Parish of Christ Church, Clifton

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults Policy and Procedure

Document control

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Main policy

1. Purpose, scope and governing framework

1.1 Purpose

Christ Church, Clifton is committed to creating and maintaining a church environment in which children, young people and adults are welcomed, respected and protected from harm.

This document sets out the PCC's safeguarding policy and the arrangements through which the parish will implement it. The main policy establishes the PCC's commitments, responsibilities and governance arrangements. The appendices provide the operational procedures and safer working arrangements needed to put those commitments into practice.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole church community. Everyone who worships, works, volunteers or participates in parish life should remain alert to the wellbeing of others and report safeguarding concerns. Responsibility for assessing and managing a safeguarding concern does not rest with individual congregation members, volunteers or activity leaders. Those responsibilities sit with the Parish Safeguarding Officer(s), the Diocese of Bristol and the appropriate statutory agencies.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all activities conducted in the name of Christ Church, Clifton and to everyone appointed, elected, employed or authorised to undertake a role on behalf of the parish.

People within scope	**Application**
Clergy and licensed ministers	All ministry, worship, pastoral and leadership activity
PCC members and churchwardens	Governance, oversight and implementation
Employees and contractors	Work undertaken for or on behalf of the parish
Volunteers and activity leaders	All authorised parish roles and activities
Congregation members	Responsibility to report concerns and maintain confidentiality

External organisations	Safeguarding conditions specified in premises-hire or partnership agreements

For this policy, a child or young person is anyone under 18 years of age.

An adult safeguarding concern may arise where an adult has needs for care and support, is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and, because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from the abuse, neglect or associated risk.

A person's circumstances and ability to protect themselves may vary over time. The parish will avoid labelling people as inherently vulnerable solely because of age, disability, illness, diagnosis or social circumstances. It will consider the person, the context, the nature of the risk and the impact of any imbalance of power.

1.3 Governing framework

The PCC will follow the current Church of England Safeguarding E-manual, applicable House of Bishops' Codes of Practice and guidance, and the safeguarding policies and procedures of the Diocese of Bristol.

The Church of England E-manual is the principal source of current national requirements. It includes Codes of Practice relating to reporting concerns and allegations, managing concerns and allegations, safer recruitment and people management, learning and development, and safeguarding practice reviews. The Church of England also provides a Parish Safeguarding Toolkit containing resources on referrals, disclosures, safer recruitment, learning and survivor support.

The Diocese of Bristol provides parish safeguarding guidance, policy templates, recording forms, safer working guidance and activity-specific resources. Its published essential parish guidance includes the Safer Environment and Activities guidance and Code of Safer Working Practice.

The parish will also have regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, the Care Act 2014, current Care and Support Statutory Guidance, data protection legislation and local safeguarding procedures. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 expressly applies to voluntary, charitable and faith-based organisations.

Current national, diocesan and statutory requirements take precedence where any inconsistency arises between this document and a higher-order requirement. The PSO(s) will bring any material inconsistency to the attention of the incumbent and PCC so that this document can be amended.

2. Policy statement and commitments

2.1 Policy statement

The PCC adopts the safeguarding principles and requirements of the Church of England and the Diocese of Bristol.

Christ Church, Clifton commits to promoting a safer environment and culture; recruiting, training and supporting people safely; responding promptly to safeguarding concerns and allegations; providing appropriate support to victims, survivors and other affected people; responding appropriately to people who are the subject of concerns or allegations; and managing safely anyone who may pose a risk to others.

The parish will place the safety and welfare of children and adults above concern for organisational reputation, personal loyalty or avoidance of embarrassment. It will challenge abuses of power, breaches of trust and conduct that places another person at risk.

2.2 Parish commitments

Christ Church, Clifton will maintain a culture in which people can raise concerns, ask questions and challenge unsafe practice. The parish will listen to those who report harm and will respond without avoidable delay.

The parish will appoint suitably trained Parish Safeguarding Officer(s) to work with the incumbent, churchwardens and PCC. The PSO(s) will have sufficient authority, access to information and support to carry out the role.

Clergy, employees and volunteers will be recruited, trained, supervised and supported in accordance with the requirements applicable to their roles. No person will undertake unsupervised work for which safer recruitment has not been completed.

Safeguarding contact details and reporting routes will be displayed on church premises and published on the parish website. Information will be presented in a form that is clear and accessible to children, adults and people with additional communication needs.

When a concern arises, the parish will take proportionate steps to protect those who may be at risk. It will consult the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and make referrals to statutory agencies where required. The parish will cooperate with police, local authority, diocesan and other authorised safeguarding processes.

The parish will offer appropriate pastoral support to victims, survivors and other affected people. Such support will respect the individual's choices and boundaries. It will not replace formal safeguarding action or place pressure on anyone to forgive, reconcile, remain silent or participate in a church process.

A person who is the subject of an allegation may also require pastoral support. Wherever practicable, someone who has no role in assessing or managing the concern will provide that support. Providing support does not imply a conclusion about the allegation.

Where a person may pose a risk to children or adults, the parish will work with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and relevant statutory agencies. Attendance or participation may be subject to an assessment, a written safeguarding agreement, defined boundaries and appropriate monitoring.

2.3 Equal protection and respectful practice

The parish will respond to safeguarding concerns without unlawful discrimination. It will consider how disability, language, culture, race, age, economic circumstances, social isolation, previous trauma and unequal power may affect a person's ability to disclose harm or obtain help.

The parish will listen to children and adults and take their views seriously. It will provide adjustments or communication support where reasonably required.

The child's welfare will remain central where a concern involves a child. In adult safeguarding, the parish will respect the adult's autonomy and desired outcomes wherever this is consistent with lawful and proportionate safeguarding action.

3. Safeguarding responsibilities

3.1 The Parochial Church Council

The PCC holds collective responsibility for ensuring that applicable safeguarding Codes of Practice and House of Bishops' guidance are implemented within the parish. Operational tasks may be delegated, but the PCC retains accountability for governance and assurance.

The PCC will receive proportionate assurance about recruitment, training, safer activities, premises, record management and implementation of agreed actions. It should not receive identifiable case information unless a specific legal or safeguarding purpose requires disclosure.

The PCC will appoint and support the PSO(s), ensure that safeguarding appears regularly on its agenda and consider the annual parish safeguarding report. Where the report identifies a material deficiency, the PCC will approve a time-limited remedial plan and monitor completion.

3.2 The incumbent

The incumbent shares responsibility with the PCC for promoting a safe culture and ensuring that safeguarding is embedded within leadership, worship, pastoral ministry and parish decision-making.

The incumbent will work constructively with the PSO, act on concerns about unsafe practice and support appropriate referrals and precautionary measures. The incumbent must not investigate allegations or allow pastoral relationships, organisational reputation or personal loyalty to obstruct safeguarding action.

Where a concern relates to the incumbent, it must be reported directly to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team rather than managed within the parish.

3.3 Churchwardens

Churchwardens will support implementation of this policy and contribute to oversight of buildings, activities and governance. They will make sure that safeguarding information is displayed, that premises risks are addressed and that concerns about parish practice are escalated.

Churchwardens may be involved in precautionary or risk-management arrangements when advised by the Diocese. They must not undertake an independent investigation.

3.4 Parish Safeguarding Officer

The PSO is the parish's principal point of contact for safeguarding advice and concerns. The PSO(s) will receive concerns, ensure that immediate risks are addressed, seek diocesan or statutory advice and make or facilitate referrals where required.

The PSO(s) will maintain secure case records, provide or coordinate safeguarding advice, monitor compliance and report governance information to the PCC. The PSO(s) will maintain current contact information and ensure continuity arrangements during absence or transition.

The PSO(s) do not assume sole responsibility for safeguarding. The PCC, incumbent, activity leaders, employees and volunteers retain the responsibilities attached to their roles.

3.5 Operations Manager or parish administrator

The Operations Manager or authorised administrator will maintain administrative records relating to safer recruitment, training and role status. These records must be held separately from safeguarding case records unless there is a legitimate reason to connect them.

Access will be restricted according to role. Administrative staff must refer safeguarding content to the PSO(s) rather than attempting to assess or resolve it.

3.6 Activity leaders and line managers

Activity leaders and line managers will apply the parish's safer working requirements, confirm that workers have been authorised, arrange suitable supervision and report concerns promptly.

They will undertake proportionate activity risk assessments, maintain relevant attendance and emergency information, and address unsafe conduct or boundary breaches. They must not delay reporting while attempting to manage a safeguarding concern within the activity team.

3.7 Clergy, staff and volunteers

Everyone undertaking a parish role must follow this policy and the Code of Safer Working Practice, complete required safeguarding learning, maintain appropriate boundaries and report concerns without delay.

They must cooperate with authorised safeguarding processes and handle information securely. They must not investigate, confront the person who may have caused harm, promise secrecy or disclose information unnecessarily.

3.8 The congregation

Members of the congregation are encouraged to report anything that causes concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or adult. They do not need proof and should not investigate the matter themselves.

Anyone may contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, police or local authority directly. This is particularly appropriate where the concern involves the PSO(s), incumbent or several parish leaders, or where the person believes the parish has not responded adequately.

4. Implementation, assurance and review

4.1 Implementation

The policy will be available on the parish website and accessible on church premises. All clergy, employees, volunteers and relevant leaders will receive information about the policy during induction.

The parish will maintain supporting procedures and guidance proportionate to its activities. These will include safer recruitment, safer working, digital communications, photography, pastoral visiting, transport, premises hire, information governance and management of safeguarding records.

4.2 Safeguarding assurance

The PSO(s) will coordinate an annual review of implementation. The review will consider the matters in the following table.

Area	Minimum assurance question

Governance	Has the PCC reviewed the policy and received an annual report?
Recruitment	Are all relevant roles subject to the required safer recruitment process?
Learning	Is required safeguarding learning current and properly recorded?
Activities	Do leaders use suitable risk assessments and safer working arrangements?
Reporting	Are current reporting routes displayed and understood?
Records	Are safeguarding records secure, accessible to authorised people and capable of being handed over safely?
Premises	Do parish and external activities comply with appropriate safeguarding conditions?
Risk management	Are safeguarding agreements and other risk arrangements current and reviewed?
Improvement	Have actions from incidents, audits, complaints or reviews been completed?

The Diocese of Bristol provides parish dashboards and other resources designed to support safeguarding administration and assurance. The parish may use these alongside its own governance records.

4.3 Review

The PCC will review this policy at least annually. It will review it sooner following a material incident, significant organisational change or amendment to applicable national, diocesan or statutory requirements.

Minor administrative changes, such as updating a telephone number, may be made by the PSO(s) with the agreement of the incumbent or PCC secretary. Any material change to responsibilities, thresholds or procedures requires PCC approval.

4.4 Adoption

The Parochial Church Council of Christ Church, Clifton adopted this policy on 28th September 2026.

Appendix A: Operational safeguarding procedure

A1 Recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns

What constitutes a concern

A safeguarding concern may arise from something seen, heard, reported or disclosed. It may concern a specific incident, a pattern of behaviour, an unsafe environment, a breach of trust or information suggesting that a person may pose a risk.

A concern may relate to conduct within the parish, another organisation, a family or household, an institution, an online environment or events outside the church. The parish's responsibility is to respond appropriately to the information it receives, rather than determining where the concern originated.

No person needs proof before raising a concern. It is enough that something indicates that a child or adult may have suffered harm, may be at risk or may require safeguarding help.

Responding to a disclosure

The first response can materially affect whether a person feels heard and able to continue seeking help. The recipient should remain calm, listen carefully and take the information seriously.

The person should be allowed to speak in their own words and at their own pace. Questions should be limited to what is necessary to clarify immediate safety and the basic nature of the concern. Open prompts may be used, but repeated, leading or investigative questioning must be avoided.

The recipient should explain that the information cannot be kept secret and will need to be shared with people who can help. They should avoid promising a particular outcome.

The recipient should reassure the person that raising the concern was appropriate. They should not express disbelief, blame or shock, explain another person's conduct, or suggest that the concern should be settled privately.

Immediate action

Situation	**Required action**
Immediate danger or urgent need for police or medical assistance	Call 999
Concern about a child without immediate danger	Report promptly to the PSO(s) and follow diocesan or local referral advice
Concern about an adult without immediate danger	Report promptly to the PSO(s), taking account of the adult's wishes and any risk to others
Concern about a church officer	Report without avoidable delay to the PSO(s) and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. Do not investigate, confront or notify the person concerned unless authorised by the Diocese or a statutory agency. If the PSO(s) is implicated or unavailable, report directly to the Diocese.

Concern about the PSO	Report to the incumbent and Diocesan Safeguarding Team
Concern about the incumbent	Report directly to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team
Inadequate parish response or conflict of interest	Report directly to the Diocese or statutory agency

The Diocese of Bristol advises calling 999 where someone is at immediate risk. Its current published contact details for safeguarding advice are 0117 9060100 and safeguarding@bristoldiocese.org.

What must not happen

The recipient must not investigate, confront a person who may be implicated, contact witnesses to test the account or attempt mediation. They must not circulate the information among colleagues or congregation members.

Relevant messages, documents or other material should be preserved. The recipient should not search for further material or ask others to do so unless instructed by an authorised safeguarding or statutory professional.

A2 Reporting and referral

Reporting to the PSO

A safeguarding concern should be reported to the PSO(s) as soon as possible. Reporting to the PSO(s) must not delay contact with the police, local authority, Diocesan Safeguarding Team or emergency services where direct or urgent action may be required.

Anyone may report directly to those agencies. They should do so where there is immediate risk, the PSO is unavailable, the concern involves parish leadership, a conflict of interest exists, or they believe the parish response is inadequate.

The PSO(s) will clarify immediate safety, the identity of relevant people, what has already been done and whether direct contact with the Diocese or a statutory agency is required.

The PSO(s) will not investigate. The PSO(s) may clarify information needed to make a referral but should avoid eliciting a detailed account that could interfere with a subsequent process.

Direct reporting

Anyone may contact the police, local authority or Diocesan Safeguarding Team directly. The parish must not discourage or obstruct direct reporting.

Direct reporting is particularly appropriate where immediate action is required, the relevant parish contact is unavailable, the concern involves parish leadership, there is a conflict of interest or the reporting person considers that the parish response has been inadequate.

Decisions and escalation

The PSO(s) will record advice received, decisions made and actions taken. Where a decision is made not to refer, the rationale must be explicit and proportionate to the known risk.

A person who remains concerned after reporting to the PSO(s) may escalate the matter to the incumbent, Diocese or statutory agency. If the concern relates to the incumbent, escalation should bypass parish leadership and go directly to the Diocese or statutory agency.

Supporting the reporting person

The person who reports a concern should receive confirmation that the information has been received and acted upon, subject to confidentiality. They should not be promised access to case information or the eventual outcome.

No person should suffer retaliation or disadvantage for raising a concern in good faith. An unsubstantiated or mistaken concern is not, by itself, evidence of malicious reporting.

A3 Concerns involving church officers or people in positions of trust

A concern involving clergy, an employee, volunteer, PCC member, churchwarden, activity leader or other appointed person requires prompt diocesan involvement.

The person receiving the concern must not notify the individual concerned unless the Diocese or statutory agency has authorised this. Premature notification could increase risk, affect evidence, place pressure on the reporting person or compromise an authorised process.

The parish will follow the current Church of England Codes of Practice on reporting and managing safeguarding concerns and allegations. These are identified within the E-manual as Codes carrying a duty to comply.

The Diocese and relevant statutory agencies will advise on notification, referral, precautionary arrangements, communications and pastoral support.

A temporary change to duties or attendance may be required while a concern is assessed. Such action is a neutral safeguarding measure and does not determine whether the allegation is true.

Appropriate support may be offered to affected people. Separate individuals should ordinarily support the reporting person, any person harmed and the person who is the subject of the concern. Those providing pastoral support must not investigate or act as an intermediary.

The parish will not determine internally whether an allegation meets a safeguarding threshold before consulting the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. The Diocese will advise on triage, statutory referral, notification, precautionary measures and management of conflicts of interest.

A4 Consent, confidentiality and information sharing

General principles

Safeguarding information will be handled confidentially but cannot be treated as secret. Information will be shared where there is a lawful and proportionate safeguarding reason.

The parish will share only what is necessary, with those who need it, for a defined purpose. Decisions should take account of safety, the person's wishes, the risk to others, legal obligations and advice from the Diocese or statutory agencies.

The person affected should ordinarily be told what information will be shared and why. This may be deferred where informing them could increase risk, compromise a process or alert a person who may have caused harm.

Children

A child's views should be heard and taken seriously, having regard to age and understanding. The recipient must not promise secrecy.

Parents or carers should ordinarily be involved where this is safe and appropriate. Advice should be obtained before contacting them where doing so may increase risk, affect evidence or compromise a police, local authority or diocesan process.

Adults

An adult's wishes and desired outcomes should guide the response wherever possible. Consent should ordinarily be sought before sharing the adult's personal information.

Information may need to be shared without consent where there is immediate or serious danger, another person may be at risk, coercion may affect the adult's decision, the adult may lack capacity for the relevant decision, a serious offence may have occurred or another legal basis applies.

Capacity is specific to the decision and time. Disability, diagnosis or an apparently unwise decision does not establish lack of capacity.

Where uncertainty remains, the PSO(s) will seek advice and document the reasoning.

Internal confidentiality

The incumbent, churchwardens and PCC do not automatically need access to safeguarding case details. The PSO(s) will provide sufficient information for legitimate governance or risk-management purposes while minimising identifiable information.

Information must not be shared for curiosity, informal prayer circulation, congregational reassurance or management of reputation.

A5 Recording, secure storage and retention

Creating the record

A record should be made as soon as possible after receiving a concern. It should be factual, legible, dated and attributable to its author.

Record element	**Required content**
Context	Date, time, location and people present
Information received	What was said, seen or reported
Direct wording	The person's own words where material
Clarification	Any questions asked and responses given
Immediate risk	Any apparent danger or urgent need
Action	Calls, referrals, advice and protective steps
Information sharing	What was shared, with whom, when and why
Decision-making	Reasons for actions or decisions
Authentication	Author's name, role and completion date

The record should distinguish observation, reported information, established fact, interpretation, advice and decision.

An original record must not be retrospectively rewritten. Any later clarification or correction should be added as a dated entry.

Electronic records during the interim period

Electronic records may be created or received where operationally necessary. They must be held only within an authorised, access-restricted parish account or storage location and must not be retained in personal email accounts, personal OneDrive folders, routine Teams channels, general SharePoint libraries, shared parish mailboxes or unmanaged personal devices.

Identifiable safeguarding information must be sent only through authorised parish accounts to verified recipients who have a legitimate need to receive it. Email circulation must be minimised. Relevant electronic material must be preserved and transferred into the authoritative case record in a form that remains complete, legible, dated and attributable.

Where temporary local access is unavoidable, the file must be protected, transferred promptly to the approved record and deleted securely from the local device. Multifactor authentication must remain enabled for every authorised parish account used to handle safeguarding information.

Transition to Microsoft 365

The parish intends to replace the paper-based system with a dedicated, access-restricted safeguarding location within its authorised Microsoft 365 environment. The PCC must approve the record-management arrangements before electronic records become the authoritative case record.

Before migration, the PCC must receive documented assurance that the proposed arrangement identifies the system owner and record owner; restricts access by role and need; uses multifactor authentication; provides audit logs and version history; supports retention, legal hold, secure disposal and formal handover; limits administrator access; provides tested continuity and recovery arrangements; and includes a process for responding to unauthorised access, loss or disclosure.

The PSO(s) and the person responsible for parish data protection must confirm in writing that these controls have been configured and tested. The migration plan must include an inventory, secure scanning or transfer method, quality assurance, reconciliation, treatment of original paper records and documented approval of the date on which the Microsoft 365 record becomes authoritative. No original safeguarding record may be destroyed solely because it has been scanned.

Retention and disposal

Safeguarding records will be retained in accordance with current Church of England and diocesan requirements. Disposal must be authorised, documented and undertaken securely. No safeguarding record should be deleted or destroyed merely because a concern was unsubstantiated, a person left the parish or no further action was taken. The record may remain relevant to later information, complaints, reviews or legal processes.

Handover and continuity

When a PSO leaves or changes role, the parish will arrange a formal handover. The handover will confirm the location and status of open and closed records, outstanding actions, key or access arrangements and any scheduled reviews. Departing personnel must not retain copies. Keys and electronic access must be removed promptly when no longer required.

Data incidents

Any suspected loss, misdirection, unauthorised access or disclosure must be reported immediately to the PSO(s) and the person responsible for parish data protection. The parish will assess whether notification to the Diocese, Information Commissioner or affected individuals is required. The safeguarding implications of the incident must be considered separately from its data-protection implications.

A6 Responding to people who may pose a risk

Where information indicates that a person attending or seeking to attend the church may pose a risk to children or adults, the PSO(s) must consult the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

The parish must not create an informal private arrangement. It may be necessary to obtain information from police, probation or another authorised agency and to complete a structured risk assessment.

A written safeguarding agreement may specify which services and activities the person may attend, where they may sit or move, who will accompany them, which parts of the premises they must not enter, expected conduct, confidentiality and the consequences of non-compliance.

The person should be told who needs to know about the agreement and why. Information will be restricted to those responsible for implementing it.

The agreement must be reviewed at defined intervals and whenever circumstances change. A breach must be reported to the PSO(s) immediately and may require diocesan or statutory action.

Pastoral support may be offered, but it must operate within the safeguarding plan. A wish to welcome or support a person cannot justify placing others at avoidable risk.

Appendix B: Safer working and activities

B1 Safer working practice

All clergy, staff and volunteers must conduct themselves in a way that promotes dignity, maintains appropriate boundaries and protects people from harm or misunderstanding.

The Church of England's Code of Safer Working Practice and Safer Environment and Activities guidance provide the principal standards for parish practice. The Diocese of Bristol identifies both as essential parish guidance.

Relationships arising through ministry or a church role involve trust and may involve unequal power. The person holding the role has responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries.

Physical contact should be appropriate to the setting, responsive to the person's needs and never imposed. Private meetings should take place in suitable locations, with appropriate

visibility or other safeguards. Favouritism, coercive behaviour, humiliation and use of spiritual authority to control another person are unacceptable.

Gifts, money and personal hospitality require careful judgement. Significant gifts to or from a person receiving pastoral support should be discussed with a line manager or activity leader. Workers must not borrow money from, lend money to, or enter private financial arrangements with people they support through their role.

A worker who becomes concerned about their own conduct or a developing boundary issue must seek advice promptly. Early disclosure allows proportionate action and should be treated as responsible practice.

B2 Planning and managing church activities

Every regular parish activity must have an identified leader who is accountable for safe planning and delivery.

The activity leader will complete and review a proportionate risk assessment. The assessment should consider the nature of the activity, participants, venue, staffing, supervision, access, communication, emergencies, transport and any additional support needs.

Planning matter	Expected arrangement
Leadership	A named and authorised activity leader
Staffing	Sufficient suitable workers for the activity and participants
Attendance	An appropriate attendance or registration record
Emergency information	Accessible to authorised leaders
Premises	Safe, suitable and appropriately accessible
Supervision	Clear allocation of responsibilities
First aid	Proportionate arrangements and access to assistance
Communication	Approved methods and contact boundaries
Incidents	Recording and escalation process
Review	Periodic and event-triggered reassessment

Staffing should not rely solely on a rigid numerical ratio. The leader should consider participants' ages, needs, the activity, venue layout, workers' experience and foreseeable emergencies.

Where the preferred staffing arrangement cannot be met, the activity should be adapted, postponed or cancelled unless a documented alternative reduces risk adequately.

Attendance records and emergency contact information must be handled securely and retained only for an appropriate period, subject to any need to preserve information relating to an incident or concern.

Participants should know whom to approach if they feel unsafe or worried. Activities for children and young people should provide age-appropriate information about safeguarding contacts.

B3 Digital communications, photography and online activity

Church-related communications must use methods approved by the parish. Workers should avoid using personal accounts where an authorised church account or platform is available.

Communications should relate to the activity or pastoral purpose, use appropriate language and occur at reasonable times. Where communication involves a child, the method should reflect current parish guidance and include parents, carers or another authorised adult where required.

Disappearing-message functions should not be used for substantive church communications. Relevant communications must be capable of preservation where a concern arises.

Online meetings and groups should have an identified leader, clear participation rules and appropriate moderation. Private one-to-one online meetings require the same consideration of boundaries, visibility and accountability as face-to-face contact.

Photography and recording must comply with the parish privacy notice and consent arrangements. Consent for participation in an activity does not automatically constitute consent for photography, filming or online publication.

Images should not be accompanied by unnecessary identifying information. Images must not be used where publication may create a safeguarding risk or conflict with an individual safety plan.

The Diocese of Bristol provides parish templates and resources for media consent, photography and filming.

B4 Pastoral contact, home visits and lone working

Pastoral contact should have a clear purpose and remain within the competence and role of the person providing it. Workers must recognise when specialist or statutory help is required.

Before undertaking a home visit, the worker should consider the purpose, the person's circumstances, location, time, communication arrangements and whether two visitors are needed.

A responsible person should know the visit location and expected completion time where lone working is involved. Workers should have a reliable means of communication and a clear escalation route.

Repeated private pastoral contact should be subject to supervision or periodic review. The worker should maintain a proportionate record of significant contacts, decisions and referrals.

A person providing pastoral support should not present themselves as a therapist, clinician, legal adviser or financial adviser unless they hold the relevant professional role and have been specifically authorised to act in that capacity.

Where a safeguarding concern arises during pastoral contact, the operational procedure in Appendix A applies.

B5 Transport, outings and residential activities

Transport provided in the name of the parish must be planned and authorised. Drivers must be suitably licensed, insured and competent, and vehicles must be roadworthy.

Private transport arrangements should be transparent. The activity leader should consider whether a worker being alone with a child or adult creates avoidable risk and what alternative arrangements are available.

Outings require a written plan proportionate to their complexity. The plan should address consent where applicable, attendance, supervision, travel, emergency arrangements, medication where relevant, accessibility, communication and missing-person procedures.

Residential activities require enhanced planning. Sleeping, washing and changing arrangements must protect privacy and dignity, and provide appropriate supervision without intrusive observation. A participant's individual needs should be considered in advance and discussed with them or their parent or carer where appropriate.

Any material incident, unexplained absence or safeguarding concern must be reported promptly and recorded.

B6 External organisations and use of church premises

The parish will distinguish clearly between parish activities, jointly delivered activities and independent external activities.

An external organisation regularly providing activities for children or adults should have an appropriate safeguarding policy, identified safeguarding leadership, suitable recruitment and supervision arrangements and adequate insurance.

The hiring agreement will define the organisation's responsibilities, including reporting emergencies, managing concerns and notifying the parish of matters relevant to safety or future use of the premises.

The parish may request evidence of safeguarding arrangements before approving a booking. The Diocese of Bristol provides guidance on safeguarding considerations in church building hire agreements.

The parish retains responsibility for premises safety and for responding to information it receives. Approval to use the premises does not make the parish responsible for independently managing the external organisation's participants or workers unless the agreement establishes a joint activity.

A booking may be refused, suspended or terminated where safeguarding arrangements are inadequate or the organisation fails to comply with agreed conditions.

Appendix C: Safer recruitment, training and supervision

C1. Safer recruitment

The parish will follow the current Church of England Safer Recruitment and People Management Code of Practice and associated diocesan arrangements.

The parish will complete all recruitment, appointment and people-management requirements specified by the current Church of England Safer Recruitment and People Management Code of Practice for the relevant category of role. The process will be proportionate to the role but must include every applicable mandatory requirement. These may include an approved role description, application or expression of interest, references, interview or assessment, confidential declaration, identity and eligibility checks, and the legally appropriate level of DBS check. The parish will also apply the Code's requirements for induction, probation where applicable, supervision, support, accountability, conduct management and review throughout the appointment.

The Diocese of Bristol states that not every role is eligible for an enhanced check and that the level of check must match the role's legal eligibility. It provides a safer recruitment toolkit and role-description templates.

No person will begin unsupervised work where required recruitment steps remain incomplete. Any permitted interim arrangement must be exceptional, documented, time limited, authorised and supported by direct supervision.

C2. Recruitment responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
PCC	Establishes the parish's recruitment arrangements and provides oversight
Incumbent	Supports safe appointment and management within ministry
PSO	Advises on safeguarding requirements and role eligibility
Operations Manager	Coordinates checks and maintains administrative records
Recruiting manager	Defines the role, assesses candidates and provides induction
Activity leader	Verifies authorisation before allowing a person to serve
Worker	Provides accurate information and reports relevant changes

C3. Learning and development

Safeguarding learning will reflect the current Church of England Learning and Development Framework and the requirements of each role.

The parish will maintain a training matrix and monitor completion and renewal. Church of England resources define a Church Officer as anyone appointed or elected by or on behalf of the Church to a paid or unpaid role.

Learning should be reinforced through induction, supervision, discussion of practice and review after incidents. Completion of a course does not of itself establish safe practice.

C4. Supervision and support

Every employee and regular volunteer should know who supervises or supports their role. Supervision should provide an opportunity to discuss boundaries, concerns, workload, changes in participants' needs and learning requirements.

Safeguarding should be addressed explicitly where relevant rather than assumed to have been covered within general discussion.

Unsafe practice, repeated boundary concerns or failure to follow procedures must be addressed promptly. Depending on seriousness, this may require additional supervision, training, restriction of duties, suspension from a role, disciplinary action or referral.

Appendix D: Safeguarding contacts and reporting routes

Contact details must be checked immediately before PCC approval and whenever the contact sheet is republished.

Service	Contact
Emergency police or medical assistance	999
Police non-emergency	101
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Sam Creavin, PSO@ccweb.org.uk
Additional PSOs	[Insert current names]
Incumbent	[Insert name and contact details]
Diocese of Bristol Safeguarding Team	0117 9060100
Diocese of Bristol email	safeguarding@bristoldiocese.org
Bristol children's First Response	0117 903 6444
Bristol adult safeguarding, Care Direct	0117 922 2700
Emergency Duty Team	01454 615165
Thirtyone:eight helpline	0303 003 1111, Use only where this service forms part of the Diocese of Bristol's current commissioned or published arrangements. This route does not replace emergency, statutory or diocesan reporting.

The Diocese of Bristol currently publishes 0117 9060100 and safeguarding@bristoldiocese.org for safeguarding advice and support, Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

Appendix E: Safeguarding concern record

E1. Case information

Field	Information
Case reference	
Date and time concern received	
Person affected	
Date of birth or approximate age	
Address or contact details, if relevant	
Person raising the concern	
Relationship to person affected	
Person completing this record	
Role	
Date record completed	
Concern	

Immediate safety	
Actions taken	
Information sharing	
Record transfer	

Appendix F: Categories and indicators of abuse

This appendix provides orientation rather than an exhaustive diagnostic list. Current Church of England, statutory and local guidance should be used when assessing and responding to a concern.

Abuse may involve physical harm, emotional or psychological harm, neglect, coercion, exploitation, misuse of money or property, discriminatory treatment, organisational failings, modern slavery, domestic abuse, self-neglect, online harm, spiritual abuse or abuse of power.

Indicators vary and may have innocent explanations. A single indicator does not prove abuse, and the absence of an obvious indicator does not establish safety.

Possible indicators include unexplained or repeated injuries, sudden behavioural change, fear of a particular person or place, withdrawal, distress, deterioration in personal care, unmet essential needs, unexplained financial difficulty, controlling relationships, loss of access to communication or documents, unsafe living conditions, repeated boundary violations or disclosure of harm.

The appropriate response is to record and report the concern, not to diagnose, investigate or seek proof.

Appendix G: Associated parish policies and guidance

This document should be read with the current versions of the following:

Document	**Owner**
Code of Safer Working Practice	PCC and PSO
Safer Recruitment Procedure	Operations Manager and PSO
Safeguarding Learning Matrix	PSO
Domestic Abuse Statement	PCC
Digital Communications and Social Media Guidance	Operations Manager
Photography and Filming Guidance	Operations Manager
Pastoral Visiting and Lone Working Guidance	Incumbent
Children's and Youth Activity Guidance	Relevant ministry lead
Adult Ministry and Pastoral Activity Guidance	Relevant ministry lead
Premises Hire Safeguarding Conditions	Operations Manager
Safeguarding Record Management Procedure	PSO
Data Protection Policy	PCC

Complaints and Whistleblowing Procedures	PCC
Health and Safety Policy	PCC
Risk Management Procedure	PCC

Appendix H: Annual safeguarding assurance and review

H2. Annual report to the PCC

The annual report should provide governance assurance without including unnecessary identifiable case information. It should cover recruitment and training compliance, safer activity arrangements, contact information, record management, policy review, themes and learning, unresolved material risks and progress against previous actions.

Where the report identifies incomplete mandatory requirements or a material safety concern, the PCC should approve a remedial action, accountable owner and completion date.

H3. Revision history

Version	Date	Approved by	Principal changes
MP/09	28/09/2026	PCC	Restructured into short main policy and operational appendices; updated Church of England framework; introduced secure M365 record arrangements; removed obsolete policy references and historical definitions