

**The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent
in the Diocese of Bristol**

2nd August 2026

**Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults:
Policy and Procedure**

Approved by

Name: Beverley Belcher in consultation with the PCC

Position: Parish Safeguarding Officer

Date issued 2 August 2026

Next Review 31st May 2027

“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

Contents

1. Policy Context	2
Church of England:	2
Diocese of Bristol:	2
Statutory Guidance:	2
2. Policy Statement	3
3. Who is a child, young person, adult who may be vulnerable?	4
4. What is abuse and neglect?	5
5. What to do if you are concerned that abuse or neglect may be happening	5
6. Confidentiality and consent	7
7. Record Keeping	8
8. Safer Recruitment and ongoing support and supervision	8
9. Roles and Responsibilities	9
10. Additional Related Policies	11
Photographs and videos	11
Communications and Social Media	11
Hire of Church Premises for non Church events (whether fee chargeable or not)	12
11. Policy implementation and Review	13
Appendix 1: Useful Contact numbers	25
Appendix 2: A quick guide to responding promptly every safeguarding concern or allegation	26
Appendix 3: Categories of Abuse and additional information	28

I. Policy Context

In developing and adopting this policy, the Parochial Church Council and the parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent commit 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 as related to the Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Adults.

The main relevant policies and guidance documents are:

Church of England:

Protecting all God's Children, 2010

Promoting a Safe Church, 2006

Promoting a Safer Church – Policy Statement, 2017

Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment, 2016

Responding Well to Domestic Abuse, 2017

Responding Well to those who have been Sexually Abused, 2011

Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers, 2017

Roles and Responsibilities of Church Office Holders and Bodies, 2017

Safeguarding Records Joint Practice Guidance, 2015

Safeguarding Records Retention Tool Kit, 2015

General Statement on Safeguarding Children in Bell Towers, 2015

Practice Guidance: Responding to Safeguarding Concerns or Allegations that relate to Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults 2018

Parish Safeguarding Handbook 2019

These documents can be found on the Diocese of Bristol Website here:

<https://www.bristol.anglican.org/safeguarding-resources/> look under National policies and procedures.

Diocese of Bristol:

Safeguarding Policy, 2018

Allegations Management Procedure, 2018

Ministering to those who may present a risk, 2018

Safer Recruitment Guidance and Toolkit, 2017

Domestic Abuse Statement 2017

Fair Recruitment of Ex Offenders 2016

These documents can all be found on the Diocese of Bristol website:

<https://www.bristol.anglican.org/safeguarding-resources/> and descriptions are given where these policies are referenced in this policy document.

Statutory Guidance from Department for Education:

Working Together 2018: (This guidance describes safeguarding processes and the safeguards that every organisation must have in place, including faith organisations, when safeguarding

children.) See the guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> Or online: www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk

Care and Support Statutory Guidance from the Department of Health 2016: (This is guidance which describes safeguarding processes for adults and the responsibilities of different organisations): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

2. Policy Statement

It is the responsibility of all members of the parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent to give paramount importance to the nurture and care of children, young people and vulnerable adults, in a safe and secure environment. It is about preventing harm to children and adults wherever possible including those who are visiting from other churches and organisations.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is of paramount importance.
- Everyone has different levels of vulnerability and each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives
- All children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable (regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse which can occur in all families and communities.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults and their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

We will develop a culture in our church that:

- Enables a safe and caring community to provide a loving environment in which there is, in all our activities, an ethos of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.
- Enables and encourages concerns in respect of safeguarding and safety to be raised and responded to openly, effectively and consistently.
- Protects children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable from actual or potential harm.
- Ensures all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
- Values, listens to and respects children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable, encouraging them to be active contributors to the church community.
- Encourages adults who may be vulnerable to lead as independent a life as possible.

When concerns are raised, we will:

- Respond without delay to every concern raised that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have been harmed recently or historically; or may be at risk of harm, through abuse or neglect.
- Work in full cooperation with police, local authority and other partners in any investigation, including where allegations are made against a member of the Church community or church officers.
- Challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
- Ensure that those concerns are handled according to our policy and best practice.

If abuse has occurred, we will ensure:

- Informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse, including support to make a complaint if so desired.
- Supervision is provided for any member of the Church Community known to pose a risk of harm to others.
- Appropriate pastoral care is provided to any member of our church against whom an allegation is made.

In all recruitment we will:

- Carefully select and appoint all those with any responsibility within the Church (including voluntary workers) fully and consistently in accordance with the Church of England Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance, 2016¹ Additional information on Safer Recruitment procedures can be found at Annexes 1 to 5.

In our publicity we will:

- Share information about good safeguarding practice with children, young people and vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and all those working and worshipping with them.
- On the Parish website we will ensure there is clear information available regarding our safeguarding arrangements, including a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy and other relevant information.
- Ensure that we post all notices which are required to be available in the correct places and that they are monitored and maintained up to date.

3. Who is a child, young person, adult who may be vulnerable?

Children and Young People: for the purposes of this policy, means anyone under the age of 18 years. Children and young people may be abused by an adult or child, male or female. It is far more common for a child or young person to be abused by a person known to them than by a stranger. This could be a parent, family member, friend, teacher, minister or anyone else. Children may be abused in person or via electronic media, they may experience harm as a result of seeing or hearing the abuse of others.

Where conflicts of interest arise between the welfare of the child and that of adults, the child's wellbeing must always be of paramount importance and priority.

Adults who may be vulnerable: The Care Act 2014 defines an adult to whom statutory safeguarding duties apply as an adult who:

- *Has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of these needs)*
- *Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect*
- *As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect.*

(Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2016)

The definition may apply to anyone 18 years old and over who may not be able to protect themselves from abuse, harm or exploitation, which may be by reason of illness, physical,

¹ <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/c-e-safer-recruitment-2016/>

sensory or learning disability or impairment, mental illness, use of drugs or use of alcohol. Increased vulnerability may be temporary or permanent and may be visible or invisible. An adult may be abused or neglected by family (including spouses, parents and children), friends, carers (paid and unpaid), strangers and professionals and members of the community. Those at risk may live alone or may live with family or in a care setting e.g. residential home.

4. What is abuse and neglect?

Please see the table attached as **Appendix 2** This outlines the forms of abuse noted in legislation related to safeguarding children, young people and adults alongside some examples and identifies potential indicators that abuse or neglect may be occurring.

5. What to do if you are concerned that abuse or neglect may be happening

You may see or hear something of concern, or someone may tell you something of concern (a disclosure). If a child, young person or adult tells you that they have experienced abuse, are experiencing abuse or are concerned that they may be at risk, the following list of **Do and Don't** must be followed:

Do Listen. Try to move to a quiet space if possible	Don't Tell them to speak to someone else
Do Let the person talk at their own pace and say what they want to say. If you need to clarify points, ask open questions like: Tell me ... what happened, Explain ... about the incident Describe ... where it was, what happened	Don't Investigate. Don't Ask leading questions e.g. Why did they do that? Was it 'name'? Did it hurt you?
Do Take it seriously	Don't react as though you are unbelieving or shocked
Do Reassure. Confirm they are doing the right thing by telling you.	Don't Tell them not to tell stories
Do Tell them you need to share the concern with the right people e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer, police, social care	Don't Promise to keep a secret or tell people who don't need to know.
Do Record what was said and the facts as accurately as possible as soon as possible	Don't Rely on your memory of the disclosure
	Don't Contact the person the allegation is about

Whether a child, young person or adult has shared a concern with you, or you have seen or heard something of concern...

If the situation is urgent i.e. there is an imminent risk of harm: you must contact the police on 101 or 999 as appropriate or contact the Local Authority Children or Adults Safeguarding Teams or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub without delay.

Once you have sought advice from the Police or the Local Authority and the situation is made safe, inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible of the concern and actions taken; provide a written record of this. If the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

If the situation is of concern but is not urgent: Contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer to report the concern and provide a written record (if the concern is about the Parish Safeguarding Officer contact the Incumbent or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser). They will decide with you whether to discuss with the child, their parents or carers or the adult and any carers and whether a referral to the Local Authority Children or Adults Safeguarding Team is needed or any other action.

Note: Anyone can report a concern directly to police or the Local Authority at anytime.

The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent expects that everyone will follow this policy but where there is any concern that an issue has not been reported and should be or any reluctance exists to inform the church of an incident the Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent wishes to make clear that the most important point is that those concerns are reported to the appropriate authority, quickly so that they can be acted upon where needed.

If there is an allegation that a person in a position of trust (Minister, Licensed Lay Minister, PCC Member, Staff Member or Volunteer) has abused or neglected a child or adult or that such a person may present a risk to a child or adult: The Diocese of Bristol 'Allegations Management Procedure²' will be strictly followed (copies of this procedure can be found on the Diocesan website and copies are held by the Parish Safeguarding Officers, Clergy and in the Parish Office). In brief this procedure requires that:

- The concern should be reported as above;
- Any report should reach the Police and Local Authority within 1 working day.
- The concern should not be made known to the person against whom the allegation is raised without agreement with the Police and/or the Local Authority.
- Next steps will be decided in conjunction with the Police, Local Authority representatives (including Local Authority Designated Officer where there is a concern for the welfare of a child), the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and parish representatives (usually PSO, Incumbent and Churchwardens).

If a person is identified who has a caution or conviction for abuse of children and or adults who may pose a risk to others: (usually those with convictions for sexual or violent offences) the Diocese of Bristol guidance 'Ministering to those who may pose a risk³' (Copies of this guidance can be found on the Diocesan website and copies are held by the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Clergy and in the Parish Office) will be followed. In brief this guidance advises that that Parish Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser are made aware and that the individual is informed that:

² <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/allegations-management-procedure/>

³ <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/ministering-those-may-present-risk/>

- To support their being part of the congregation as safely as possible, contact will be made with police, probation and other agencies connected with their case.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and Church leaders will need to know of their circumstances.
- That a risk assessment will need to be completed
- And that a written agreement will be needed between the individual and the Church which agrees when the individual will or will not be involved in church services and activities, boundaries of behaviour and support offered.

6. Confidentiality and consent

Confidentiality: The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent accepts 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 are shared responsibly and stored securely.

Consent: The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent accepts that all people have a right to make their own views and wishes known and that these wishes should be followed wherever possible.

Children: Where there is a concern that a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, they may ask those that know not to tell anyone. The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent accepts that we cannot undertake to do this. These concerns must be reported to the appropriate authorities to enable the child or young person to receive appropriate help and support.

The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent asks all staff, ministers and volunteers to explain this to children in their care when appropriate. Where there is concern that a child is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect.

The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent expects that parents and carers will be communicated with and will have their consent sought for information to be shared with the Local Authority or other agencies **EXCEPT** where there is concern that to do so would place a child at increased risk **OR** where a parent or carer may be involved in the sexual abuse of the child. In those circumstances, the advice of the Local Authority or Police will be sought before informing the parents or carers of the concern.

Where the allegation is against an individual who may have access to other children or vulnerable adults the referral will be made without seeking consent from parents or carers; how they are made aware of the concerns will be decided alongside statutory agencies.

Adults: Adults have the right to make their own decisions about their lives. Consent should be sought from an adult before information is shared about them. However, where an adult withholds consent for a safeguarding concern to be shared with statutory authorities (police and local authority), this should be accepted

EXCEPT where there may be others at risk (e.g. the abuse or neglect is happening in a care home or hospital or the abuser has access to other vulnerable adults or children)

OR where there is reason to doubt that the individual has the capacity to make that decision or where there is imminent risk of serious harm to the individual.

Advice should be sought from statutory services (Adult Social Care or the Police) or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser where there is any doubt as to whether a concern should be referred.

7. Record Keeping

Records of all safeguarding concerns will be kept by the Parish Safeguarding Officer. They will keep a record of the initial concern and all actions taken. The records will be held securely (If Physical Documents then in a locked Cabinet or Safe. If Electronic Documents then protected by a strong, secure password on any computer or device on which they are stored AND each electronic document protected by a strong, secure password. All those involved with any safeguarding concern must ensure that they provide to the Safeguarding Officer any records related to that case for secure storage.

Records will be retained as per Church of England guidance 'Safeguarding Records: Joint Practice Guidance for the Church of England and the Methodist Church' 2015⁴ (Available on the Diocese of Bristol website).

The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent does not have access to secure email systems. Therefore, considerable care should be taken where email is used to ensure that confidential information is not open to being accessed by unauthorised individuals. Individual's confidential information should not be communicated via email (e.g. any information should not make the individual identifiable by name, address etc.).

Full records must be maintained of staff and volunteer training and DBS checks, including the dates for refresher training or repeat DBS checks. These will be maintained by the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

8. Safer Recruitment and ongoing support and supervision

All recruitment of staff and volunteers will be undertaken in line with Church of England policy 'Safer Recruitment, 2016'⁵. Additional information on Safer Recruitment procedures can be found at Annexes 1 to 5

Finding and recruiting the right people to work with children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect can be difficult. What follows is a safer recruitment checklist to help make sure that the Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent recruits and appoints safely the most appropriate people as employees or volunteers.

It is a criminal offence for an individual who is barred from working with vulnerable groups to apply for a regulated activity role and it is a criminal offence for an organisation to appoint a barred person to a regulated activity role.

Our recruitment and selection processes will be inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.

⁴ <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/safeguarding-records-practice-guidance/>

⁵ <https://www.bristol.anglican.org/documents/c-e-safer-recruitment-2016/>

We will take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults from taking up, in our Churches, positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others.

Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken by those delegated such responsibility by the PCC.

We will be clear about who is responsible for appointments. Recruitment of staff and volunteers will only be undertaken according to agreed process.

All recruited staff and volunteers will be made known to PCC who must approve their recruitment before they commence work.

We will ensure that we have people available who are trained in safer recruitment practice guidance.

No one who has not been safely recruited will be permitted to work unsupervised with children, young people or adults who may be vulnerable.

The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent has adopted the Diocese of Bristol's policy statement on the fair recruitment of ex offenders (2016)

In brief: All staff and volunteers, without exception, will:

- Have all recruitment checks completed and approved prior to starting in role.
- Have a repeat DBS disclosure every 3 years. Any lapsed DBS check will require the post holder to stand down from their role or duty until the check has been completed.
- Attend, in a timely manner, safeguarding training as required by the Church of England
- Attend any other training as decided by the PCC
- Have a named supervisor

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Responsibilities
Parochial Church Council (PCC)	• Agree, implement, monitor and review annually this safeguarding policy and all associated policies • Ensure that all staff and volunteers are recruited safely • Agree and implement supporting good practice guidance and processes • Ensure adequate insurance for all activities • Recruit and provide adequate support to the Parish Safeguarding Officer • Ensure all staff and volunteers are adequately trained and supervised • Review and sign off the annual Audit of Safeguarding undertaken by the Diocese of Bristol • Maintain awareness of changes in Safeguarding Guidance and Practice • With the Incumbent, promote a safer church for all in the church community

Name	Responsibilities
	• With the Incumbent, ensure there is a plan in place to raise awareness of, promote training and ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously by all those in the church community • Report annually to the APCM on Safeguarding and confirm whether or not they have complied with the duty to have regard to the House of Bishops guidance thereon
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)	• Work closely with the incumbent on all safeguarding matters • Respond to all safeguarding allegations and concerns according to policy and guidance • Monitor and report to PCC regarding adherence to policy and practice • Arrange safeguarding training and maintain all safeguarding records • Maintain awareness of changes in Safeguarding Guidance and Practice • Process DBS disclosures for the church and maintain records • Provide advice, support and reports to the PCC as required
Incumbent	• Act as a point of contact should there be any safeguarding allegation or concern regarding a PSO • Provide leadership concerning safeguarding, and to encourage everyone to promote a safer church.
Church Wardens	• Take part in the allegations management procedure when required • Take part in an 'agreement' as per 'ministering to those that may present a risk' • Ensure that in the period of a vacancy (during an interregnum), that the incumbent's safeguarding roles and responsibilities are fulfilled, in consultation with the PCC, parish safeguarding officer and the area dean • Pay attention to the specific needs of children and vulnerable adults when undertaking health and safety inspections and risk assessment • Ensure that risk assessments are carried out before new activities are undertaken
Activity Leaders	• Follow the Safeguarding Policy and associated good practice guidance • Ensure that activities are run according to good practice guidance • Report any safeguarding concerns • Ensure all volunteers are safely recruited • Ensure all volunteers have in date training and DBS check as required • Ensure all new volunteers receive agreed induction • Supervise agreed volunteers

Name	Responsibilities
Children's and Young People's Advocates	• Undertake any necessary training • Complete a DBS check • Be fully aware of the processes to be followed in the event of a disclosure • Be conversant with the Safeguarding Policy
Staff and Volunteers	• Follow the safeguarding policy and associated good practice guidance • Report any safeguarding concern as per policy
Church members	• Be aware of the safeguarding and associated policies • Report any concerns

10. Additional Related Policies

Photographs and videos

It is the policy of The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent that no one should take photographs of children or young people in church or at any church event without the consent of that child's parent or carer and the consent of that child where they are old enough to give consent.

Where photographs are to be taken, consent will be gained from parents and carers in advance, using any agreed form. This will stipulate who will take photos, for what purpose they may be used, how they will be stored and after what period they will be destroyed. The church will provide a camera and SD card for church purposes. This is to be stored in the safe.

All photos and videos taken for The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent should be stored securely on devices belonging to the PCC. No photo or video should be left stored on personal photography or videography equipment.

Under no circumstances will any photo be taken, shared or used for any purpose which shows a child in any state of undress.

Children will not be named in publicity related to photographs or video.

Where an event may be photographed and is open to the public; signs will be displayed or announcements made noting 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. The photographer/ videographer will be named on these signs and will wear ID.

Only those delegated with that responsibility by PCC may ask for parental consent and arrange the taking of any photo or video.

Communications and Social Media

It is the policy of The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent that no one employed on a paid or voluntary basis, serving as a PCC member or as a licenced minister will contact children or young people directly via social media, email, phone or text without the knowledge and consent of that child or young persons parent or carer.

Where such contact needs to be made (for example a text to advise of a change of time for an activity) the child's parent or carer will be asked for consent in advance and the parent or carer will be copied into that communication.

Very rarely contact may be made with a child or young person without the knowledge of the child's parents or carers (for example where there are serious safeguarding concerns for a child and it would increase the risk to the child to contact the parent). In this case the person making contact with the child must agree in advance with the Parish Safeguarding Officer that this is appropriate, a second adult should be copied into all communications e.g. Parish Safeguarding Officer or Incumbent and must keep a record of all communications and provide these to the Parish Safeguarding Officer for the case record.

Where a group wishes to have a social media account to publicise or communicate regarding their group or activity the following will apply:

- The account shall not be a personal account belonging to any group member or leader; it will be a separate group account.
- More than one adult will be administrator for the account so that all content and messages can be seen by more than one adult.
- All users will be made aware that bullying, harassment or other anti social behaviour will not be tolerated. Information will be available to all users about how to raise a concern about the conduct of others and who with.
- Steps must be taken to prevent people outside the group having access to the names or personal details of anyone who is part of the group e.g. if a group Facebook page is used, the account settings should prevent group members being identified and any message sent to anyone other than the administrator.
- All those in a leadership role will ensure that their language is professional and appropriate e.g. not adding 'xx' to messages, not using nicknames that are not what the leader is called by everyone else, avoiding addressing others by endearments which would be ambiguous, such as 'love'.
- Further advice and information regarding online safety is available from the Diocese Safeguarding Team.

Hire of Church Premises for non Church events (whether fee chargeable or not)

Organisations and individual users meeting at 'The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent 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.

'The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent is responsible for overseeing users and ensuring that that agreed hire process and forms are in use. This will include obtaining a copy of the hirers safeguarding policy where relevant and providing a copy of this policy.

I I. Policy Implementation and Review

This policy was agreed by the Parochial Church Council of The Parish of North West Swindon and Lydiard Millicent PCC on **19th August 2026**

All staff, volunteers and ministers are required to abide by this policy and associated good practice guidance.

This policy will be made available on the Church website; a copy will be available in each church building.

This policy will be monitored via annual audit from Bristol Diocese and annual report to the Parochial Church Council

This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Parochial Church Council

The next review of this policy is due by: 31 May 2027

ANNEX 1

Model Job Role

This is a simple model role outline template for a volunteer

Name of Church

Volunteer Worker (Children and /or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect)

The Church takes the safety of everyone within the church very seriously and expects that everyone will work within the church safeguarding policy. In particular, the Church expects anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding risk or of actual abuse, to immediately report it.

Principles

Workers with children and/or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect must have a commitment to:

- Treat individuals with respect;
- Recognise and respect their abilities and potential for development;
- Promote their rights to make their own decisions and choices, unless it is unsafe;
- Ensure their welfare and safety;
- The promotion of social justice, social responsibility and respect for others; and
- Confidentiality, never passing on personal information, except to the person to whom you are responsible, unless there are safeguarding issues of concern (e.g. allegations of abuse). Safeguarding issues of concern must **always** be reported to the Police or Social Care services and Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Responsible to (named contact for support and resolution of any difficulties):

The Priest (or his / her named representative) and through them to the PCC.

Key responsibilities and accountabilities:

- To work with vulnerable people (children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect) in a way that meets and develops their personal, spiritual and social needs, exercising active pastoral concern.
- To represent the needs and views of vulnerable people to the PCC or, where appropriate, enable them to do this for themselves.
- To maintain a link with parents and carers.
- To work in accordance with the church's policy on safeguarding.
- To undertake any other work that has been agreed and is seen to be appropriate.

As a volunteer you can expect that we will do our best to ensure that:

- We provide a supportive, inclusive and positive environment that ensures you enjoy your volunteering and that you are treated with respect and courtesy and provided with training.

Person specification

1. Able to demonstrate an ability to work with people who are /may be vulnerable; and
2. A willingness to develop their skills and training

As a volunteer working regularly with people who are/may be vulnerable, this post may be eligible for a criminal record check which will be renewed at least every three years. This letter is binding in honour only; it is not intended to create a legally binding contract between us and it may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intend any employment relationship to be created now or at any time in the future.

ANNEX 2

Application form

This is a simple model application form template for a volunteer which can be used, amended or substituted by a local model as required.

Name of Church

Application form for voluntary workers with children and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect.

Application for the post of:

Full Name	Previous experience of working with children or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect -continue overleaf if necessary
Date of birth	
Former Name	
Home address	
Postcode	Please provide two references one of which must be from current employer or previous church Name Address Postcode Tel: Name Address Postcode Tel:
Telephone Day	
Evening	
How long have you lived at the above address?	
If less than 12 months	
Previous address	
Postcode	
How long there?	
Church attended	Signed
Name of Minister	
Relevant Qualifications/Training	
	Print name
	Date

ANNEX 3

Reference form

This is a simple model reference form template for a volunteer which can be used, amended or substituted by a local model as required.

Name of Church

Name and address of referee:	Name and address of Priest or their nominee requesting a reference:
Date	

Dear

REQUEST FOR REFERENCE FOR A VOLUNTARY WORKER WITH CHILDREN / ADULTS EXPERIENCING, OR AT RISK OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

RE Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms,

Address:

Post applicant applying for:

The above has given your name as someone who may be contacted in relation to his/her* application to work with children/adults* experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. Guidelines suggest that all voluntary organisations including Churches must take steps to safeguard the children/adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect entrusted to their care. I would be grateful if you could comment on the following factors as they may apply to the applicant:-

- Previous experience of working with children or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect.
- His/her* ability to provide kind and consistent care.
- Evidence of his/her* willingness to respect the background and culture of children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect in his/her* care.
- His/her* commitment to treat all children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect as individuals and with equal concern.
- Any evidence or concern that he/she* would not be suitable to work with children and adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect.

You are welcome to use the reverse of this letter for your reply. Thank you for your assistance in this matter. Yours sincerely

Priest or Nominee

How long have you known the applicant?..... years

His/her* previous experience of working with children/adults* experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect:

His/her* ability to provide kind, consistent and safe care:

Evidence of his/her* willingness to respect the background and culture of children/adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect in his/her* care:

His/her* commitment to treat all children/adults* experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect as individuals and with equal concern:

Any evidence or concern that he/she* would not be suitable to work with children/adults* experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect?

Telephone contact point for clarification:

**Please delete as appropriate*

ANNEX 4

Church of England Confidential Declaration Form

The Confidential Declaration Form must be completed by all those wishing to work with children and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. It applies to all roles, including clergy, employees, ordinands and volunteers who are to be in substantial contact with children and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. This form is strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of law, will be seen only by those involved in the recruitment / appointment process and, when appropriate, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or someone acting in a similar role / position. All forms will be kept securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you answer yes to any question, please give details, on a separate sheet if necessary, giving the number of the question which you are answering.

Please note that the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an independent body, which came into existence on 1st December 2012. It combines the functions of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

1. Have you ever been convicted of or charged with a criminal offence or been bound over to keep the peace that has not been filtered in accordance with the DBS filtering rules? (Include both 'spent'¹ and 'unspent' convictions) YES / NO
2. Have you ever received a caution, reprimand or warning from the police that has not been filtered in accordance with the DBS filtering rules²²? YES / NO

You do not have to declare any adult conviction where: (a) 11 years (or 5.5 years if under 18 at the time of the conviction) have passed since the date of the conviction; (b) it is your only offence; (c) it did not result in a prison sentence or suspended prison sentence (or detention order) and (d) it does not appear on the DBS's list of specified offences relevant to safeguarding (broadly violent, drug related and/or sexual in nature). Please note that a conviction must comply with (a), (b), (c) and (d) in order to be filtered

Please note that the 'rehabilitation periods' (i.e. the amount of time which has to pass before a conviction etc. can become 'spent') have recently been amended by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. Since 10 March 2014, custodial sentences greater than 4 years are never 'spent'.

You do not have to declare any adult caution where: (a) 6 years (or 2 years if under 18 at the time of the caution, reprimand or warning) have passed since the date of the caution etc. and (b) it does not appear on the DBS's list of specified offences referred to in footnote 1 above. **Please note that a caution etc. must comply with (a) and (b) in order to be filtered**

If your position / role does not involve substantial contact with children and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect you should only declare 'unspent' and 'unfiltered' convictions / cautions etc.

Notes applicable to questions 1 and 2: Declare all convictions, cautions, warnings, and reprimands etc. that are not subject to the DBS filtering rules. Please also provide details of the circumstances and/or reasons that led to the offence(s).

Broadly, where your position / role involves substantial contact with children and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect (i.e. where you are eligible for an enhanced criminal

records check) you will be expected to declare **all** convictions and / or cautions etc., even if they are 'spent' provided they have not been filtered by the DBS filtering rules.

Convictions, cautions etc. and the equivalent obtained abroad must be declared as well as those received in the UK.

If you are unsure of how to respond to any of the above please seek advice from an appropriate independent representative (e.g. your solicitor) because any failure to disclose relevant convictions, cautions etc. could result in the withdrawal of approval to work with children and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. Although it is important to note that the existence of a conviction, caution etc. will not necessarily bar you from working with vulnerable groups unless it will place such groups at risk.

3. Are you at present (or have you ever been) under investigation by the police or an employer or other organisation for which you worked for any offence / misconduct? YES / NO
4. Are you or have you ever been prohibited and / or barred from work with children and/or vulnerable adults? YES / NO
5. Has a family court ever made a finding of fact in relation to you, that you have caused significant harm to a child and / or vulnerable adult, or has any such court made an order against you on the basis of any finding or allegation that any child and / or vulnerable adult was at risk of significant harm from you? YES / NO
6. Has your conduct ever caused or been likely to cause significant harm to a child and / or vulnerable adult, and / or put a child or vulnerable adult at risk of significant harm? YES / NO

Significant harm' involves serious ill-treatment of any kind including neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or impairment of physical or mental health development. It will also include matters such as a sexual relationship with a young person or adult for whom an individual had pastoral responsibility or was in a position of respect, responsibility or authority, where he/she was trusted by others. It also includes domestic abuse

7. To your knowledge, has it ever been alleged that your conduct has resulted in any of those things? YES / NO
8. Have you ever had any allegation made against you, which has been reported/referred to, and investigated by the Police/Social Services/Social Work Department (Children or Adult's Social Care)? YES/NO

If you reply yes to questions 7 and/or 8, please give details, which may include the date(s) and nature of the allegation, and whether you were dismissed, disciplined, moved to other work or resigned from any paid or voluntary work as a result.

Note: Make any statement you wish regarding any incident you wish to declare

Note: Declare any complaints or allegations made against you, however long ago, that you have significantly harmed a child, young person or adult who is vulnerable. Any allegation or complaint investigated by the police, Children's Services, an employer, voluntary body or other body for which you worked must be declared. Checks will be made with the relevant authorities.

9. Has a child in your care or for whom you have or had parental responsibility ever been removed from your care, been placed on the Child Protection Register or been the subject of child protection planning, a care order, a supervision order, a child assessment order or an emergency protection order under the Children Act 1989, or a similar order under any other legislation? YES / NO
10. If you are working from home with children, is there anyone who is 16 years of age or over living or employed in your household who has ever been charged with, cautioned or convicted in relation to any criminal offence not subject to DBS filtering rules²⁴; or is that person at present the subject of a criminal investigation/pending prosecution? YES/NO/Not Applicable

If yes, please give details including the nature of the offence(s) and the dates. Please give any further details, such as the reasons or circumstances, which led to the offence

Note applicable to Q10: You are only required to answer this if you work from home with children. The DBS define home based working as where the applicant for the DBS check carries out some or all of his or her work with children or adults from the place where the applicant lives (this will include the majority of clergy, (for instance, those resident in a vicarage etc

Note: All these matters shall be checked with the relevant authorities

Declaration

I declare the above information (and that on any attached sheets) is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

After I have been appointed I agree to inform my line manager or supervisor if I am charged, cautioned or convicted of any offence or if I become subject to a Police/Social Services/Social Work Department (Children or Adult's Social Care) investigation.

Full Name..... Date of Birth.....

Address.....

.....

Date..... Signed.....

Please return the completed form to

Before an appointment can be made applicants who will have substantial contact with children and/or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect in their roles will be required to obtain an enhanced criminal record check (with or without a barred list check (as appropriate)) from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

All information declared on this form will be carefully assessed to decide whether it is relevant to the post applied for and will only be used for the purpose of safeguarding children, young people and / or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect.

Please note that the existence of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent a person from being appointed, it is only if the nature of any matters revealed may be considered to place a child and / or an adult experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect at risk.

ANNEX 5

Model interview / discussion

This is a simple model interview / discussion form template for a volunteer which can be used, amended or substituted by a local model as required.

Name of Church

Interview / discussion questions for a volunteer seeking to work with children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect and outcome

The purpose of the interview / discussion is to explore the applicant's suitability. Notes of the interview / discussion must be retained and attached to this form which must be returned to the Priest to be held on behalf of the PCC. The following factors must be addressed:

Name and address of applicant:

1. What experience have you of working with children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect?
2. Can you give an example of something that you have done that demonstrates your commitment to working with vulnerable groups (i.e. children and/or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect)?
3. Can you give some examples of how you would provide kind, consistent and safe care?
4. Can you describe how you would respect the background and culture of children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect with whom you would volunteer?
5. How would you treat all children / adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect as individuals with equal concern?
6. Do you know of any reason why you should not be working with children or adults experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect? Are there any police or employment matters outstanding which could affect your ability to volunteer?

Outcome

Are there any issues in the Confidential Declaration? YES/NO

Do the references support the appointment? YES/NO

Do you recommend their approval to the PCC? YES/NO

Signed:

Name (Print):

Date Approved by PCC:

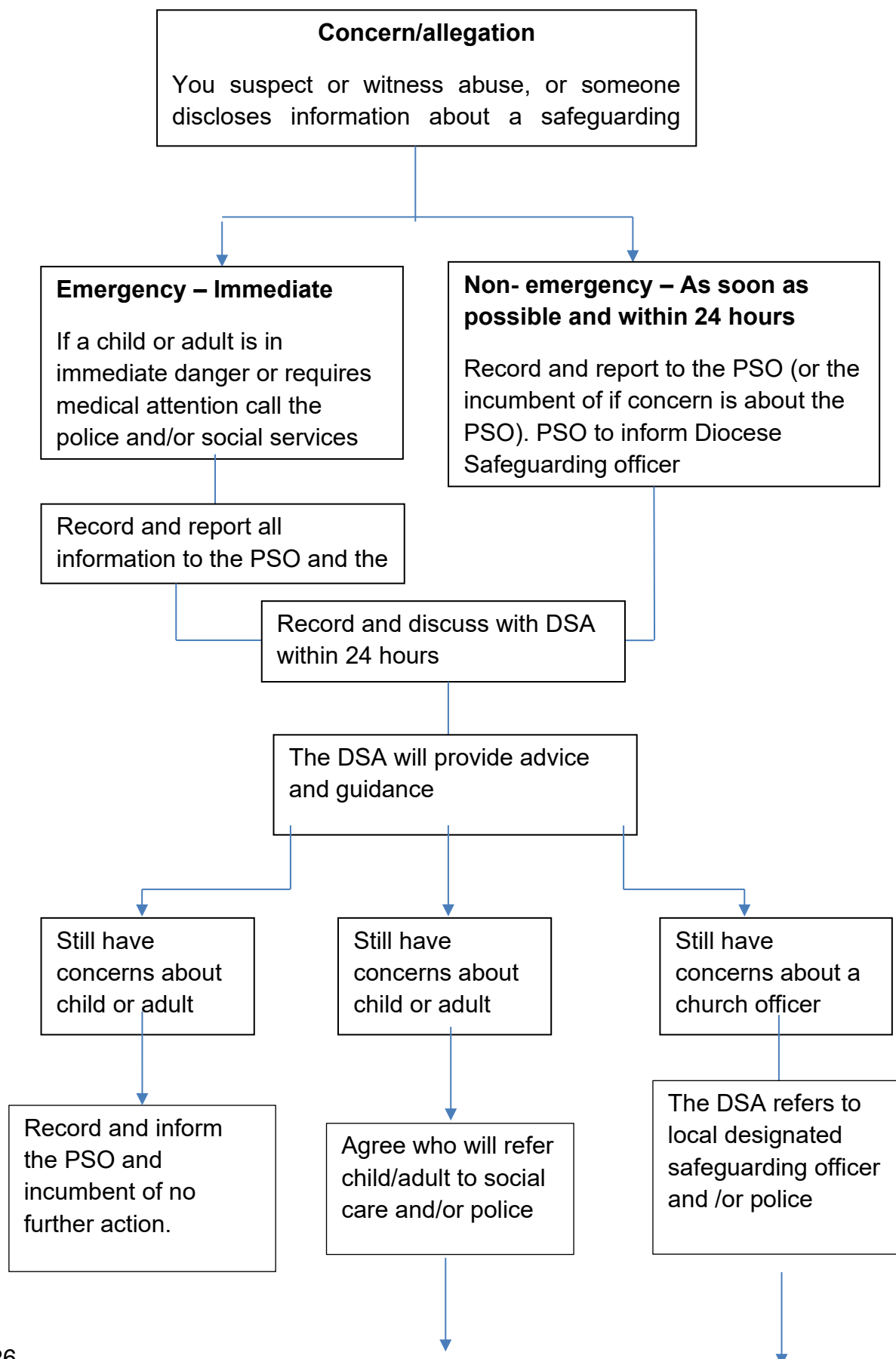
Date:

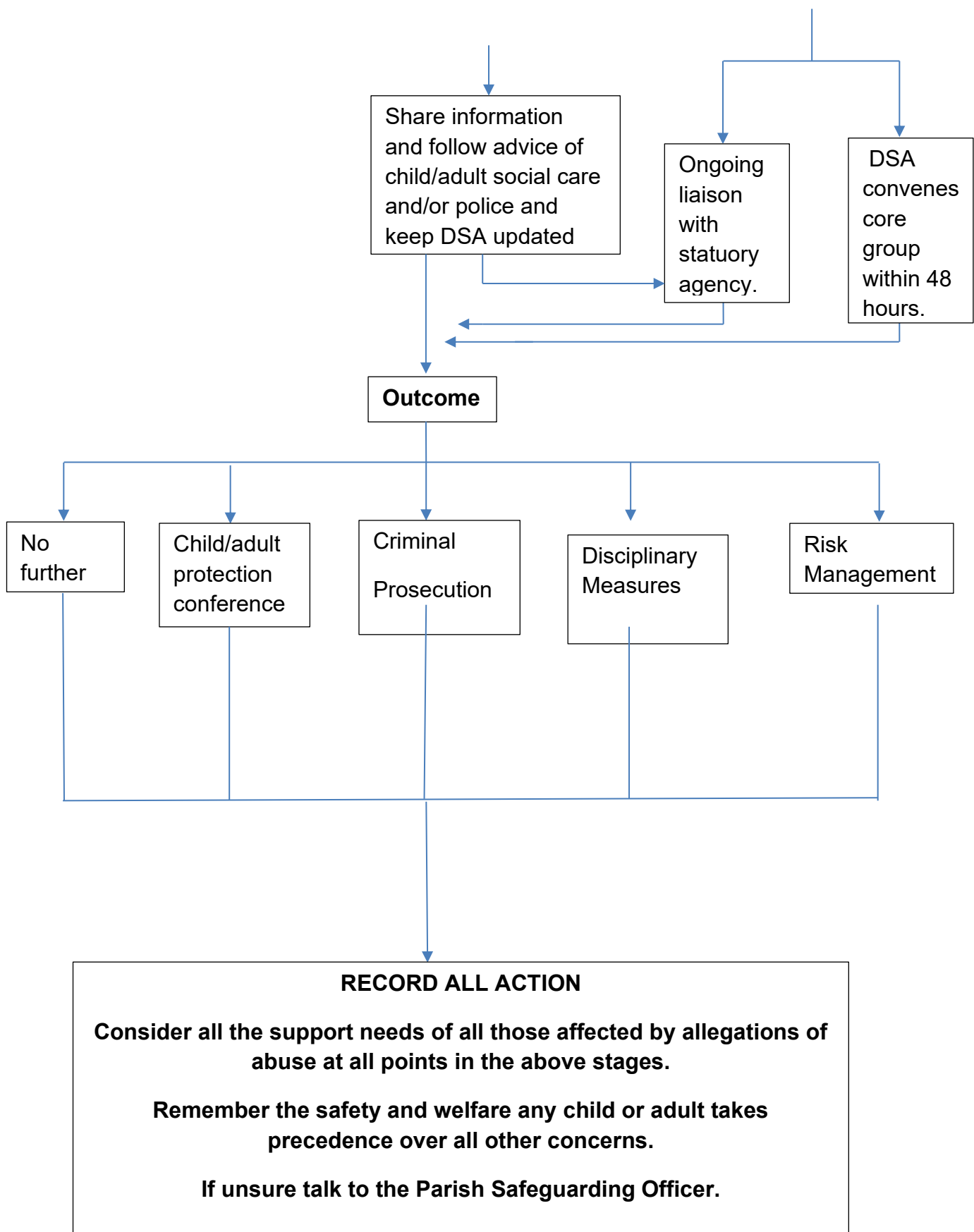
Appendix I: Useful Contact numbers

- Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is: Beverley Belcher who can be contacted on email Safeguarding.aslm@gmail.com or 01793 486329
- Our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser is Adam Bond and can be contacted on 0117 906 0100.
- If advice is needed on a safeguarding issue and the PSO or DSA are not available, 'thirtyone:eight'⁶ provide a helpline that can be contacted on 0303 003 11 11. Please state that you are calling from a Diocese of Bristol Church and contact your PSO as soon as possible to report that you sought advice from 'thirtyone:eight' and any action that was taken.
- Your Local Authority name: Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board
Telephone number - Monday to Friday (01225 718440)
- Your Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) if you are worried about a child
Telephone number - Monday to Friday (0300 456 0108)
Telephone number - Out of Hours/Weekend (0300 456 0100)
- Your Local Authority name: Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board
Telephone Number - Monday to Friday (0300 456 0111)
Telephone number - Out of hours/Weekends (0300 456 0100)
- Police: 999 (emergency) or 101 (non emergency)

⁶ Formerly known as Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

Appendix 2:A quick guide to responding promptly every safeguarding concern or allegation





Appendix 3: Categories of Abuse and additional information

Categories, Definitions and Indicators of Harm (Last Updated April 2017 v4)

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
Physical Adults and Children	Non-accidental harm to the body. From careless rough handling to direct physical violence. Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions.	Hitting, slapping, pinching, shaking, pushing, scalding, burning, dragging, kicking, physical restraint, locking an individual in a room or a car.	History of unexplained falls or minor injuries, bruising which is characteristic of non-accidental injury – hand slap marks, pinch marks, grip marks, bite marks, scalds, flinching, reluctant to undress.
Sexual Adults and Children	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without capacity and/or consent. Individual did not fully understand or was pressured into consenting. Note: A child under 16 years old can never consent to any sexual act	Coercion to be involved in the making or watching of pornographic material. Coercion to touch e.g. of breasts, genitals, anus, mouth, masturbation of either self or others, penetration or attempted penetration of vagina, anus, mouth with or by penis, fingers and or other objects	Pregnancy in a woman unable to give consent, difficulty in walking or sitting with no apparent explanation, torn, stained or bloody underclothes or bedding, Bleeding, bruising to the rectal and/or vaginal area, bruising. Behavioural changes, sexually explicit behaviour, explicit language, self harm, obsession with washing, fear of pregnancy may be exaggerated
Emotional Adults and Children	Behaviour which has a harmful effect on an individual's emotional well being or development, causing mental distress undermining their self-esteem and affecting individual's quality of life. Wilful infliction of mental suffering by a person in a position of trust and power.	Shouting, coercion, bullying, blaming, insulting, ignoring, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, depriving an individual of the right to choice and their privacy, dignity, self - expression, deprivation of contact, undermining self-esteem,	Loss of interest, withdrawn, anxious or depressed, frightened, avoiding eye contact, irritable, aggressive or challenging behaviour, unexplained sleep disturbance, self harm, refusing to eat, deliberate soiling, unusual weight gain or loss

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
		isolation and over-dependence. Failure to provide a loving environment for a child.	
Neglect Adults and Children	Failure of any person who has responsibility for the charge, care or custody of an adult at risk or child to provide the amount and type of care or treatment that a responsible person could be expected to provide.	Fail to meet basic needs including food, environment, access to health care and education, failure to provide for social needs.	Unwashed/ dirty appearance, clothes too small/big, untreated sores or infections, isolation.
Financial Adults	The unauthorised taking (theft), deprivation or misuse of any money, income, assets, funds, personal belongings or property or any resources of an adult at risk without their informed consent or authorisation.	Misuse of power of attorney or appointeeship. Money and possessions stolen, misuse or misappropriating money, valuables or property, possessions or benefits, undue pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, denying the adult at risk the right to access funds, unauthorised disposal of property or possessions, being asked to part with money on false pretences,	Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, Power of Attorney obtained and misused when a person lacks or does not lack mental capacity to understand, unexplained withdrawal of money with no benefits, person lacking goods or services that they can afford, extortionate demands for payments for services
Organisational Adults	Involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide safe, appropriate and acceptable standards of service to adults at risk.	Lack of individualised care, inappropriate confinement or restriction, sensory deprivation, inappropriate use of rules, custom and practice	Whistle blowing policy not in place and accessible, insufficient employees training and development. Organisational standards not meeting those laid down by regulatory bodies,

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
	Mainly relates to health and social care provision but aspects may be relevant to Church settings		service users not treated with dignity and respect, diverse needs not recognized and valued in terms of age, gender, disability, ethnic origin, race or sexual orientation, services not flexible
Discriminatory Adults	Exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals.	Verbal abuse, harassment or similar treatment, unequal treatment, deliberate exclusion from services such as education, health, justice and access to services and protection, harmful or derisive attitudes, inappropriate use of language	Repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment and criminal justice
Modern Slavery	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.	Adult or Child trafficked into UK or between places in UK for purpose of sexual abuse or labour. Adult or Child forced to work as domestic servant. Adult or child forced to work as sex worker, farm labourer, car cleaner.	Individual may not have their passport or Identity documents. They may not have access to or contact with friends and family. May never be left alone, live in poor conditions, not be able to leave of own free will. May have no access to funds. May not know where they are or who they are with.
Self Neglect	A wide range of behaviour involving neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.	May not react to or appropriately fulfil needs for health care, food, warmth. May live in an environment that is an environmental or fire risk and not	Environment which is poorly maintained, dirty, animal infested, cramped to the degree that it places the individuals wellbeing at risk.

Type Of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
		take any measure to reduce risk or inadequate measures.	May have untreated or inadequately treated physical health issues.
Domestic Violence	Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. Age range 16+	Includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence; Female Genital Mutilation; forced marriage.	Appears to be afraid of partner / of making own choices, behaves as though she/he deserves to be hurt or mistreated, low self-esteem or appear to be withdrawn, appears unable or unwilling to leave perpetrator, makes excuses for or condones the behaviour of the person alleged to have caused harm, blames abuse on themselves
Domestic Violence Children	Witnessing the above incidents or patterns of behaviour.		Appears to be afraid of the adults that are responsible for their care, withdrawn, low self-esteem, may cause others harm.
Spiritual Abuse ⁷⁸ (not defined in Statutory Guidance)	Inappropriate use of religious belief or practice	The misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing or deliverance ministries which may result in various types of harm.	Could be any of the above.

Some Additional Information:

Child Sexual Exploitation: All children and young people can be at risk of sexual exportation. This includes boys and girls of any age. This is a form of sexual abuse. Whilst young people can give consent to sexual acts from the age of 16 (so long as they have the capacity to do so) they continue to be a risk of sexual exploitation beyond their 16th birthday. **Any concern that a child or**

⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf

⁸ [http://files.ccpas.co.uk/documents/Help-SpiritualAbuse%20\(2015\).pdf](http://files.ccpas.co.uk/documents/Help-SpiritualAbuse%20(2015).pdf)

young person may be at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation must be reported immediately to Children's Social Care or the police. Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Female Genital Mutilation: Female genital mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. It has been estimated that over 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the UK each year, and that 66,000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM. However, the true extent is unknown, due to the "hidden" nature of the crime. The girls may be taken to their countries of origin so that FGM can be carried out during the summer holidays, allowing them time to "heal" before they return to school. There are also worries that some girls may have FGM performed in the UK. Any concern that a child or adult who may be vulnerable may be at risk of FGM must be reported immediately to the relevant Local Authority or directly to police.

Terrorism and Extremism: Any person may become drawn into extremism or sympathy with such views and into terrorism. This will often happen through contacts made via the internet but a culture that supports this can develop in any community, group, school or faith organisation. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places duties on certain bodies, not including Faith Organisations (excepting where such an organisation runs a school or other relevant premises) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Everybody should be alert to any indication that a person or group may be developing or has developed an interest or ideology that may include harm to others. **Any concern related to this whether for a child or adult must be reported to the police without delay.**