

# Marshfield Church Hall Safeguarding Policy

## Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

This policy defines how Marshfield Church Hall operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect and runs alongside the **Marshfield Benefice Safeguarding Policy**.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including: children, young people and adults at risk, involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events.

Those hiring the Hall must ensure that any activities for children, young people and other vulnerable adults are only provided by fit and proper persons in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and any subsequent legislation. When requested, they must provide us with a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The hirer shall ensure that any activities for children under 8 years of age comply with any legislation current at the date of the hiring. Youth organisations using the Hall must have adequate adult supervision.

## Policy Principles

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness.

Marshfield Church Hall Committee:

- has a zero- tolerance approach to abuse
- recognises that under the Care Act 2014, it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are risk of abuse.

- It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the children act 1989 and 2004.
- Is committed to promoting well-being, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised
- is aware of the work of their local safeguarding board/partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk. The policy is about stopping abuse where is happening and preventing abuse where there is risk that it may occur.

The Church Hall committee is committed to the following principles

- the welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount
- all children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part and knew line all suspicions of allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately:

### **Children at risk of abuse and neglect**

For the purpose of this policy children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of Children's Health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

There are four main types of abuse, physical, emotional, sexual and neglect (see appendix i)

### **What are the signs of child abuse?**

The signs of child abuse aren't always obvious, and a child might not feel able to tell anyone what's happening to them. Sometimes, children don't even realise that what's happening to them is abuse.

There are different types of child abuse and the signs that a child is being abused may depend on the type. For example, the signs that a child is being neglected may be different from the signs that a child is being abused sexually. Children of different ages may also show different signs of child abuse. For example, a toddler will show different signs that they've been sexually abused than a teenager.

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- becoming withdrawn
- seeming anxious
- becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
- poor bond or relationship with a parent
- knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- running away or going missing
- always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour

### **Adults at risk of abuse and neglect**

For the purpose of this policy, adults at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk

### **Persons affected**

- All those attending or organising any activity or service that is being delivered from the Church Hall.

- Committee members

It's not always easy to spot the signs of abuse. Someone being abused may make excuses for why they're bruised, may not want to go out or talk to people, or may be short of money.

It's important to know the signs of abuse and, where they're identified, gently share your concerns with the person you think may be being abused.(Appendix ii)

If you wait, hoping the person will tell you what's been happening to them, it could delay matters and allow the abuse to continue.

Behavioural signs of abuse in an older person include:

- becoming quiet and withdrawn
- being aggressive or angry for no obvious reason
- looking unkempt, dirty or thinner than usual
- sudden changes in their character, such as appearing helpless, depressed or tearful
- physical signs – such as bruises, wounds, fractures or other untreated injuries
- the same injuries happening more than once
- not wanting to be left by themselves or alone with particular people
- being unusually lighthearted and insisting there's nothing wrong

If you feel someone you know is showing signs of being abused, talk to them to see if there's anything you can do to help.

If they're being abused, they may not want to talk about it straight away, especially if they've become used to making excuses for their injuries or changes in personality.

Do not ignore your concerns, though. Doing so could allow any abuse to carry on or escalate.

### **Reporting Concerns**

If a crime may have been, or is being, committed contact the Police on 101 or 999

Hall users and Management Committee members should report any concern that they have about a child or an adult at risk to the Parish

Safeguarding Officer-**Linda Lamb**, Email: [llsafeguarding@gmail.com](mailto:llsafeguarding@gmail.com) and Chair of the Management Committee.

Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so

**Internal:**

**Marshfield Benefice Safeguarding Officer  
Linda Lamb  
Email: [llsafeguarding@gmail.com](mailto:llsafeguarding@gmail.com)**

**External:**

**South Glos Safeguarding Adults Board - 01454 868007**

**South Glos Children's Partnership - 01454 866000 – Monday to Friday**

**Out of hours/weekends - Adults and Children 01454 615165.**

**The following organisations and phonelines may also be helpful:**

- **[Safe Spaces](#) – 0300 303 1056**
- **[NSPCC](#) – 0808 800 5000**
- **[Childline](#) – 0800 1111**
- **[Stop it Now](#) – 0808 1000 900**
- **[NAPAC](#) – Supporting Recovery From Childhood Abuse**
- **[Samaritans](#) – 116 123**
- **[Family Lives](#) – Parenting and Family Support**
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 2000 247**

## *Appendix i*

### **Types of child abuse**

There are four main types of abuse.

#### **Physical abuse**

This is when someone hurts a child on purpose and with the intent to cause harm. This can include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, or suffocating. If it causes them physical harm, such as cuts, bruises, broken bones or other injuries, it is physical abuse.

Anyone can hurt a child - a relative, friend or stranger. It can also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### **Signs of physical abuse**

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained:
  - bruises or cuts
  - burns or scalds
  - bite marks

Children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Babies and disabled children also have a higher risk of suffering physical abuse.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is when a child's feelings and emotions are manipulated or shamed on purpose. This can take different forms, for example:

- when a child is unfairly blamed for everything
- told they are stupid, worthless or ugly
- ignored or never shown any emotion in interactions

Emotional abuse is the severe and persistent ill treatment of a child. It can have long-lasting and devastating effects on a child's emotional health and development.

#### **Signs of emotional abuse**

- The child is excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child

- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Emotional abuse may be the only form of abuse suffered by a child, or it might be part of a wider pattern of abuse.

### **Sexual abuse and exploitation**

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity with a child, or inducing a child to act in sexually inappropriate ways.

Many children and young people do not recognise themselves as victims. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong.

The sexual abuse of children is more than just physical sexual contact. It includes:

- sexual touching, masturbation, kissing, rubbing - clothed or unclothed
- all penetrative sex
- intentionally engaging in sexual activity in front of a child
- making, showing, or distributing indecent images of children.
- grooming children for future abuse - in person or online

### **Signs of sexual abuse**

- displaying knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- using sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- asking others to behave sexually or play sexual games
- exhibiting physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy

Sexual abuse is not only perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Child sexual exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. This is when an individual or group takes advantage of a child (anyone under 18) to coerce, manipulate or deceive them into sexual activity.

This is done:

- in exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Even if the activity appears consensual, the victim still may have been sexually manipulated. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact, and can also occur online or through social media.

## **Signs of child sexual exploitation**

- appearing regularly with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- suffering from sexually transmitted infections or pregnancies
- changes in emotional well-being
- misuse of drugs and alcohol
- going missing for periods of time or regularly coming home late
- regularly missing school or not taking part in education

## **Neglect**

Neglect is where a child is not looked after. It is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic and essential needs.

This can include:

- not providing adequate food, water, clothing, and shelter
- leaving a child alone in dangerous situations, or to watch after themselves when they are very young
- failure to provide medical care
- failure to meet the child's emotional needs

## **Warning signs of neglect**

- living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- persistent hunger and signs of malnutrition
- lack of hygiene - dirty clothes and hair that may lead to lice or nits
- lack of adequate clothing for the time of year - such as not having a winter coat
- living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence
- often acting angry, aggressive or self-harming
- failing to receive basic health care
- parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or injured

If a child does not have a safe and stable home, this is neglect.

## *Appendix ii*

### **Types of adult abuse**

The Care Act 2014 outlines 10 types of abuse and neglect that adults at risk who have care and support needs may experience.

#### **Psychological and Emotional Abuse**

Psychological abuse, sometimes referred to as emotional abuse, is a form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another person to a behaviour that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder. It is often associated with situations of power imbalance in abusive relationships, and may include bullying, gaslighting, and abuse in the workplace.

Psychological abuse can be difficult to spot, especially in the early stages. It can be subtle and insidious, and it often involves the abuser using words and actions to control, isolate, and humiliate the victim.

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is any act or behaviour that causes bodily harm to another person. It can include hitting, slapping, kicking, punching, biting, choking, burning, and other forms of violence. Physical abuse can also include denying someone food, water, or medical care.

It is important to note that physical abuse does not always leave visible marks. Someone may experience physical abuse without having any bruises or other injuries. This is because physical abuse can also include things like shaking, squeezing, and throwing.

Physical abuse can have a devastating impact on the victim. It can cause physical pain, injury, and disability. It can also lead to emotional and psychological problems, such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

#### **Sexual abuse and exploitation**

Sexual exploitation is the sexual abuse of an adult in exchange for attention, affection, food, drugs, shelter, protection, other basic necessities and/or money, and could be part of a seemingly consensual relationship. There can also be links to grooming.

There are many types of sexual abuse. Some victims may not even realise that they've experienced sexual abuse unless they become educated about the different forms of this violent act.

Any type of non-consensual sexual activity or contact qualifies as sexual abuse, including

- Rape
- Date rape
- Attempted rape
- Inappropriate touching
- Sexual harassment

Any sexual act or contact that makes someone feel uncomfortable, afraid, or intimidated and could fall in the category of sexual abuse.

Sexual exploitation is the sexual abuse of an adult in exchange for attention, affection, food, drugs, shelter, protection, other basic necessities and/or money, and could be part of a seemingly consensual relationship. There can also be links to grooming.

### **Discriminatory abuse**

Discriminatory abuse is the unequal treatment of an individual based on age, care experienced, disability, gender and gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. The four types of discrimination, as outlined by the Equality Act of 2010, include:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation

### **Examples of Discriminatory Abuse**

- Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010)
- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic
- Lack of effective communication provision, for example, interpretation
- Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- Below standard service provided relating to a protected characteristic

### **Signs of Discriminatory abuse can include:**

- a tendency for withdrawal and isolation
- fearfulness and anxiety
- being refused access to services or being excluded inappropriately
- resistance or refusal to access services that are required to meet assessed needs

### **Self-neglect and hoarding**

Self-neglect is when someone does not take care of themselves. This can include not taking care of their personal hygiene, health, or surroundings. It can also include hoarding, which is when someone collects and keeps too many things, even if they don't need or use them, to the point where it interferes with their daily life.

Self-neglect is different from other kinds of abuse because there is no one who is causing the abuse. However, abuse can sometimes lead to self-neglect. Self-neglect can be a complex and difficult issue to deal with because it is important to respect the person's right to make their own choices, but it is also important to protect their health and well-being.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is a law that helps to decide what action can be taken in cases of self-neglect.

Here are some signs of self-neglect

- Poor personal hygiene, such as not bathing or changing clothes regularly
- Not eating or drinking enough
- Not taking medication as prescribed
- Living in a dirty or cluttered environment
- Hoarding animals or objects

It is important to remember that self-neglect is a serious issue, but it is one that can be helped

### **Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between anyone who has been 'personally connected'. This includes current or ex partners, family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

## **Neglect or an act of omission**

Neglect or an act of omission is when someone who is responsible for caring for an adult with care and support needs fails to provide them with the care they need. This can be intentional or unintentional.

Some examples of neglect include

- Ignoring the person's medical, emotional, or physical needs
- Not providing the person with access to the healthcare, care and support services they need
- Withholding the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate food, and heating

## **Modern slavery and criminal exploitation**

Modern slavery is a crime that involves people being forced to work or provide services against their will. It can include human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude. Modern slavery can also be linked to sexual exploitation.

Traffickers and slave masters use threats, violence, and other forms of abuse to control their victims. They may also isolate their victims from their families and friends, and make it difficult for them to escape.

Modern slavery is a hidden crime. Victims are often controlled and hidden away, making it difficult to identify them and provide them with help.

Some signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery include,

- They are being forced to work long hours in poor conditions.
- They are not paid for their work, or are paid very little.
- They are not allowed to leave their workplace or home.
- They have physical injuries or signs of abuse.
- They are afraid to talk about their situation.

## **Organisational abuse**

Organisational abuse can happen to anyone, but it is more likely to happen to people who are vulnerable, such as older people, people with disabilities, and people with mental health problems. Organisational abuse and neglect can have a serious impact on people's physical and mental health, as well as their quality of life. It can lead to physical injuries, emotional trauma, and even death.

