/Incident reporting

Every group will have Accident and Incident Forms. Entries will be made by the adult responding to the accident or incident, signed by the group leader (if different) and discussed with the child's parent/guardian at the time. The Safeguarding Representative will also be informed in order to assess if any changes to procedures are required. The Incident Form may also be used to record any disclosure of child abuse, see later section for more information. These forms are confidential and should be stored securely between sessions.

### Consent forms

Parents/carers will be provided with information and consent forms regarding any off-site activities that do not involve an overnight stay, for example, swimming, outings, or days away. These forms will require the parent/carer to provide any pertinent medical information pertaining to the activity and to give their consent for the child to participate.

### Photographs and videos

Parents or guardians will be informed and consent obtained in advance if photographs or videos of children are to be taken during a church activity. Leaders will explain how the photographs or video will be used. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from any photo or video that might be taken.

It is our church policy that any photograph posted in a public place, for example, notice boards, church newsletter or website, should only include groups of children and not an individual child. Any photograph should also aim to obscure the identity of individual children.

### Administration: non-regular activities

For these activities, a file will be set up containing the information as described for regular activities. Forms and Registers will be adapted to the needs of the activity. Children's information and needs and Parent/Carer consent, specific to the activity will be obtained.

## **Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection**

During the probationary period employees and volunteers will be made familiar with how to recognise incidences of abuse and receive training in how to respond.

### **Possible areas of abuse**

There are four generally recognised areas of abuse – **physical, sexual, emotional and neglect**. In addition, **spiritual abuse** is of concern within a church setting.

- **Physical abuse** causes harm to a person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.
- **Neglect** is the persistent or severe failure to meet a basic physical and/or psychological need. It will result in serious impairment of health or development.
- **Sexual Abuse** involves a person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the person to be aware that the activity is sexual and apparent consent is irrelevant.
- **Emotional Abuse** occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.
- **Spiritual abuse** is Christian ministry towards children, young people and vulnerable adults that is devoid of grace, respect and love. Overbearing leadership, manipulative teaching, and inappropriate prayer come into this category.

### **Disclosure of abuse and reporting concerns**

Abuse may come to the notice of an adult in a number of different ways including;

- disclosure by the child, young person or vulnerable adult,
- receiving information from a third party,
- observation of unexplained injury,
- observation of changes in behaviour.

More information concerning signs of abuse may be found on the NSPCC website

Disclosure of abuse is often a process, not a one-off event. The abused may indicate in a variety of ways over time that all is not well. Every concern will be noted as these may contribute to the larger picture. It is the responsibility of the adult to listen and respond in a positive way that will help the abused. All those working with our children, young people and vulnerable adults will be briefed in how to respond to a disclosure, including record keeping. Any such disclosures will be shared with the Safeguarding Representative who will make a referral if necessary.

If information is received from a third party, they will be listened to and asked to make a written statement of what they have observed. They will be told that anything they say must be shared initially with the group/activity leader and also the Safeguarding Representative.

Records will always be signed and dated by the adult to whom the disclosure is made or who receives the information and shared with the Safeguarding Representative or, in their absence, a nominated adult, who will also sign and date the record. All records will be made and retained confidentially.

### **Making a referral**

If there is any concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm, the Safeguarding Representative will initially seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Adviser. Then, if deemed necessary, the case will be referred to local multi-agency safeguarding team (MASH) and the police. (See page 3 for telephone numbers).

### **Imminent risk**

If a child is in imminent danger, the adult will **act immediately** to secure the safety of the child. In urgent cases, MASH and the police will be telephoned directly. If a child needs emergency medical attention, this will be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents/Carers will be kept fully informed.

**If there is any doubt – action will be taken.  
This is always better than doing nothing.**

### **Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Employees.**

The procedures apply to all employees, including volunteers. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, those working within our Youth and Children's Ministry may have allegations of child abuse made against them. It is recognised that an allegation of child abuse may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigation is thorough and not subject to delay. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the organisation will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful way; taking advice from the Diocese Safeguarding Office at all times.

### **Support for those involved**

All those involved where a case of abuse has been disclosed or suspected will require support of some kind. Often this will mean professional help and it is important to follow recognised procedures, maintain confidentiality and do nothing which interferes with the judicial process. Nonetheless, there will be those, often not directly involved, who need and seek out a 'listening ear'. It is important that this is recognised and provided sensitively.