

Safeguarding Report 2025

St Andrew's PCC takes seriously its collective responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and adults who may be vulnerable. We have complied with due regard to House of Bishops guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

All those who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and PCC Members are required to undertake regular safeguarding training and to complete DBS checks.

All training is completed online through the Church of England portal. In January 2025 the Church of England introduced additional training requirements and a course on Domestic Abuse needs to be completed in addition to both Basic and Foundation level training. The Foundation training and Domestic Abuse training is refreshed every 3 years. The Clergy, Readers and the Parish Safeguarding Officer undertake face to face 'Leadership' training which is delivered via Zoom.

DBS checks are carried out for us by Thirtyone:eight. All those who work with children and vulnerable adults and PCC Members are required to complete an enhanced check. These checks are renewed every 3 years, or alternatively, individuals can sign up for the DBS Update service whereby the certificate is reviewed annually and remains valid for the duration of the individual's time in the role.

Our Safeguarding Risk Assessment for all activities involving children and young people is reviewed annually.

A copy of all St Andrew's policies which include 'Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults', 'Lone Worker' and 'Safer Recruitment' are kept on the church website and in a folder at the entrance of the church. These policies are reviewed annually and, along with other safeguarding documentation, are stored centrally in the Church GoogleDrive with access to the Drive being given to the Priest, Parish Safeguarding Officer, Church Wardens and Parish Administrator.

In 2024 the Church of England published their National Safeguarding Standards which asks all parishes to assess their safeguarding work against five standards:

Standard 1 - Culture, Leadership and Capacity

Standard 2 - Prevention

Standard 3 - Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk

Standard 4 - Victims and Survivors

Standard 5 - Learning, Supervision and Support

The Diocese of St Albans have asked that PCCs review each of the five standards to examine safeguarding in their parish and identify their strengths and weaknesses. St Andrews PCC have agreed to review all standards prior to the Diocese's next audit in 2027.

The Diocese of St Albans support our safeguarding practices in a number of ways:

- Regular safeguarding newsletters ensure that parishes are kept up to date with current legislation and of any changes to policies, procedures and training requirements.
- The 'Parish Dashboard'. This is a useful online portal which records all the safeguarding measures we take as a church including risk assessments completed and policies and their review date.
- The 'Parish Safeguarding Hub'. This stands alongside the Parish Dashboard and is designed to help with safer recruitment and people management. It contains details of all those who have completed training and DBS checks and generates automatic reminders when these are due to be renewed.
- Monthly Zoom drop-in sessions and an annual Safeguarding Forum for Parish Safeguarding Officers.
- An online safeguarding training course is available through their website (www.stalbans.anglican.org). This takes less than an hour to complete and is an excellent introduction to safeguarding, particularly in recognising potential safeguarding issues and knowing then what course of action to take. The PCC recommend that all those involved with church life complete the course, particularly sidesmen, choir members and those in coffee teams. Please let me know if you would like me to send you the link to the course.
- Also on their website is a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and information documents, many of which we use as templates for our own policies and procedures.

Catherine Sleath, Parish Safeguarding Officer