

St. Mary's Woburn- Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection Policy. (adopted by the PCC on 26 May 2016)

General Purpose Statement

St. Mary's Woburn seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and vulnerable persons who participate in our programmes and activities. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable persons within the legal framework of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

By implementing the practices below, our goal is to protect the children and vulnerable persons of St. Mary's from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations. (Apart from our Rector, Rev'd Stephen Nuth, we only have volunteers at present. This policy will cover future employees.)

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms "child" or "children" include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term "worker" includes both paid and volunteer persons who work with children. The term vulnerable person is someone in receipt of regulated care from Social Services, Health Services, care at home or in need of regular transport.

(See appendix A for full definition of a vulnerable person.)

Selection of Workers/helpers

All persons who desire to work with the children or vulnerable persons participating in our church activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

a) **Six Month Rule**

No applicant will be considered for any position involving contact with minors or vulnerable adults until she/he has been involved with St. Mary's or a recognised organization such as Scripture Union for a minimum of six months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children.

b) **Written Application**

Prospective Employees should complete an application form or curriculum vitae.

c) **Personal Interview**

Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview should be

scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

d) **Reference Checks**

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicant's references will be checked. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferably from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. Documentation (or notes of telephone calls) of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at the church. In addition, a reference will be sought from their current minister or pastor.

e) **Training**

Appropriate training guidance and supervision should be given and all persons

working with children and vulnerable persons should be shown this policy.

Disclosure Barring Check

A national criminal background check is required for all employees/helpers regardless of position and for the following categories of volunteers:

1. Those who will be involved in our Sunday School, Followers, Noahs Ark, choir, giving regular transport to children or vulnerable persons or any other activities set up in the future.
2. Those who will be involved in overnight activities with children.

It has been advised by the Diocesan Child Protection Officer that persons working in crèche do not need a national criminal check if there are persons in the congregation who have the background check. However, if the crèche was to be moved to the Lady Chapel area or any other area away from the congregation then checks would be necessary.

Members of the Open church team do not need a DB check. There should always be two people on duty and preferably, a woman and man should be on duty together where at all possible. Persons should not spend anytime alone with children visitors or vulnerable persons.

Before a background check is run, prospective workers/helpers will be asked to sign an authorisation form allowing the church to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorisation form, s/he will be unable to work with children.

What constitutes a disqualifying offence that will keep an individual from working with children and vulnerable persons will be determined by the Child Protection Officer and Rector on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for an offense involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a

criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event.

(Full details on obtaining DBS clearance can be found on the Diocesan website under the heading 'Obtaining Clearance under the Child Protection Measure'.)

- The background check authorisation form and results will be maintained in confidence on file at the church.
- No person should take up the post until suitable references and DBS results have been received.
- DBS checks should be renewed every 5 Years.

Any enquiries concerning DBS issues should be forwarded to the Diocesan Child Protection Officer Chris Lee, telephone (Office hours only) 01299 841269

Mobile: 07811467511

or:

Dr N Darwood

The Bishops Lodge

Bedford Road

Cardington

Bedford

MK44 3SS

Email: bishopbedfordpa@stalbans.anglican.org

What is 'Abuse'?

For purposes of this policy, "abuse" is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child or vulnerable person's physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- 1 **Physical abuse** - any physical injury to a child/ vulnerable person that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, fractures and biting.
- 2 **Emotional abuse** - emotional injury when the child/vulnerable person is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing. A child/person may appear withdrawn, anxious, clingy or depressed.
- 3 **Sexual abuse** - any sexual activity between a child/vulnerable person and an adult or between a child and another child including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- 4 **Neglect** - depriving a child/vulnerable person of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

It can often be difficult to recognise abuse. The signs listed in these guidelines are

only indicators and many can have reasonable explanations. Children may behave strangely or seem unhappy for many reasons, as they move through the stages of childhood or their families experience changes. It is nevertheless important to know what could indicate that abuse is taking place and to be alert to the need to consult further.

Someone can abuse a child or vulnerable person by actively inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place within a family, in an institutional or community setting including abuse of one person to another within our church, by telephone or on the Internet. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to a child/vulnerable person or by a complete stranger.

Suspicion of Abuse of a child

If a member of St. Mary's becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care or the conduct of an adult towards a child, this should be reported immediately to The Child Protection Officer, the Rector, or the Diocesan Child Protection Officer. **Please do not allow this reporting to be delayed.** Certain circumstances may dictate that the local authority social care or the Police should be contacted first. In this instance the Diocesan Child Protection Officer should be informed at the first opportunity.

Disclosure of Abuse by a child

If a child disclose abuse, one should accept that they are not lying and write down as concisely and accurately as possible what is said. One should not interrupt, question the person, or criticise the perpetrator. Tell the child what will happen next and don't make any promises to them. You must NOT ask leading questions, i.e. "Was it your Dad that caused that bruise?" You must pass on the disclosure and make this clear to them at the beginning.

In the event that a criminal incident occurred at St Mary's during one of our children's activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. Remove the child and notify the parent or guardian. Encourage the parent to report the incident to the police and state that you would be happy to be a witness.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct should be immediately asked to leave the premises or placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.
3. The Diocesan Child Protection Officer should be notified **immediately** and will deal with the situation from then on.

Suspicion of Abuse of a Vulnerable Person

Should someone other than a child disclose abuse by a member of St. Marys then the above applies. Should they report abuse by someone outside of St. Mary's record exactly what they say and notify persons as above.

Two Adult Rule

There should be a minimum of two adult workers in attendance at all times when children/vulnerable persons are being supervised during our church activities. On occasions such as confirmation advice the rector, Steve Nuth, will meet with the parent and child. The Rector will meet with people thought to be vulnerable on his own but would bring another person if he felt it necessary.

Home Visits

People should be DBS checked for regular duties which entail visiting Church family at home such as home communion or regular diarized visits. This is as much for the protection of the visitor as the visited.

Teenage Workers

We recognise that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for volunteers aged under 18 to assist in caring for children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- 1 Must be at least age 14
- 2 Must be screened as specified above.
- 3 Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of St. Mary's not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children, guardians of vulnerable persons, church attendee, or elderly with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). These situations should be addressed with the leaders of the activity concerned such as Sunday School Leaders, Followers or Leaders of Noah's Ark, Leaders of Lets Get Together etc. to develop a plan of action.

Bathroom Guidelines

No helper should take a child to the toilet alone. Children attending Sunday School or Followers should be able to take care of themselves while Parents/Carers at Mother and Tots and crèche should take their own children to the toilet. If through illness a helper needs to go to the toilet with a child, elderly or vulnerable person, they should enter the event in the incident book in the servery drawer, then notify parent/carer.

Accidental Injuries to Children/Vulnerable Persons

In the event that a child or vulnerable person is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

1. Records should be reviewed to check allergies before administering First Aid.
2. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (plasters, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care. **Wherever possible carry out First Aid in view of others.** For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called
3. Once the child/vulnerable person have received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional. The book is in the drawer in the servery.

Registers

A record or register should be kept to show who attends children's activities and any activities that have vulnerable persons attending. This should include address, phone number and medical conditions one should be aware of.

Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Route to take

If there is a sense of general unease concerning someone or something then:

1. Speak to Mai Law (LEAD RECRUITER for ST. Marys)
2. Mai will pass this information to the Rector, Steve Nuth.
3. If necessary, Steve will speak to Diocesan CPO for more advice..

In cases involving a possible Criminal act:

1. Take the steps above contacting Steve Nuth or Mai Law immediately who will contact the Diocesan CPO. It is up to the parent/guardian to contact the police in the case of a criminal act against a child/vulnerable person.

Useful Contact Numbers

Designated Child Protection AND Vulnerable Persons Officer for St. Mary's Woburn:

Mai Law

Telephone number:

If Mai is not available, speak to Steve Nuth on (01525 290225) or **warden if Steve is not available either. Details to be put here if agreed**

Diocesan Child Protection Officer- Mr Chris Lees

Tel (Office hours only) 01299 841269

Mobile: 07811467511

Children's Schools and Families Team for Bedfordshire

South and Mid-Bedfordshire 01582 818499

Out of hours team: 01525 404396

Police Contacts

Luton and South Bedfordshire: 01582 401212

Mid Bedfordshire 01234 841212

Appendix A

The term 'vulnerable person' refers to someone who is in receipt of a regulated activity in relation to vulnerable adults. Regulated activity is defined as the provision of health care treatment in any setting; the provision of relevant personal care in any setting to a person who needs care because of age, illness or disability; the provision of assistance in relation to general household matters and especially if it involves money; and the transportation of individuals where the transport is provided because of age, health or disability.

Appendix B will contain those persons and their position who have CRB/DBS clearance.