

PARISH OF CURDWORTH, MIDDLETON AND WISHAW
St Nicholas Church, Curdworth
St John the Baptist Church, Middleton
St Chad's Church, Wishaw

POLICY AND PROCEDURES
FOR THE PROTECTION OF
VULNERABLE ADULTS

Note for Members of the Church Councils of Curdworth, Middleton & Wishaw

This was a working document that was prepared for Holy Trinity and which we have been invited to use to the form the basis of our own policy for the protection of vulnerable adults (the same procedure as was adopted when we approved our policy for child protection). I have amended the document where there is a straight swop of names of the churches. Holy Trinity were still considering the document when it was forwarded to us. They had colour coded the document. As we do not have access to colour copying I have made the appropriate text bold; changed the font and put in brackets alongside what colour the type was! There may be things I have missed, for which I apologise, or there may be things that do not apply to us.

Red and Blue - amendments by Holy Trinity

Green - amendments we need to consider

Isabel Potter 2nd June 2011

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A BACKGROUND

1. INTRODUCTION

The Parochial Church Council of Curdworth, Middleton and Wishaw hereafter referred to as the PCC, is fully committed to the welfare and safe-keeping of vulnerable adults and aims to:

- 1.1 Raise the awareness of all church members, and especially of all who work with vulnerable adults in the name of the church, of safeguarding issues;
- 1.2 Promote good, safe working practices and create a safe, secure and caring environment for vulnerable adults;
- 1.3 Have a clear policy and procedures and publicise these to church members, workers and volunteers with vulnerable adults, the vulnerable adults and their families and carers, and to other users of church premises.
- 1.4 Provide all who work with vulnerable adults with appropriate training and support in following the policy and procedures for the safeguarding of those adults;
- 1.5 Raise awareness and recognition of the signs and symptoms of suspected abuse, and provide clear procedures for church members, workers, vulnerable adults, families or carers in reporting their suspicions.

2. STATEMENT OF POLICY

- 2.1 We accept the prime duty of care placed upon the PCC and incumbent of the Parish of Curdworth, Middleton and Wishaw to ensure the well being of vulnerable adults in the church community and accept the principle that the welfare of the adult is paramount.
- 2.2 We adopt and implement a Parish Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and procedures. The policy and procedures set out in this document are based on the “Parish Pack for Safeguarding Adults”, published by the Diocese of Birmingham in 2010.
- 2.3 We create a culture of informed vigilance which takes vulnerable adults seriously. We recognise our responsibility to guard against the spiritual, physical, emotional, psychological, financial, legal, or sexual abuse or neglect of vulnerable adults by persons who may be acting in the name of the church, and to promote good, safe working practices and to create a safe, secure and caring environment.
- 2.4 We appoint a Parish Lead Person (PLP) for Safeguarding Adults:
 - to work with the incumbent and PCC to implement policy and procedures,
 - to co-ordinate all Parish matters relating to the protection of vulnerable adults,
 - to adopt the role of parish representative on all matters relating to the protection of vulnerable adults and
 - to help the parish develop a culture of ‘informed vigilance’.

In practice the PLP may be the same individual as the Parish Child Protection Co-ordinator (PCPC) as many of the responsibilities are similar, but the posts may be held by two individuals.

- 2.5 We appoint a person, who will be a member of the PCC, to be a Parish Advocate for Vulnerable Adults (PAVA) in order to present and promote the views and needs of vulnerable adults in decisions made by the church in all aspects of the life and ministry of the church.
- 2.6 We ensure that all those authorised to work with or are in regular contact with vulnerable adults or who are in a position of authority are appropriately appointed, trained and supported, and provided with a copy of the parish policy for the protection of vulnerable adults, procedures and good practice guidelines.
- 2.7 We pay particular attention to adults with special needs and those from ethnic minorities to ensure their full integration and protection within the church community.
- 2.8 We endeavour to ensure that appropriate pastoral care is available and, as appropriate, support for all adults, families and carers in the congregation, being particularly aware of those who have themselves suffered abuse.
- 2.9 We take seriously allegations of abuse and follow the appropriate steps set out in this policy. We take appropriate steps to ensure that those who may pose a threat to vulnerable adults are effectively managed and monitored.
- 2.10 We ensure that appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place.

- 2.11 We provide appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the parish.
- 2.12 We make this policy and the procedures known to church members, workers with vulnerable adults, vulnerable adults and their families and carers, and to other users of the church premises.
- 2.13 We receive regular reports, and will review the implementation of the policy for the protection of vulnerable adults, procedures and good practice, at least annually.
- 2.14 We will work as appropriate in collaboration with neighbouring parishes of Holy Trinity Sutton Coldfield, St Chad's Sutton Coldfield and St Peter's Sutton Coldfield, on matters in connection with this policy and procedures.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 "vulnerable adults" means any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. An adult may become vulnerable temporarily through illness, bereavement or other sources of stress or difficulty.
- 3.2 "Worker" or "worker with vulnerable adults" means anyone, (paid worker, office-holder or volunteer), who has a responsibility for working with vulnerable adults in a specific setting.
- 3.3 "PCC" means the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of Curdworth, Middleton and Wishaw.
- 3.4 "the Church" or "the parish" means the Churches of St Nicholas, Curdworth; St John the Baptist, Middleton and St Chad's, Wishaw or the parish of Curdworth, Middleton and Wishaw.
- 3.5 "church premises" means any church building, church yard and car park/ grounds of St Nicholas, Curdworth, St John the Baptist, Middleton and St Chad's, Wishaw. (Green)
- 3.6 "the PLP" means the Parish Lead Person for Safeguarding Adults.
- 3.7 "the PAVA" means the Parish Advocate for Vulnerable Adults.
- 3.8 "We" means the Incumbent and PCC of the Parish of Curdworth, Middleton and Wishaw.
- 3.9 "Group leader" means the co-ordinator of the relevant group or, where co-ordination is carried out by a committee, the chair of the committee co-ordinating the group.
- 3.10 "the ISA" is the Independent Safeguarding Association.
- 3.11 "domestic abuse" is abuse between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members.
- 3.12 "VBS" means Vetting and Barring Scheme.

4. THOSE COVERED BY THE POLICY

- 4.1 All groups and activities under the control of the PCC are covered by this document. These include any organised groups for vulnerable adults, any other groups at which vulnerable adults may be present (for example house/study groups, church fellowship, choir) and any home visits to vulnerable adults, for example home communion and any pastoral visits.
- 4.2 Other adults, who do not specifically hold posts as workers with vulnerable adults, may nonetheless find themselves in situations where they are dealing with vulnerable adults on church premises or in the home. People in this category might for example include Church Wardens, **the Treasurers and the leader of the Choir (red)**. Good practice would require that they also complete the Confidential Declaration and be subject to the recruitment procedures set out in Section 7 of this document.
- 4.3 The PCC has a duty of care to advise individuals and organisations working with or running events involving vulnerable adults, who hire or use church premises, of their responsibility for the welfare of these adults. A copy of the Parish Policy will be maintained in a public place on the premises together with details of the PCPC's name and contact

details - and the hirers/users will be made aware of it. Hirers/users will be required to sign a statement indicating their acceptance of the Parish Policy.

4.5 A similar policy is available for the protection of children and young people, and should be consulted for any work with those under 18, in order to avoid or reduce unnecessary risks.

B THE WORKERS

5. ROLE OF THE PARISH LEAD PERSON (PLP) FOR SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

5.1 A Parish Lead Person (PLP) for Safeguarding Adults will be appointed, who will be responsible to the incumbent and the PCC. This role may be combined with that of Parish Child Protection Co-ordinator (PCPC).

5.2 The PLP has an essential role in the parish in relation to the protection of vulnerable adults. The PLP should be a lay person interested in taking best care of vulnerable adults and those working directly with them and should have some understanding of safeguarding issues.

5.3 The PLP will adopt the role of parish representative on all matters relating to the protection of vulnerable adults and will help the parish develop a culture of 'informed vigilance'.

5.4 The PLP will be notified to the Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Adults and will be kept informed of developments and training events regarding the safeguarding of adults.

5.5 Roles and Responsibilities for the PLP are outlined in detail in the "Parish Pack for Safeguarding Adults" published by the Diocese of Birmingham (page 14).

5.6 The PLP, in collaboration with the Parish Advocate for Vulnerable Adults (PAVA), will cascade information in respect of Diocesan policy developments, local parish policy developments and training opportunities for workers with vulnerable adults.

5.7 The PLP, in collaboration with the PAVA, will provide support and/or advice to the incumbent and to all workers with vulnerable adults in respect of concerns about the welfare of specific vulnerable adults within the parish.

5.8 The PLP will ensure that, when appropriate, situations are referred to the relevant statutory authorities or to the Diocese if necessary.

5.9 The PLP will ensure that the incumbent is kept informed of any concerns about the welfare of a particular vulnerable adult, and of any specific advice given to the children's workers or youth workers/volunteers where concerns exist.

5.10 The PLP will access specific advice from other sources should the need arise.

5.11 The PLP will be responsible for ensuring that various records are maintained and kept up to date within the parish, in relation to:

- activities involving vulnerable adults within the parish;
- details of those who work or volunteer with vulnerable adults
- dates that safe recruitment procedures have been completed
- any training completed by workers with vulnerable adults

5.12 The PLP will ensure that a parish policy for the protection of vulnerable adults is in place, that it is in accordance with and reflects Diocesan policy and that it is reviewed at least annually.

5.13 The PLP will monitor any training given to workers with vulnerable adults.

5.14 The PLP will ensure that all personal information pertaining to prospective workers or volunteers, and all information relating to specific vulnerable adults, is treated with sensitivity and that confidentiality is maintained at all times.

5.15 The PLP will ensure that all sensitive and/or confidential documentation in their possession is passed to the incumbent to be suitably stored and locked away in secure parish or church premises. The PLP will liaise with those within the parish who are responsible for Health and Safety within the parish, to ensure that safe practice is exercised at all times, which will help to ensure the safety of all adults and children.

6. ROLE OF THE PARISH ADVOCATE FOR VULNERABLE ADULTS (PAVA)

6.1 A Parish Advocate for Vulnerable Adults (PAVA) will be appointed and will report to the PCC. They will be someone who can be a voice and speak on behalf of vulnerable adults in the parish. They will report to the PCC on matters which affect vulnerable adults within the parish. The person will represent the vulnerable adults' views and needs with regard to ministry, mission, worship and their pastoral care, which might include being someone to whom vulnerable adults feel they can go to with concerns or even to disclose abuse.

6.2 The PAVA may collaborate with the PLP and/or the Parish Child Protection Co-ordinator, in particular regarding regular contact with workers with vulnerable adults and also in improving awareness of safeguarding issues throughout the church community.

7. RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT OF WORKERS WITH VULNERABLE ADULTS

7.1 All those working with vulnerable adults and those, (e.g. churchwardens) whose position or office enables them to have regular contact with vulnerable adults in the course of their duties, will be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). This applies to people who are paid and to volunteers alike.

7.2 All those working with vulnerable adults or applying to work with them, will be required to sign the Confidential Declaration. This declaration is confidential, and will be kept by the incumbent and his/her successors indefinitely.

7.3 All who wish to work with vulnerable adults will be interviewed by the incumbent. The interview will include discussion of the role to be taken up, and of the lines of responsibility that will apply. A job description will be agreed. The applicant will be asked to supply the name of two referees who can confirm that he or she is of good character and suitable for the role; these references will be taken up by the incumbent. It is recommended that at least one of these referees is the current employer or representative of the applicant's previous church.

7.4 The PLP will keep a record of all who work with vulnerable adults, including their names, addresses and telephone numbers, and the role or activity in which they are involved. Since the CRB check and other processes are the same, this may be a combined list with those who are cleared to work with children and young people. The PLP should also keep details of those who have completed their CRB check and who do not regularly help with groups. These people, with their permission, may be asked to help, on occasion, with groups who require an additional helper.

7.5 Group leaders and co-ordinators of services for vulnerable adults (for example those receiving home communion) will be asked to refer to the incumbent all prospective new workers so that the recruitment policy can be followed in full. They will provide workers for their activity with guidance, support and supervision, in fulfilling this policy, and in becoming aware of good safe practice. They will make workers aware of the line of responsibility through to the incumbent and PCC.

7.6 If any response in a completed declaration form, or if anything arising during the recruitment procedure, reveals any possible cause for concern, reference will be made to the Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Adults, and if appropriate to the Bishop.

7.7 If training opportunities occur which would benefit workers with vulnerable adults, workers will be informed and will be given the opportunity to attend if they wish.

7.8 Those appointed to work with vulnerable adults will initially be appointed for a three month probationary period, after which they will meet with the group leader or the incumbent to review their experience in the role, and subject to a satisfactory outcome, to confirm the appointment. Ideally during this probationary period they will accompany other more experienced workers during visits or other activities, though it is recognised that this may not always be possible.

7.9 The role of services for vulnerable adults within the overall life of the parish is kept under review by the incumbent and PCC. Within each group (for example providers of home communion) organisers should meet with helpers at appropriate intervals to review their roles and work and to share ideas and concerns.

7.10 During an interregnum, the Area Dean will hold the confidential Declaration Forms and individual records from the parish, and will oversee the procedures with regards to new volunteers and workers. Workers with vulnerable adults, or else the churchwardens, should contact the Area Dean if recruitment of helpers is proposed during an interregnum.

8. STAFFING LEVELS

- 8.1 No particular compulsory staffing ratios apply when working with vulnerable adults; however see 8.2 below.
- 8.2 Ideally there should be at least 2 workers (age 18 or over) present at each group or activity held solely for vulnerable adults. It is recognised, however, that home visits are often undertaken by one worker. If there is any doubt about the safety of a vulnerable adult, or a worker visiting a vulnerable adult, it would be advisable for two workers to undertake the visit together, or for a carer or family member of the vulnerable adult to be present during the visit.
- 8.3 Where possible, there should be a leader of each gender for a mixed gender group for vulnerable adults.
- 8.4 Where possible, a visit to a vulnerable adult at home should take place within sight or hearing of another adult – for example in a care home a meeting could take place in a communal area, with a door left open or with a carer or family member present. Alternatively a meeting could be held on church premises with another worker present. It is recognised that this will not be practical where a vulnerable adult lives alone or is unable to travel easily to church premises.

C THE VULNERABLE ADULTS

9. HAND OVER AND CONSENT PROCEDURES

9.1 Vulnerable adults are generally responsible for themselves and so there is not usually an issue of handover or consent when they are visited by a worker. Where the needs of a vulnerable adult are such that a carer or family member needs to accompany them, the carer should ideally stay with the adult during the interaction with the church worker, or should remain within calling distance in case of a problem. In this situation the church worker should make it clear to the carer or family member when they are about to leave, so that the vulnerable adult is not left alone.

9.2 Occasionally workers might be dealing with a vulnerable adult for whom another adult acts with Power of Attorney. Such a Power granted by the courts could extend to a wide range of matters, both financial and as regards care, etc. Where a worker is aware that such a Power of Attorney exists, details of that person should be obtained, as well as their consent in writing, before engaging with the vulnerable adult. A record of the person with Power of Attorney, and of their consent, should be retained by the Incumbent. (Red)

9.3 In other situations, (Red) workers should not be in a position of taking sole responsibility for a vulnerable adult, there should be no need for consent forms. However the co-ordinators of work involving visits to the homes of vulnerable people should keep a record of arranged visits.

10 APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR WHEN WORKING WITH VULNERABLE ADULTS (Blue)

10.1 Those working with vulnerable adults are in positions of trust, which inevitably give them power, although this may not be apparent to them; therefore respecting professional boundaries is particularly important. Following these guidelines will not only protect vulnerable people but will also help to ensure that workers are not wrongly accused of abuse or misconduct.

10.2 Many pastoral relationships can become intertwined with friendships and social contacts - Workers should exercise particular care when working with persons with whom they have a close personal friendship or family relationship. Workers should avoid behaviour that could give the impression of inappropriate favouritism or the encouragement of inappropriate special relationships.

10.3 Workers should be aware of the dangers of dependency in pastoral and professional relationships and seek advice or supervision when these concerns arise. Workers should treat those with whom they minister or visit with respect, encouraging self-determination, independence and choice.

10.4 Workers should recognize their limits and not undertake any ministry that is beyond their competence or role or for which they have not been trained (e.g. therapeutic counselling, healing ministry, counselling victims of abuse, or giving legal advice.) In such instances the person should be referred to another person or agency with appropriate expertise.

10.5 Workers should avoid helping with physical needs, such as washing and toileting. Any such requests for help should be declined or referred to a family member or carer of the vulnerable adult.

10.6 Workers should not undertake any pastoral work while they are under the influence of drink or non-prescribed drugs.

10.7 Formal interviews and informal conversations can all be seen to be pastoral encounters. Workers should avoid situations where they feel vulnerable to temptation or where their conduct may be misinterpreted. The Worker should consider in advance:

- The place of the meeting, arrangement of the furniture and lighting, the worker's dress, establishing at the outset the nature of the interview in respect of subject matter, confidentiality and duration, whether the interaction is professional or social in nature;
- The balance of privacy for conversation with the opportunity for supervision (open doors or windows in doors, another person nearby);
- The physical distance between people determined by hospitality and respect, personal safety and comfort, being aware that someone may have suffered abuse or harassment in the past;
- The propriety or danger of visiting or being visited alone, especially in the evening;

10.8 Workers should be aware of their language and behaviour. For example, innuendoes or compliments of a sexual nature are always inappropriate. When a person asks questions or seeks advice around topics of a sexual nature, the worker should be discerning about the motives and needs of the person and question their own ability to assist.

10.9 It is never appropriate for workers to take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with anyone with whom they have a pastoral relationship. Workers should be aware of the power imbalance inherent in pastoral relationships.

10.10 Workers must consider the appropriateness of initiating or receiving any physical contact, for example gestures of comfort, which may be unwanted or misinterpreted. Workers should consider verbal and non-verbal clues from the vulnerable adult.

10.11 In spite of these precautions, occasionally pastoral relationships may develop into genuine romantic attachments. Workers need to recognize such a development as early as possible and make it clear to both the person concerned and a supervisor or colleague. Alternative arrangements should be made for the ongoing pastoral care of the person concerned. (Blue)

11. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS: FINANCIAL DONATIONS & PERSONAL CARE

11.1 Extra care should be taken if a vulnerable adult wishes to make a donation to the church either through cash, a bank standing order or through a will, particularly if this takes place during a one to one home visit. Care should be taken that there is no suspicion of coercion, or financial or legal abuse.

11.2 Any donations must be passed to the Planned Giving Officer or Parish Administrator, who will acknowledge the gift in writing. Any donation of over £100 should be discussed with the incumbent who will consider whether to accept or refuse it.

11.3 Workers should avoid providing any personal care such as assistance in the toilet. Vulnerable adults requiring such assistance should be accompanied by a carer or family member.

12. YOUNG HELPERS

12.1 Young people aged 16 & 17 may be involved with visits to, or activities with, vulnerable adults, as helpers. However, no-one under 18 should be responsible for a group of vulnerable adults, nor should they attend a home visit alone. Any young person who attends a home visit to a vulnerable adult should do so under the supervision of, and accompanied by, an adult who has completed a Confidential Declaration and a CRB check.

12.2 Young people aged 16 & 17 who work with vulnerable adults as helpers are also required to sign the Confidential Declaration and to provide references. They should sign the declaration with their parents.

12.3 All young people under the age of 18 assisting as helpers should be treated as 'visitors' to the group; care should be taken to support and supervise these young people. (Red)

D GENERAL SAFETY

13. ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS, AND CONCERNS

13.1 All accidents should be recorded in the Accident Book, at each of the churches, by the group leader or worker concerned. Remember to include the date, time and where the accident happened, along with a note of action taken or treatment given. The incumbent should also be informed.

13.2 The incumbent will keep a confidential “Vulnerable Adult Protection Folder” in which incidents involving concerns about vulnerable adults should be recorded. Such items are obviously of a confidential nature, but may be pieces in a jigsaw which point to concerns for a vulnerable adult’s welfare or give grounds for suspicion of abuse occurring somewhere in their life. Proper reporting and recording is therefore important for the protection of vulnerable adults and workers. This folder is to be kept indefinitely.

13.3 It is important that we protect ourselves as workers, as well as providing for the welfare of the vulnerable adults. Good practice provides for this. If a vulnerable adult makes allegations against you such as “you’re always picking on me” or “you hit me”, keep a record of this, again noting the date, time and place. If possible, get another adult to witness the allegation. A copy of this record should be passed to the incumbent for inclusion in the “Vulnerable Adult Folder”.

13.4 If a vulnerable adult’s behaviour gives concern, whether it is about their treatment of others in the group, their language, inappropriate touching of children or other vulnerable adults or workers, or general behavioural problems, make a record of this, and make sure that another adult, such as the group leader, knows. A copy of this record should be passed to the incumbent for inclusion in the “Vulnerable Adults Protection Folder”.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

14.1 The PCC recognises its responsibility to provide a safe, secure and caring environment for vulnerable adults, and to promote safe working practices in all appropriate organisations.

14.2 Leaders of organisations and those working with vulnerable adults should ensure that equipment is clean, safe and appropriate for the activity they are to undertake.

14.3 Leaders of organisations and those working with vulnerable adults should check the premises before vulnerable adults arrive, to ensure that the premises are clean, safe and secure, and appropriate for the activity. Workers should familiarise themselves with emergency exits, and ensure that they are not obstructed.

14.4 All workers should familiarise themselves with the location and safe operation of fire extinguishers, and be aware of what to do in the event of fire or a similar emergency.

14.5 An Accident Book will be kept in the Trinity Centre or clergy vestry of the Church. In the event of any accident or emergency the Leader of the organisation or activity should make a record of the event, and of any action that they took, in the Accident Book and should sign and date it. The incumbent should also be informed of the event, and the church Insurers notified at once by him, if appropriate.

14.6 The PCC is responsible for ensuring that adequate and appropriate insurance cover, relating to all activities and organisations working with vulnerable adults, is in place. To assist in this, leaders of organisations are asked to keep the incumbent and PCC informed about any special events or activities that may require additional insurance cover.

14.7 Access to the church buildings should be well lit and clearly marked.

14.8 No weapons or illegal substances should be brought onto the premises. When safe to do so, any found will be confiscated and reported to the police. Note that Appendix 2 gives detailed guidance on the PCC’s policy regarding drugs.

15. TRANSPORT

15.1 If transportation of vulnerable adults is required, as far as possible there should be at least 2 workers in each vehicle. If this is not possible, consent to the arrangement should be obtained and confirmed by note.

15.2 It is the responsibility of drivers to check that they have a valid licence for the class of vehicle being used, that it is appropriately taxed, MOT’d and insured. Those organising outings requiring the use of private vehicles are responsible for ensuring that car owners are aware of the above.

15.3 Cars used for transporting vulnerable adults must have seat belts in the front and back, and these must be used. Similarly, mini-buses or coaches must have seat belts throughout. Seat belts must be used.

16. PHOTOGRAPHS AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Photographs

16.1 Written permission must be obtained before

- photographs are taken of vulnerable adults at church organised events or groups;
- photographs are published – whether in church magazines, local press or on-line;
- photographs are stored - in any form, digital or not. Digital storage must be in accordance with the PCC's overall policy on personal data.

Communication

16.2 From time to time, workers may contact vulnerable adults by email or text message in order to organise events or groups. Workers should ensure that the incumbent and the PLP are aware that such communication happens. In particular, copies of such communication should be made and a permanent record kept.

16.3 Workers should remember that whilst email and text messages are conversational in nature, they are effectively a 'print media'. They should restrict their messages to the relevant matter and not enter into personal 'conversations'.

16.4 Where he/she feels confidentiality requires it, PCC accepts that the incumbent might feel it inappropriate to copy communications to others. In such cases he/she must make a permanent **physical (Red)** record.

16.5 PCC does not authorise the use of instant messaging software.

Social networking

16.6 The PCC authorises the use of a Facebook social networking page for communication within the parish. An administrator must be in place

- to take responsibility for who 'likes' the page, and who is blocked if believed to be an inappropriate user;
- to continually monitor the content of the page. (Green)

16.7 Users must think carefully about the boundaries between personal and church life, and remember that the page's content is public.

16.8 Users may receive invitations from other users (specifically vulnerable adults) to become Facebook 'friends'. They are advised not to accept such invitations unless there is a pre-existing relationship with the vulnerable adult. (Red)

E DEALING WITH ABUSE

17. AWARENESS OF ABUSE

17.1 It is the responsibility of the incumbent and PCC to ensure that all workers understand what is meant by abuse, and to understand the procedures which have to be followed if a disclosure of abuse is made. Some useful guidelines on "Understanding Abuse" are summarised in Appendix 1.

17.2 The incumbent, PCC and PCPC will ensure that training awareness of abuse, and of how to respond appropriately, is made available to workers.

17.3 If there are suspicions of abuse rather than disclosure, these should be recorded and reported to the incumbent, who will take advice from the Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Adults via the Bishop's Office.

18. REPORTS OF ABUSE

General disclosures

- 18.1 If a disclosure of abuse is made to a worker the procedure set out below will be followed.
- 18.2 If the disclosure is of an instance of domestic abuse, the worker must obtain the victim's permission before taking any further action.
- 18.3 For anything other than domestic abuse, and for domestic abuse where the victim has given permission, disclosure should be reported **at the earliest opportunity** to the incumbent.
- 18.4 The incumbent will report the disclosure and circumstances to the Bishop's Adviser through the Bishop's Office.
- 18.5 Throughout the procedure all who are involved must keep full records of their actions, and notes of all conversations they have regarding the disclosure.

Additional issues in disclosure of abuse by a church worker

- 18.6 Informal mediation should be tried. A mediator should be appointed by the incumbent, and should meet the complainant and determine how the complainant wishes to proceed.
- 18.7 The mediator should ascertain whether a criminal offence has been committed. If there has, the complainant should be given the opportunity to make a statement to the police. The alleged abuser must not be spoken to without police agreement.
- 18.8 If the alleged abuser is a member of clergy or a lay reader, the complaint should be referred to the Archdeacon.
- 18.9 If the alleged abuser is an employee of the PCC, employment law requires we comply with disciplinary and dismissal procedures:
- The PCC should notify the employee in writing of the complaint and invite the employee to a meeting. The employee must be told the basis of the complaint and given a reasonable time to respond. No action may be taken until the meeting has taken place.
 - The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting, and has the right to be accompanied. The PCC must notify the employee of the decision taken and of the right to appeal.
 - If the employee notifies the PCC that they attend to appeal a further meeting must be held, but disciplinary action may take place in the meantime. As with the initial meeting, the employee must take all reasonable steps to attend, and may be accompanied; the PCC must notify the employee of the decision taken.
- 18.10 If the alleged abuser is a volunteer it may be possible to resolve the complaint informally. But where the complaint is of a serious nature it is good practice to follow the procedure under 17.9 above.
- 18.11 The incumbent will inform the Insurance Company that a disclosure of abuse has taken place.
- 18.12 If the alleged abuser is the incumbent, then a churchwarden should carry out the incumbent's duties under 18.1 to 18.11 above.
- 18.13 The PCC must assess whether to refer the complaint to the ISA under certain conditions. The circumstances and procedures are set out in Appendix 3. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to fail to comply.

19. PASTORAL CARE AND CONFESSION

- 19.1 Allegations of abuse must be handled sensitively. Support and advice will be sought from the Bishop's Adviser for Adult Safeguarding (and/or if appropriate the Bishop's Adviser for Child Protection) through the Bishop's Office. The safety of vulnerable adults will be paramount.
- 19.2 Both those making an allegation or disclosure of abuse, and (where they are a church member) the person about whom an allegation is made, will need support. Different people must give support for each. The Bishop's Adviser will be consulted on how this will be practically managed in each individual situation.
- 19.3 Those to whom an allegation or disclosure of abuse is made may require advice or pastoral support. In the first instance this will be provided by the incumbent or by others as appropriate. The Bishop's Adviser may be consulted.

19.4 Adult survivors of child abuse may seek pastoral support or make allegations. This situation is covered by the PCC's Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Children and Young People.

19.5 It is recognised that some known offenders and perpetrators of abuse are part of church communities and organisations. Recognition of their needs and appropriate support are necessary, without putting vulnerable adults at risk. If such a situation should arise in the parish, guidance and support will be sought from the Bishop's Adviser.

19.6 With regards to confidentiality, and confession, the guidelines from "God's Children: Our Diocese", 2005 will be followed, and the incumbent will consult the Bishop's office.

19.7 With regards to confession of abuse, the guidelines from "God's Children: Our Diocese", 2005, section 2.5.3 will be followed by the incumbent, and the incumbent will consult the Bishop's office.

19.8 To avoid any question, if approached for counsel or confession, the incumbent will make it clear in advance that he is unwilling to guarantee absolute confidentiality on the issue of abuse and there are circumstances when he will pass information to an appropriate authority. If necessary, he will make arrangements for an alternative priest to take a sacramental confession.

19.9 Practical advice on how to provide pastoral care to victims of abuse is shown at Appendix 2.

F DEALING WITH KNOWN ABUSERS

20. ABUSERS

20.1 The PCC recognizes with regret that there are individuals who abuse vulnerable adults, and that they may be part of our church community. However the safety of vulnerable adults must always be paramount. This is not to exclude people from the love of God through the church but to recognize that these people will need support and boundaries.

20.2 Abusers in the church may be:

- Those who have been convicted or cautioned;
- Those who are known to the criminal justice system;
- Those who are known to others but where no action has been taken;
- Those who are not known.

They may or may not be still abusing.

20.3 We recognize that abusers are practiced in deception, and may be attending church in order to gain access to vulnerable adults by building relationships with them.

21. CONFIDENTIALITY

21.1 The incumbent might learn about an abuser from:

- The police, prison services, social services or a rehabilitation clinic;
- The prison service or the courts;
- The Archdeacon or the Bishop;
- The incumbent of a church previously attended by the abuser;
- The Criminal Records Bureau;
- The abuser in person;
- A member of the congregation.

21.2 Confidentiality of this sensitive information is of prime importance for everyone involved. Boundaries need to be set with the Bishop's Advisor and these will be different in every situation. Consideration must be given to the safety of the abuser. However, the PCC believe that the protection of vulnerable adults is paramount. These boundaries may need to be broken if the incumbent thinks vulnerable adults are at risk.

21.3 We again note the specific issue of a disclosure being made to the incumbent or curate by someone believing the conversation to be in the nature of a sacramental confession, and so strictly confidential. To avoid any question if approached for counsel or confession the incumbent or curate will make it clear in advance that he/she is unwilling to guarantee absolute confidentiality on the issue of child abuse. If necessary, he/she will make arrangements for an alternative priest to take a sacramental confession.

21.4 Because of the changing face of church officers and congregations, the issue of 'who knows' will be constantly reviewed. The PCC recognizes that such knowledge is a burden for those who hold it and they will need pastoral support and guidance on the nature of abuse and abusers.

22. IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

22.1 The incumbent must ascertain from the person giving the information what contact they have with the abuser and what safeguards have been put in place.

22.2 The incumbent must ensure that the abuser is not doing any work that brings them into contact with vulnerable adults and if they are, stop this immediately.

22.3 The incumbent must consider whether vulnerable adults outside the church context are at immediate risk. If he believes they may be he should contact Social Services.

22.4 The incumbent must, in any case, contact the Bishop's Adviser who will advise on future action to be taken in this specific circumstance.

22.5 If the abuser says they are still abusing, the incumbent must follow the procedures set out in sections 18 and 19 above.

23. SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS

23.1 Every situation may be different. When the Bishop's Adviser is contacted he/she will give appropriate advice and support. An assessment of the risks will be carried out, and a written contract with the abuser may result.

23.2 The Bishop's Adviser may make contact with the statutory authorities.

23.3 Should an allegation be made against the abuser, full vulnerable adult protection procedures, as set out in this document, should be followed.

23.4 If the abuser leaves the church the incumbent will seek the advice of the Bishop's Adviser. This may result in him/her informing:

Any agency that has been involved;

Any referring agency;

The incumbent/minister of any new church that the abuser may be attending.

G COMMUNICATION AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

24. MAKING THE POLICY KNOWN

24.1 The PCC recognises its responsibility to make its policy and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults generally known to church members, appropriate workers, vulnerable adults and their families, and other organisations linked with the church or using its premises.

24.2 Copies of the Policy and Procedures Document will be kept at church and in the Trinity Centre where they may be consulted by all concerned. The introduction to the document and Statement of Policy will be posted on noticeboards in the church and Trinity Centre.

24.3 Copies of the Policy and Procedures Document will be given to all workers with vulnerable adults and appropriate training will be provided. The document will be available to any other person on request. A register will be kept of all those who have been provided with a copy of the Policy and Procedures Document.

25. ANNUAL REVIEW

25.1 The PCC will carry out an annual review of its Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults, and also monitor the progress which has been achieved.

26. LIST OF STANDARD DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE

26.1 The following standard documents and templates are available from the PLP or the PAVA in both paper and electronic formats:

Volunteer Application Form

Confidential Declaration

Volunteer Agreement

Registration Form for On-Site Group Activities

Referral Form – for use when making a referral to ISA, Social Services or the Police - available in the Trinity Centre Office

26.2 The following documents are available in the Trinity Centre office:

Parish Pack for safeguarding adults(published by the Diocese of Birmingham-2010)

Holy Trinity Parish Church Health & Safety Policy and Procedures. (Green)

APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE ON UNDERSTANDING ABUSE

UNDERSTANDING ABUSE: WHAT IS IT?

Abuse could be in one of a number of forms.

Neglect is any pattern of activity by another person that results in serious impairment of an individual. It can include: failure to intervene where there is danger; and lack of proper supervision.

Physical, injury by deliberate action or by not knowingly preventing an injury.

Sexual, involving an individual in sexual activities without their informed consent. It may be contact (indecent assault, etc) or non-contact (exposure to indecent material).

Emotional is the use of threats, fear or power to negate an individual's independent wishes. It includes bullying, sexual and racial harassment when there is no physical abuse.

Financial/legal is the wilful extortion or manipulation of an individual's legal rights, including the misuse of the individual's finances and possessions.

Spiritual, where a faith community 'forces' religious values or ideas onto vulnerable people, including those under their pastoral care.

Systematic abuse, where the system designed to protect in itself produces abuse, e.g. abuse in nursing homes.

Note that often, many of the above types of abuse could be categorised as domestic abuse (abuse between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members).

WARNING SIGNS

Diagnosis is a specialist social and medical task and signs of abuse may in fact be indications of other problems. However, the following are some of the signs for lay people to watch for:

- Physical injuries, such as cuts, wounds, bruises, fractures
- Untreated injuries or other untreated medical conditions
- Dehydration or malnourishment
- Inappropriate use of medication: under- or over-dosing
- Poor hygiene, either of the person or the environment
- Lack of necessary assistance with basic needs – eating, bathing, dressing
- Genital infections, bruising or bleeding
- Inappropriate flirtation or coyness from the vulnerable adult
- Inappropriate affection or defensiveness from carers, etc
- Implausible stories, or stories which differ from those given by carers, family, etc
- Unexplained fear or behaviour (rocking, biting)
- Unexplained anger or other highly emotional behaviour
- Depression and withdrawal
- Non-communicative or fearful about communicating
- Changes to bank account names
- Unexplained transfer of, or disappearance of assets; or numerous unpaid bills
- Lack of amenities the vulnerable person should be able to afford (TV, clothing, etc)
- Abrupt changes to will
- Appearance of previously uninvolved relatives

Such signs should make us stop and think, not jump to conclusions. They are pieces in a jigsaw. If concerned, workers should record their observations and concerns and provide a copy to the incumbent. Proper recording provides protection to both vulnerable adults and workers, and may lead to a decision to take further action.

Signs which may indicate domestic abuse include:

- Unexplained physical injuries
- Suicidal feelings
- Panic attacks
- Unusual quietness and withdrawal
- Frequent absences from work or other commitments
- Wearing concealing clothes even in warm weather

- Anxiety about being out, or rushing away

Again, in the place of such signs we should not jump to conclusions. The signs are only indicators of possible domestic abuse. In the case of domestic abuse the victim cannot be made to take action against the perpetrator. Workers must obtain the victim's permission before they discuss concerns with anyone other than the victim. If concerned, they should record their observations and concerns and – provided they have permission from the victim – provide a copy to the incumbent.

HOW TO REACT TO SUSPICION OF ABUSE

Diagnosis of abuse must be left to qualified professionals. If you have suspicion of abuse, rather than disclosure, think through the signs, record your concerns and report them to the incumbent who will take advice from the Bishop's Adviser for Adult Safeguarding.

APPENDIX 2: PASTORAL CARE FOLLOWING ABUSE

ADULT SURVIVORS OF CHILD ABUSE

Refer to the PCC's Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Children and Young People.

RECENT ABUSE

Practical responses to recent or ongoing abuse might include:

- a safe place, protection and medical attention
- a safety plan, including personal safety devices (e.g. alarm, mobile phone, improved locks) – obtainable from the police or community care schemes
- a list of items to take with them, e.g. money, birth and marriage certificates, passports, benefit books, chequebooks, address book containing names and addresses of friends and family, children's favourite toys
- expert professional help
- childcare while seeking help
- DIY assistance, e.g. mending windows
- furniture, household and baby equipment, toys, etc. in cases of rehousing
- care for pets
- advocacy and support during the legal or financial processes such as getting benefits

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Some practical guidelines when encountering domestic abuse:

- Most survivors want to be asked. If you are able to broach the subject, your offer of help could be the first step in enabling them to seek help; e.g. 'How are things at home?'
- Try wherever possible to talk in a safe, private place where you will not be interrupted, or arrange to talk again (but someone in distress may start talking anywhere).
- Try to make it clear that complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, depending on the nature of what is disclosed.
- Dial 999 if you are witnessing a violent incident or if the person needs medical care.
- Take plenty of time to listen and believe what they say. If they sense disbelief they may be discouraged from speaking again.
- Be sensitive to people's backgrounds and cultures and check your own and their understanding of how the cultural issues affect them. Ask them about the attitude of their families and what support they can expect.
- Affirm the strength and courage it takes to have survived the abuse and even more to talk about it.
- Express concern for their safety and discuss it. Do they have somewhere to stay?
- Ask about the children, if there any. Are they abused or witnesses to abuse? If so you may need to persuade them to report it or allow you to do so. You may have no option but to do so if a child is at risk. (Discuss your concerns with the PCPC and follow the church child protection policy).
- Encourage them to focus on their own needs, something they may not have been able to do since the abuse began but which is critical in helping them to change their situation.
- Reassure them that, whatever the circumstances, abuse is not justified and not their fault.
- Ask them what they want from you and the parish. Offer help which is in response to their needs and preferences and which lets them keep in control.
- Check if it is all right to contact them at home before doing so.
- Keep information confidential and never pass on without consent (unless it is a child protection issue).
- Give information about where to get specialist help and encourage them to seek professional help even if they do not want to leave.
- Make a brief objective note of date, facts and context of what you have been told but keep your opinions separate. This should be kept in strict confidence but could be useful in any future prosecution.
- Do not trivialize, judge, criticise or dismiss what they tell you.
- Do not have physical contact.
- Do not put yourself in a dangerous position. Do not confront the alleged abuser or offer to mediate.
- Do not give advice or try to take control. Discuss their options, find out what *they* want (bearing in mind that sometimes their wishes will have been manipulated by the perpetrator) and help them to achieve it.
- Do not expect them to make decisions in a hurry. Leaving may be as frightening as staying. Helping them build a contingency/crisis plan can make them feel in control of their life.
- Do not forget your own needs. Such disclosures will be stressful for you. Discuss the situation with a specialist or supervisor without identifying the victim.

ABUSE AND ETHNIC MINORITY VICTIMS

Where survivors are from a minority ethnic background:

- Remember that the need to build a sense of security and trust, which applies to all encounters with survivors, is likely to be intensified for those from minority ethnic communities.
 - Take extreme care before deciding whether family or community support networks would be beneficial – they might be part of the problem.
 - Make referrals, as far as possible, for support and advice to organisations from the same background as the survivor, with a reliable track record of helping survivors.
 - Make referrals to specialist practitioners and organisations if immigration or asylum issues are involved.
 - Keep an accurate record of allegations of domestic abuse, since this may be vital in enabling someone with insecure immigration status to obtain indefinite leave to remain in the UK.
 - Consider what financial and other support can be offered to a survivor whose immigration status is insecure and who cannot access housing or benefits.
 - Ensure that any interpreter speaks the correct language, and dialect, and that the survivor feels comfortable with this person – issues of confidentiality may arise if the interpreter is from the same community.
 - Continue to provide befriending and support, remembering the isolation, shame and poverty which may befall women from minority communities whose marriages break up.
-
- Do not attempt to mediate or reconcile out of respect for cultural difference. This places the survivor at further risk of abuse.
 - Do not allow lack of secure immigration or asylum status to prevent attempts to ensure the safety of the survivor.
 - Do not use children as interpreters, since they may have experienced or witnessed violence and been deeply affected by it.

APPENDIX 3: MAKING A REFERRAL TO THE ISA

WHEN TO REFER

PCC will almost always be providers of regulated activity and as such now has a statutory duty to refer information to the ISA.

It will be important for PCC to consider:

whether an individual's behaviour is '**relevant conduct**', defined by the ISA as:

- conduct endangering, or is likely to endanger, a child or vulnerable adult;
- conduct that, if repeated against a child or vulnerable adult, would endanger them or be likely to endanger them;
- conduct involving sexual material relating to children (including possession of such material);
- conduct involving sexually explicit images depicting violence against human beings (including possession of such images);
- inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature involving a child or vulnerable adult.

or:

whether an individual's behaviour has raised concerns in respect of harm they have caused or potentially could cause in the future to a child or vulnerable adult. The ISA defines this behaviour which

- may harm a child or vulnerable adult;
- may cause a child or vulnerable adult to be harmed;
- puts a child or vulnerable adult at risk of harm;
- attempts to harm a child or vulnerable adult; or
- incites another to harm a child or vulnerable adult.

and/or:

an individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence. A relevant offence is a serious criminal offence which qualifies a person for automatic inclusion in the 'barred' lists (e.g. the rape of a child)

If having gathered sufficient evidence to suggest on the balance of probabilities that any one of the above criteria have been met, then the PCC or other body has a duty to make a referral.

A referral must be made where an employee of, or a volunteer appointed by the PCC or other body is removed from regulated activity for any of the above reasons irrespective of whether that person subsequently resigns, retires, is made redundant, transfers to other activity or leaves the parish.

This duty is unlikely to arise very often but it is important when it does occur, because failure to comply is a criminal offence.

HOW TO REFER

If the PCC believes that a referral may be necessary, they should contact the Bishop's Adviser for Adult Safeguarding in the first instance through Bishop's Croft. The Bishop's Adviser will then advise the PCC on what appropriate action should be taken.

Arrangements are required such that PCC can be confident that any instances that may warrant a referral will be properly handled. So, PCC has delegated specific authority to a group comprising the PLP, PCPC, a church warden and the incumbent to deal with any instances which might trigger a referral. This group is empowered to act without reference back to the PCC, but must report to the PCC from time to time on the exercise of its delegated powers (without disclosing personal information that should remain confidential to those who need to have it).

The above refers to the PCC's statutory duty to make a referral. However, it is important to remember that safeguarding vulnerable groups is the responsibility of us all and that anyone can and should report an individual if their behaviour is such that they believe that the individual has caused or is likely to cause harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Such referrals should be made directly to social services or to the police.

APPENDIX 4: POLICY ON DRUG ABUSE

LEGAL BACKGROUND

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 says that a person commits an offence if he knowingly permits or suffers the presence or use of controlled drugs.

Person has been interpreted to mean anyone in a supervisory role, or with responsibility for the premises. This would include the PCC, its officers, and the volunteers who supervise the activity.

Knowingly is defined to cover: actual knowledge; knowledge of circumstances which cause suspicion; knowledge of circumstance such it could be said they had shut their eyes to the obvious; not caring whether or not an offence takes place.

Controlled drugs covers the following:

Class A: including heroin, opium derivatives, cocaine, LSD, ecstasy

Class B: including cannabis, barbiturates, oral preparations of amphetamines

Class C: including tranquillisers such as valium, sleeping pills, less harmful amphetamines.

ZERO TOLERANCE

To protect all members of the church and church groups, and particularly to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults, the PCC adopts a policy of 'zero tolerance'. No illegal drugs shall be brought onto, sold on, used on or made on premises owned by the church. No illegal drugs shall be brought to, sold at, used at or made at any group or activity organised by the church. The PCC recognises that an adult may become 'vulnerable' if they are under the influence of drugs or, over a long time period, dependent on drug use.

A notice setting out the PCC's policy towards drugs will be displayed in the Trinity Centre

ACTION FOLLOWING DRUG INCIDENTS

If a worker becomes aware that illegal drugs are present, he/she must immediately inform the leader of their group who will report the matter to:

the emergency ambulance service - if an incident of actual abuse has occurred;

the police;

the incumbent.

Where the person involved is a child or young person, their parents/guardians will also be informed.

If it becomes necessary to remove a person from the premises, group or activity immediately, this must be done safely and appropriately. Regard must be paid to the person's age, perceived state of health and whether any aggression is being shown. In exceptional circumstances a volunteer may have to physically restrain a child, young person or adult. This raises other Child Protection issues or other legal issues. Broadly speaking, if there is a significant risk of them harming either themselves or others, they may be legally restrained. If possible a second volunteer should be present.

There may be materials at the scene - hypodermic needles, foils, tablets, vomit, etc. These must be preserved as they may help decide upon appropriate medical treatment, and may constitute forensic evidence. Hypodermic needles can transmit communicable diseases and must be treated with care.

The person or persons involved in the incident may be banned from the premises, group or activity - either temporarily or permanently. The incumbent and wardens will take advice from diocesan representatives, and after discussion with the PCC will rule on the extent of any ban.

The incumbent shall make a record of any incident including: full description of the incident; the names of persons involved; when and to whom the incident was reported. Where a person is banned, the record should also show: what steps the incumbent took to take advice; the commencement and duration of the ban.

Suggested addition=

SECTION 7.

TO ADD:

REFERENCE OF ISA REGISTRATION AS APPROPRIATE
REFERENCE TO VBS WHERE APPROPRIATE