

Revised May 2016

Hertford St Andrew Child Protection Policy: The Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable
Adults

PARISH CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULTS PROTECTION POLICY
PARISH OF HERTFORD ST ANDREW

The PCC has agreed and adopted the following Policy on Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection:

- We commit ourselves to nurture, protect and safeguard all our members, particularly our children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- We recognise that our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the whole church community.
- We accept and endorse the principle of the Children Act (1989), the House of Bishops' Policy Statement (1999)
- We undertake to maintain a register of all people working with children, young people and vulnerable adults within this Parish and that they will have completed the DBS disclosure as required by the Diocese of St Albans and its umbrella organisation, CCPAS (see www.stalbans.anglican.org/ and www.ccpas.co.uk).
- We uphold and adhere to the Diocesan Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adults Policy Guidelines.
- We wish to support parents and carers who have responsibility for bringing up children.
- To provide a safe and welcoming environment for the above categories of people who take part in the life of the church.
- To authorise children's youth and vulnerable adults' activities carried out on behalf of the PCC on a regular basis.
- Copies of the following documents are held in the Church office: the Church of England Child Protection Policy Statement, which the Diocese of St Albans has adopted and fully supports, House of Bishop's Protecting all God's Children (4th edition – 2010), Safe from Harm – Code of Practice for Safeguarding the Welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales, Child Protection in the Diocese of St Albans (Sept 2007), Church of England Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment (2016), Diocese of St Albans Best Practice Guidelines (2016)
- The PCC shall review this policy annually.

For the purposes of this document the term "vulnerable people" means children, young people and vulnerable adults*.

"Children" means 0-18 years of age.

The Child and Vulnerable Adults Support Group (CVAS Group)

It is the duty of the PCC (Parochial Church Council) and the CVAS Group to ensure that suitable persons are appointed to work with vulnerable persons on behalf of the church and that they:

- Have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
- Have been duly accredited and their appointment recorded.

This policy will be implemented on behalf of the PCC by a CVAS Group and the Incumbent.

- The CVAS Group will include a churchwarden, a member of the Junior Church team and the DBS officer, and will include both men and women.
- Group members should be aware of the contents of the Children Act (1989) and the recommended procedures and guidance on appropriate action to take if required.
- The CVAS Group should assist the CPO (Child Protection Officer) in arranging interviews with prospective leaders and helpers, maintaining records, and ensuring that the informal interviews take place.
- A report from the CVAS Group should be presented to the PCC each year before the APCM.

**A Vulnerable Adult is a person aged 18 or over, "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness"*

and

"who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation."

(Sourced via the Office of the Public Guardian: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy, November 2008)

General Support

It is the duty of the PCC to ensure that the facilities provided for an activity to be undertaken do not place vulnerable persons or the leaders in charge of them liable to interference by third parties. Where it is reasonably practicable, there should be at least two adults present supervising children, and the PCC should ensure that sufficient support is available to avoid any need to leave a vulnerable person alone, or with only one responsible person present.

Should leaders require assistance or have concerns about the equipment or facilities available they should advise a churchwarden.

The policy should be reviewed annually by the PCC and CPO.

Abuse

The term "abuse" may cover Physical, Sexual, Emotional abuse and Neglect as set out in The Child Protection Guidance for St Albans Diocese.

The church must:

- Exercise care when appointing leaders/carers to work with vulnerable people.
- Take precautions to see that vulnerable persons are not subjected to abuse.
- Recognise that leaders may in the course of their work suspect that someone in their charge is being subjected to abuse by others.

Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

It is expected that all vulnerable persons who come into contact with Hertford St Andrew will receive care and attention and not be exposed to risk of harm. We adhere to the Diocese of St Albans Best Practice Guidelines (copy on the noticeboard by the church office).

If any member of the church should become suspicious or aware of an allegation of abuse towards a vulnerable person it is their duty to inform The Child Protection Officer, The Vicar, or The Bishop's Representative for Child and Vulnerable Persons.

Allegation of a suspicion **MUST** be taken seriously. If it is made by a child or vulnerable adult the allegation should be listened to without interruption and as soon as possible a note made of the statement including:

1. The time.
2. The location.
3. The names of other people present when the allegation is revealed.

Such information may be used for legal purposes. The church will **NOT** undertake investigations but act as a reporting agency. The incumbent or other responsible person will inform the Bishops Representative for Child Protection of any allegation of abuse.

Requirements for Prospective Employee/Volunteers

People who work (paid or unpaid) with vulnerable persons as part of their contribution to church life and activities will be asked to:

- Sign a declaration concerning whether they have ever been convicted of a criminal offence.
- Meet informally with members of the CVAS Group to discuss their suitability for the work being undertaken. This will be confidential.
- Conduct their work in a safe and responsible manner and also take due care that the vulnerable persons in their charge are not subjected to the risk of misconduct by others.

Procedure

The person applying or volunteering to work with vulnerable persons must be given an explanation of the responsibilities placed on them by the Children Act (1989).

An informal meeting will then be arranged with members of The CVAS Group to:

- a) Consider what the volunteer/applicant will be expected to do.
- b) Review their credentials and experience, and any health problems that may affect their suitability for the task.
- c) Agree a description of the work to be undertaken and to whom they will be responsible.
- d) Consider how long the probationary period/and or review should be and what future training might be appropriate.
- e) Explain the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) form*.

Provided the CVAS Group agree that the volunteer/applicant is suitable, they will be appointed subject to DBS clearance and the satisfactory completion of a probationary period working under supervision as agreed at the meeting with the CVAS Group.

A member of the CVAS Group shall meet informally with each person appointed to work with vulnerable persons to see how work is progressing and to ensure that appropriate support and training is being given.

****On 1 December 2012 the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) merged to form the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).***

The CRB application form has been replaced with a new DBS application form. The new form reflects the change of name from CRB to DBS and a new logo, together with some wording and format changes. All key processes and information required to complete the application form remain unchanged.

Code of Practice

The following examples of good practice are to be observed when planning activities with vulnerable persons:

- Know the number of people present at all times. Keep an attendance list: this is essential in the event of evacuation being necessary.
- The meeting place itself should be secure and not subject to intruders entering without warning. Be aware this can impede evacuation if not thought through.
- Check toilets and store cupboards are not being used as hiding places.
- Be aware of any other people who are authorised to use the premises at the same time.
- Check lighting and paths are safe.
- Know where the FIRST AID box is and aim to have a First Aider in attendance.
- Know where the nearest telephone is (fixed line and/or mobile).
- Have parents and carers contact telephone numbers accessible at all meetings/events.
- Have an evacuation procedure for use in event of a fire.
- Assistants must be accredited by the procedure on Pages 4 & 5 if they are regular helpers and if under 18 should NOT be given overall responsibility even for a short time.
- Plan activities, where practicable, to involve more than one leader/helper being present or at least within sight or hearing.
- Inside doors should be left open to aid observation where possible.
- Be careful what you say and do – even well intentioned words and actions can be misinterpreted.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Keep a written record of any incidents, injuries, fights, accidents etc.
- Ensure there is a definite drop-off and pick-up procedure that parents, carers and vulnerable people understand.
- Vulnerable persons should not be driven home without a parent/carers consent.
- When visiting a child's home NEVER go into the home if the parent or guardian is not there and keep a record of the visit noting date and purpose.
- Two leaders remain on the premises until the last vulnerable person has left.
- If an event is to last longer than usual, parental permission should be obtained beforehand.