



St John's Wood Church

Safeguarding Procedures

This document sets out the procedures by which the PCC gives effect to its commitment, in its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, to “nurture, protect and safeguard all our members, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults”. It should be read alongside the most recent edition of the House of Bishops’ *Parish Safeguarding Handbook*, and any guidance or instruction issued by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

1. The Parish Safeguarding Officer

- 1.1 The PCC will appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO).
- 1.2 Details of how to contact the PSO will be prominently displayed, together with his/her photograph, on the parish website and in the church porch.
- 1.3 The PSO will undertake regular Safeguarding Training, in accordance with the guidance or instruction issued from time to time by the Diocesan Safeguarding Office.
- 1.4 The PSO and Vicar will meet at least three times a year to review the working of these procedures.
- 1.5 The PSO may (if not already a member of the PCC) attend any meeting of the PCC without invitation, and will be sent notice of meetings. (‘Safeguarding’ will be a named agenda item at every PCC meeting).

2. DBS Disclosures

- 2.1 In the case of every employee or role-holder (paid or voluntary), the Vicar and PSO will determine whether their post requires an Enhanced DBS Disclosure. It will be the normal practice that every person who is eligible for an Enhanced DBS Disclosure applies for one.
- 2.2 While waiting for their Enhanced DBS Disclosure to be issued, the employee or role-holder may begin their work, on condition of having first completed a Confidential Self-Declaration. Where appropriate, the incumbent will also arrange a risk assessment.
- 2.3 The practical forwarding of DBS Disclosures will be undertaken by the Parish Administrator, who will be trained and authorized as an Evidence Checker. The PCC will also ensure that one other of its members (currently the incumbent) is empowered as an Evidence Checker.

3. Reporting concerns

- 3.1 Any safeguarding concern or disclosure will be reported immediately to the PSO. The PSO will be responsible for reporting such concerns or disclosures to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team in accordance with the reporting thresholds set by the Diocese,

independently of the incumbent (who should, however, be informed as soon as possible and as far as is appropriate of any report).

4. Annual audit

4.1 The PSO will conduct an annual audit of the parish Safeguarding procedures and their operation, and report the outcome to the PCC (this audit will no longer be required once the parish's Safeguarding Dashboard has reached the required threshold).

5. Handling of data

5.1 Any data gathered by the PSO, the incumbent, or any member of the PCC in connection with these procedures will be handled and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations, and such other guidance or instruction as is issued from time by the Diocesan Safeguarding Office.

6. Offender Agreements etc.

6.1 The moment the PSO or incumbent becomes aware that someone has begun to attend church for whom there may need to be an Offender Agreement or Covenant of Care in place, they will report this to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and the Archdeacon, and follow their advice.

7. Safer recruitment

7.1 Appropriate safeguarding questions will be included in the interview process for any post whose nature would allow the postholder to build a relationship of trust with a child or vulnerable adult, as well as those having direct contact with children and vulnerable adults in their work.

7.2 References will always be taken up when appointments are made, and explanations will be sought for any gaps in an employment record.

8. Imminent risk

8.1 In the case of a perceived imminent risk of serious harm to a child or vulnerable adult, the person who first identifies the risk should immediately call 999.

Date last reviewed: July 2023

Date of next review: July 2024