

The Parochial Church Council of St Thomas' Church, Kidsgrove will take all reasonable care to ensure the safety of the children, young people and vulnerable adults for whom it bears responsibility.

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

Below is a statement of the Safeguarding Principles as shown in the House of Bishops 'Promoting a Safer Church; safeguarding policy statement':

We are committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children, young people and all adults;
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and all adults;
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention of abuse.

To this end:

- We will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with the principles of Safer Recruitment. We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that any adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care and support to anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry that recognises the importance of understanding the needs of those who have been abused, including their feelings of alienation and / or isolation.
- We will seek to protect survivors of abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of respect and responsibility, where they are trusted by others.
- We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision, and referral to the appropriate authorities, to any member of our Church community known to have offended against a child, young person or adult who is vulnerable.

In all these principles we will follow legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

This statement was adopted by St Thomas' Church at a PCC meeting held on _____.

Signed on behalf of the PCC: _____

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

This statement was adopted by St Thomas' Church, Kidsgrove at a Parochial Church Council meeting held on January 23rd 2025

1. This policy will be reviewed each year to monitor the progress which has been achieved.

- The implementation of this policy and its procedures will be monitored by the Safeguarding Lead (currently Iain Baker), in collaboration with the Children & Youth Co-ordinator and the DBS Administrator.
- St Thomas PCC will ensure the safeguarding dashboard held on www.parishdashboards.org.uk is kept up to date and it will be used to produce a Parish action plan in advance of the January PCC each year, and will ensure duties and obligation relating to safeguarding are met.

2. The PCC recognises that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives. As members of this parish we commit ourselves to respectful pastoral care for all adults and children to whom we minister.

- We recognise that a position of power in relation to another creates a risk of vulnerability. As a consequence we strive to ensure that we consider power when working and leading with people.
- We recognise that children by virtue of legal status and dependency on adults for their emotional and physical needs will always be vulnerable and at a disadvantage. We commit to considering this in our children's activities— undertaking supervision of staff working with them and risk assessing activities and groups as a check and balance in our work.
- We understand that illness, disability, race, mental health and other issues can put adults in a position of vulnerability. We accept that these can be long term (ongoing), or temporary. We commit to considering this in our adults activities and events – undertaking supervision of staff and risk assessing activities as a check and balance in our work.
- We commit to transparency in our actions and accountability for our work.
- We will consider issues relating to spiritual care in prayer activity, ensuring that members of our prayer team consider power, control and spiritual abuse issues in their ministry.

3. We commit ourselves to the safeguarding of people who may be vulnerable, ensuring their well-being in the life of this church, and to promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be vulnerable.

- We will issue clear guidelines for avoiding situations where children and young people, or vulnerable adults, could be in danger.
- The PCC is directly responsible for the following groups which include children and young people:
 - Climbers
 - Explorers
 - Cipher
 - St Thomas' Toddlers
 - Go mad with dad
 - Annual events such as the Holiday Club
- The PCC requires the Children & Youth Coordinator to maintain a record, in writing, of at least the following for each group listed above:
 - A list of its current leaders and details of their roles, and provision for training and support.
 - When and where the group meets, its normal working pattern and the age range it covers.
 - A statement of working practice.
- The PCC is directly responsible for the following groups which may include vulnerable adults:
 - Growth Groups and the Book Group
 - Oysters
 - Keenagers
 - Luncheon Club
 - Friday Soup
 - Community Corner
 - Bell-ringers
- The PCC require groups that are working with vulnerable adults:
 - To agree clear roles for leaders
 - To set up structures to train and support their leaders in their roles
 - To agree statements of working practice.
- We will consider the impact of power, disadvantage, inclusion, disability, age and race on how we provide and plan for our ministry.

- We will actively (but appropriately), challenge each other in our work in order to ensure we consider a wide range of perspectives and views – ensuring that we do not oppressively impose our own values or views to another’s detriment.
- Where a person struggles with an activity due to disadvantage, disability or illness, we will go the extra mile to assist them so they can participate and contribute as a full part of the church.
- Clergy licenced to the parish will not utilise their homes for residency or shelter of vulnerable persons without informing the rural dean, archdeacon, or a Bishop. This does not apply to visiting friends and family for personal stays and specifically applies only to the provision of accommodation in the context of a place of safety.

4. We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.

- We will ensure that those in positions of trust (wardens, treasurer and Readers), all members of the PCC, and those with remits or leadership of groups involving vulnerable children or adults have appropriate enhanced DBS checks and that these are updated every 3 years.
- We will be transparent, open and not have secrets.
- Only suitable and responsible people may become key holders, they will be required to complete the Confidential Declaration Form and references will be taken up. Access and Usage of Church Buildings will be monitored as far as is reasonably possible.
- Any groups hiring part or all of the church buildings for work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will need to satisfy the PCC that they have a Safeguarding policy. If they do not have their own policy, the PCC will present their own Safeguarding policy for group to adopt and implement.

5. It is the responsibility of each of us to prevent the physical, emotional, sexual, financial and spiritual abuse of vulnerable people and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.

- We will seek the views of others and ensure through use of external agencies and the diocese safeguarding service that we engage and welcome external perspectives in order to promote a healthy accountable culture.
- We will not collude, keep secrets or make decisions when we have suspicion of abuse.
- We will report without being biased to our own personal views. We will report and not investigate.
- We will record concerns factually in diocesan suggested formats (as per the Diocesan Recording with Care Policy 2017)
- We will not take chances with the welfare of children or vulnerable adults.
- We are open to scrutiny and encourage this in others.
- We have zero tolerance to abuse and put the welfare of vulnerable children and adults first.
- We take seriously training and activities relating to safeguarding and seek to embed this in our congregational culture.
- Our Safeguarding Officer or Deputy will report concerns following our “Reporting Safeguarding Concerns” policy.

6. We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with people who may be vulnerable.

- Our incumbent undertakes to ensure that to the best of his knowledge all PCC members, wardens and ministry leaders are of good standing.
- Validation for children & youth: Leaders must be aged 18 or over working with children and young people, under 18s may assist in leadership roles but must be supervised at all times. Each group must have at least 2 leaders at all times.
 - Leaders will be required to prayerfully consider the “Person Specification for Church Leadership”
 - Leaders will be required to complete the Application Form which includes the Confidential Declaration and the requirement to provide 2 references.
 - Leaders may need to apply for and supply clearance from the Disclosure & Barring Service.
- Completed declaration forms and references will be confidential to and securely held by the Incumbent or, in the event of a vacancy, by the Rural Dean or Archdeacon.
- The PCC will use the Disclosure & Barring Service for checking leaders’ criminal records where appropriate. This will be done via the Safeguarding Office, St Mary’s House, The Close, Lichfield, WS13 7LD.

7. We are committed to supporting, resourcing, training and regularly reviewing those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable.

- We will provide those working in safeguarding and group leaders access to guidance and training in the understanding of child/vulnerable adult abuse. Diocesan Safeguarding Training is delivered according to Church Of England National Policy and guidance, and is compulsory (regardless of training from other organisations) at the following levels:
 - Basic awareness training, required for all church officers. Provided as an e-learning module
 - Foundation – training for those working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, Churchwardens, Vergers and PCC members. Provided as an e-learning module.
 - Leadership – training for those who are ordained or licensed.

- Wardens are also required to complete Domestic Abuse e-learning course
- We will ensure that those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have completed Diocesan Safeguarding Training and this is renewed every 3 years. Provided via <https://safeguardingtraining.cofeportal.org/> or in-person learning sessions.
- The PCC undertakes to appoint and upskill a dedicated Safeguarding Officer. This person cannot be an active member of the parish clergy or a relative of clergy (this being a conflicting interest).
- Through the Safeguarding Officer we will undertake to maintain a relationship with the diocesan safeguarding team and other outside agencies.
- The Safeguarding Officer (and deputy) will undertake all required training – currently Basic, Foundation, Leadership, Domestic Abuse and Safer Recruitment & People Management safeguarding e-learning

8. The parish adopts the guidelines of the Church of England and the Diocese.

- The PCC will work towards adopting the recommendations of the House of Bishops as published in the Policy for Safeguarding Children Protecting All God’s Children (2010) and Promoting a Safe Church (2006)
- The Parish will report and record in line with Diocesan policies, complying with local guidance for implementing national policies.
- The PCC will ensure full compliance with Health and Safety Guidelines.
- The PCC will carry public liability insurance and will insure all leaders and staff for personal accident. Public liability insurance certificates will be kept and stored in the safe in order to be able to identify and prove insurance cover for at least a period of 75 years (the likely lifespan of a potential victim).
- The PCC will make a copy of this policy and its procedures available, if requested, at The Archdeacon’s visitation.
- Records relating to safeguarding issues within the Parish will be retained for 75 years (in order to cover the likely lifespan of a survivor of abuse). Records will be stored in the church safe in a locked box with only the safeguarding officer and deputy holding keys.

9. Each person who works with vulnerable people will agree to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this church.

- Those working with vulnerable adults or children will sign a declaration to state that they have read and agree to abide by the points outlined in this policy.
- A working agreement will be in place signed by the volunteer and a representative for the PCC.
- Those working with vulnerable children or adults will be provided with a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook, which includes the Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Adults (based on ‘Protecting All God’s Children, The Policy for Safeguarding Children in the Church of England’ written by The Church of England), the Diocesan Safeguarding Flowchart, and the "Who's Who" which provide contact details of the Safeguarding Coordinator, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors and external agencies.
- The PCC will publish on the notice boards in the Church Hall a copy of the Diocesan Safeguarding Poster, and the Designated Person poster.

This church appoints a Safeguarding Coordinator to represent the concerns and views of vulnerable people at our meetings, and to outside bodies. However, the PCC recognises that there is still a collective ownership for this important issue.

1. This church appoints Siobhan Macey as our Parish Safeguarding Officer and Rob Timmis as our Deputy Safeguarding officer. One or either will represent the concerns and views of vulnerable people at our meetings and to outside bodies as and when necessary.
2. They, working in partnership with the Safeguarding Lead, Children & Youth Coordinator and the DBS Officer, are responsible to the PCC for ensuring that these procedures are implemented.

	Incumbent	Church Warden	Church Warden
Print:			
Signed:			
Date:			