



St Edmunds RC Church, Beckenham

Safeguarding Policy

**Safeguarding is Everybody's
Business**

Adopted: October 2018

Review: Annually

By Whom: Safeguarding Representatives and Parish Priest

Introduction

The safeguarding policy of St Edmunds, Beckenham is based on the principle that everyone in our community is welcome and loved.

We are lucky to have a vibrant parish, with many volunteers supporting our community groups. We appreciate that our leaders and helpers give their time freely and generously, and are committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of all children, young people and vulnerable adults in their care.

We welcome volunteers at St Edmunds and commit to giving all our employees and volunteers the appropriate support and training to ensure their own safety and the safety of their groups. Our policy is in place to safeguard every member, leader and helper.

Everyone who works with children and vulnerable adults has a duty to help protect them. Our policy helps group leaders and members to identify people who might need to be referred to the Social Services, Police, NSPCC etc. and also to protect themselves and learn how to keep themselves safe, and to ask for help when they need it.

It's important that we recognise that abuse could happen in any - and our own parish.

Thank you in advance for reading this policy. Let's use it to build a stronger St Edmunds.

Fr Steve Wymer
Parish Priest

St Edmunds Parish has appointed a safeguarding lead and supporting representatives who will co-ordinate the work for the parish.

The Parish Safeguarding Team:

Yvonne Epale – Safeguarding Representative
Angela Cummins - Safeguarding Representative

Anyone can call the safeguarding team, at any time on **07905 617 932**

The team is responsible for:

- Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) checking of all employees and volunteers.
- Record-keeping and general administration
- The training of employees and all volunteers to help everyone to recognise and respond to signs of abuse.
- Providing procedures to be followed by all Parish workers.
- As a contact and support for anyone concerned about, or wanting to report abuse.
- Good practice within the Parish.

St Edmunds Church commits to:

- Appointing and support all volunteers according to the 'Recruitment Procedures' (Appendix 1)
- Seeking to implement all the guidelines in the 'Safe from Harm' Code of Practice (Appendix 2)
- Providing ongoing training for employees and volunteers
- Supporting children and young people in conjunction with their parents/carers to understand the ways they can protect themselves.
- Add a clause to all hiring agreements to whereby outside groups must follow 'Safe from Harm' Code of Practice.
- Providing a concise entry on this subject in the parish directory or web-site
- Provide easy-to-access channels to report abuse
- Provide emotional and spiritual support for the parties involved in any investigation, including any child, young person or vulnerable adult and their family, the accused person and their family and the parish community.
- Co-operate fully with the statutory and Diocesan agencies in any investigation
- Withdraw any accused person from contact with children and young people.

Code of Behaviour

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with dignity and respect
- Have other adults present, or in sight or hearing of others, when holding activities with children and young people
- Maintain a safe ratio of adults to children. Extra help must be obtained with any outings or outdoor activities. Minimum ratios for such activities are:
 - 1 adult leader for every 3 children under 5
 - 1 adult leader for every 6 children under 8
 - 1 adult leader for every 10-15 children aged 8-11
 - 1 adult leader for every 15-20 children aged over 11

At all other times there MUST always be, as a minimum, TWO adults present with children

- Try to ensure that each group includes a male and female helper.
- Be cautious in all one-to-one situations.
- Watch your speech, tone of voice and body language.
- Respect a person's right to personal privacy whatever the age.
- Arrange separate sleeping accommodation for adults and children and young people
- An adult should avoid being alone with a child
- Allow children and young people to talk to others about any concerns.
- Encourage children, young people and adults to be confident to point out attitudes and behaviour that they do not like.
- Avoid inappropriate physical or verbal contact.
- Do not touch inappropriately or intrusively.
- Do not allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking.
- Refrain from being drawn into inappropriate tantrums or crushes.
- Do not scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person.
- Do not allow abusive peer activities including initiation, ridiculing or bullying.
- Do not rely on your good name to protect you.
- NEVER agree or promise to keep a secret.

APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Appendix 1

If at any time St Edmunds Parish has **full or part-time employees** (including all priests, deacons and religious sisters) working, or in regular contact with identified groups of children, young people or vulnerable adults, such a person will be subject to the full range of checks available at the time, including the Disclosure and Barring Scheme checks (DBS)

- All those undertaking a particular ministry within the church (**volunteers and occasional helpers**) where contact with children and young people is involved, will be subject to the full range of checks available at the time, including DBS.
- Most roles have a Job Description. Where not already in existence, a Job Description will be drafted to cover the role.
- The Parish Safeguarding Representative, together with the Parish Priest, will need to be satisfied, in some cases by formal interview, that the person has the necessary personality and integrity for the particular work. This is especially important if the person is new to the parish.
- The Parish Safeguarding Representative will be responsible for this procedure and ensure the confidentiality of the information given.
- At least two references should be taken up. They will specifically ask about the person's suitability for the role and ability and experience with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Roles which require a DBS check are: Altar Servers' Co-ordinator, Catechist, Child Protection Representative, Childrens Liturgy, Eucharist Minister, Parish Youth Worker, Music/Choir Leader, Pastoral Assistant, Sacristan, Safeguarding Representative, Parish Secretary (if role includes pastoral work), Schools Officer. (This list is not exhaustive and Safeguarding Reps will always check with the Diocesan Safeguarding Office)

If it is known that an ex-offender attends St Edmunds Church or is otherwise seeking to be involved; the Parish Priest and Parish Safeguarding Representative will discuss this with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. They will work together in deciding appropriate safeguards.

Whenever help and support is offered to the offender, the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults will always come first.

Appendix 2

THE GOVERNMENT'S SAFE FROM HARM GUIDELINES

- Adopt a Policy Statement on safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse may occur.
- Introduce a system whereby children, young people and vulnerable adults may talk to an independent person.
- Apply agreed procedures for protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults to all paid staff and volunteers. They should all be treated as job applicants for any position involving children and young people.
- References should be gained from persons who have knowledge of the applicant's paid or voluntary work with children, young people or vulnerable adults. The applicant's experience of working or contact with these groups should be explored at interview before an Appointment offer is made.
- Ensure that all paid staff and volunteers have clear roles.
- Use supervision as a means of protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Find out if the applicant has convictions for criminal offences against children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Issue guidelines on how to deal with disclosure of abuse.

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS - GUIDELINES

Appendix 3

All people, no matter where they live or what their circumstances, are entitled to a life free from exploitation and abuse. Adults are autonomous, they make their own decisions.

Self-determination must guide Adult Protection activities wherever possible. Some adults will be making decisions under duress and will need extra support. Others will not have the mental capacity to make informed decisions about their own protection; they need to have as much choice as possible within the principle of the duty of care.

- All adults are entitled to access the criminal justice system; subject to the mental capacity of the adult to consent, the seriousness of the suspected offence and the wishes of the adult concerned. The police should be called immediately if it is believed that a crime has been committed.
- Adults need to be made aware of their rights, and how to get help if they are being abused. Any adult disclosing abuse must be listened to, taken seriously and believed, unless there is a good, substantiated reason that disproves what they are saying.
- The vulnerable adult, and their protection needs, should be at the centre of any investigation. Interventions to protect must, wherever possible, follow principles of adult self-determination, consent and minimal intervention needed to protect the vulnerable adult.
- Abuse occurs when one person by doing, or failing to do something they should, causes harm or distress. The person responsible can be anyone in a position of trust. This includes care/support workers, family, friends and neighbours or staff of an organisation (both statutory and independent sector). It can also mean casual callers to the vulnerable person.

Physical - The non-accidental infliction of physical force that results in bodily injury, pain or impairment – this could include being hit, slapped, pushed, kicked, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate care and treatment.

Sexual - Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent – this can include rape, sexual assault or sexual relationships to which the vulnerable adult is either unwilling or unable to agree to. Consent may not be given because:

- A person has capacity and does not want to give it
- A person lacks capacity and is therefore unable to give it
- A person feels coerced into activity because the other person is in a position of trust, power or authority.

Emotional/psychological – including being made to feel abandoned, threatened, blamed, or humiliated. This can include coercion, harassment, verbal abuse isolation or withdrawal of services or supportive networks. Financial or material – including theft, fraud, exploitation or the misuse of property, money or belongings.

Neglect and acts of omission – including the failure to provide health or social care and withholding the necessities of life including medication, adequate food and heating. This also includes the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others.

Wilful neglect and ill treatment - is a Criminal Offence under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Discriminatory – It is the exploitation of a person’s vulnerability, resulting in repeated or pervasive treatment of an individual; e.g. behaviour or words that are racist, sexist, based on someone’s sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or belief. It can also be harassment or slurs, or similar treatment.

Institutional abuse – repeated, systematic practices within an institution or regime of “care” which cause harm, deprive people of their right, neglect peoples wellbeing and/or take advantage of their vulnerability or lack of capacity. This may include environments which convey a perpetual and/or repeated subjective sense of a lack of safety amongst users and/or carers.

What to do if you encounter a case of abuse:

**If you have any
concerns about a
child, young
person or
vulnerable adult**



**CONTACT THE PARISH
SAFEGUARDING REP
07905617932**



**The safeguarding rep will contact all the
relevant authorities to manage the
situation**

**If you cannot reach the Safeguarding Rep
and you believe that a child or vulnerable
adult is at immediate risk, call the Police**

**REMEMBER
SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS
BETTER THREE PEOPLE REPORT THAN NONE**

Useful Contact details

- Catholic Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (COPCA) **020 7630 8220**
- Diocesan Safeguarding Officer:
Helen Sheppard **020 7261 1606**
helen.sheppard@rcdsouthwark.org
Safeguarding Office: office@sgo-rcdsouthwark.org
- Police in an Emergency: **999, 101 for non-emergency**
- London Borough of Bromley Social Services Dept, call children's services (Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5pm): 020 8461 7373 / 7379 / 7026. Out of hours/weekends/public holidays: 0300 303 8671
- CHILDLINE (24hr FREEPHONE): **0800 1111**
- NSPCC (24 hr Helpline): **0808 800 5000**
- Parish Safeguarding Representative: 07905617932

