



**The Abbey Church of St Mary and
St Ethelflaeda, Romsey**

with

St Swithun's, Crampmoor

Parochial Church Council

Safeguarding Policy

Document control

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Contact details

Church Addresses

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Foreword by the Vicar

The protection and nurture of vulnerable people in our community is critically important to our Christian mission. We strive together to follow the example of Christ in reaching out to all people, in all circumstances, with a special compassion for those who may have nobody else to speak up for them.

We have developed our new Safeguarding policy to ensure that Romsey Abbey is following the best possible practice in our work with children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm. It has been put together using both expertise from within our own community and external advice. We have worked hard to make it a practical and useful tool for the large number of volunteers who assist with this work.

I commend our Safeguarding Policy to you and hope that it will be a helpful support to all those engaged in this important work and will ensure that we protect both the children and adults who may be at risk of harm in our community effectively.



Revd. Thomas Wharton
Vicar of Romsey

1 Safeguarding Policy statement

The PCC of Romsey will:

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy the PCC of Romsey Abbey with St Swithun's Crampmoor is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parish will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all.
- Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Display in church premises and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Each person who works within our church community will agree to abide by this policy and the safeguarding guidelines established by the Parish.

The PCC appoints Nigel Herriott as the Parish Safeguarding Officer

2 Parish statement on Domestic Abuse and Violence

All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. We are committed to promoting and supporting environments which:

- Ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse
- Protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse from actual or potential harm
- Recognise equality amongst people and within relationships
- Enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently.

We recognise that:

- All forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship
- All survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Domestic abuse can occur in all communities
- Domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency
- Domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of child abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour
- Working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by:

- **In all our activities:**
 - Valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and perpetrators of domestic abuse
- **In our publicity:**
 - Raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public and women only areas of relevance to survivors, children and perpetrators of domestic abuse
- **When concerns are raised:**
 - Ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help
 - Working with the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community
- **In our care:**
 - Ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse
 - Identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care responsibilities with both survivors and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

3 Policy on the Recruitment of ex-Offenders

1. As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), The Parish of Romsey complies fully with the [DBS code of practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
2. The Parish undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
3. The Parish will only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that it is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended).
4. The Parish will only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
5. The Parish is committed to the fair treatment of its staff and volunteers, potential staff and volunteers, or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
6. The Parish has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.
7. The Parish actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.
8. The Parish select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
9. An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
10. The Parish ensures that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. The Parish also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

4 Purpose of these policies

4.1 Why we have a policy

- To safeguard, care for and nurture the children and adults who may be at risk of harm that are part of our church community.
- To inform those who are involved with this work of the behaviour that is expected of them.
- To set out the procedures for appointing both voluntary and paid workers to work with children or with adults who may be at risk of harm.
- To protect members of the church who undertake this work from false or malicious accusations of abuse

4.2 Definition of terms

For the purposes of this Safeguarding Policy, all references to:

- *'child', 'children', 'young person', 'young people'*, – whether singular or plural – are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to those under 18 years of age.
- *'workers', 'staff', 'volunteers', 'helpers'* are used interchangeably and are taken to refer to anyone interacting with others on behalf of The Church
- *'abuse'* refers to any of the recognised forms of abuse – physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect.
- A *'vulnerable adult'* is “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”

Some of the factors that increase vulnerability include:

- a sensory or physical disability or impairment;
 - a learning disability;
 - a physical illness;
 - mental ill health (including dementia), chronic or acute;
 - an addiction to alcohol or drugs;
 - the failing faculties in old age;
 - a permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity brought about by life events, for example bereavement or previous abuse or trauma.
- *'DBS'* is the Disclosure and Barring Service which carries out criminal record checks. It was established when the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) merged in 2012.

5 Safeguarding Responsibilities

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible with the Vicar for ensuring the wellbeing of children and adults who may be at risk of harm in the church community. It will do this through adopting effective policies and procedures and by appointing appropriate people to carry out safeguarding responsibilities in the parish. It will review the operation of these policies and procedures to ensure that they are effective.

The Vicar is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is embedded in the work of the Parish. He will ensure that a safeguarding culture is adopted in all work with children and adults who may be at risk of harm. He will manage the consequences for the congregation after an allegation or a conviction has been made and will ensure pastoral care for all concerned is offered (victim, alleged abuser and families).

The Parish Safeguarding Officer has an overview of all involving children and vulnerable adults and keeps a record of these activities. They are familiar with the national and diocesan safeguarding guidance, attending training as necessary, and ensure that leaders of activities are fully aware of, and are implementing, this guidance. They liaise with the incumbent and leaders of activities offering advice and support on safeguarding matters. They liaise with the Diocesan Safeguarding team, implementing Diocesan requirements in the Parish and reporting concerns and allegations to them. They report to the PCC through the PCC Health and Safety Committee, and report to the PCC in person at least annually. They promote safeguarding and inclusiveness in the Parish, ensuring that this policy and contact details are displayed in the Parish and on the website. They promote and arrange safeguarding training in the Parish and keep secure records of safeguarding issues and safeguarding training undertaken.

The Parish Safeguarding Administrator is responsible for collating the results of the Safer Recruitment process (application forms, results of DBS checks and references), recording information and working with the Parish Safeguarding Officer to confirm appointments.

Everyone in the Parish, paid staff or volunteers, working with children, young people or adults or risk of harm must follow safeguarding procedures and report any concerns or suspicions that an individual is at risk or may have been harmed

6 Appointment and vetting procedures

6.1 Roles which are subject to the Parish “safer recruitment” procedure

The “safer recruitment” procedure includes the use of a confidential declaration including a DBS check, is required for positions which undertake “Regulated Activity”. This covers anyone working closely with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults in a paid or unpaid capacity. Some parts of the definition of “Regulated Activity” are left to the individual organisation and the Parish of Romsey will comply with guidelines issued by the Church of England.

The Parish has defined the following positions as being those which involve such work and are therefore subject to this appointment and vetting procedures, including the use of criminal record checks using the government DBS service.

- Clergy
 - Stipendiary Parish Clergy
 - Children and Families Workers
 - Self-supporting Ministers (SSM)
 - “Permission to Officiate” Clergy
- Other Parish Roles
 - Readers
 - PCC members (in accordance with the recommendation of the Charity Commission that all Charity Trustees of Charities who direct work with children or vulnerable adults should be DBS checked)
- Parish Safeguarding Officer
- Children's Workers
 - All Toddler Group leaders and regular Helpers
 - All Sunday School Leaders and regular Helpers
- Youth Group Leaders and regular Helpers
- Music Groups
 - Director of Music
 - Assistant Organist
 - Choir chaperones
- Bellringers
 - Tower Captain
 - Adult Bell-ringers who teach children under the age of 16
- Pastoral Visitors
- Lunch Club Leaders

6.2 Roles not normally subject to this procedure

For the sake of clarity, the following roles will not normally be subject to this appointment procedure unless the person undertakes additional responsibility involving Children or Vulnerable Adults.

- Verger
- Assistant Vergers
- Sacristans and Servers
- Church and Church Hall cleaners
- Abbey Stewards (Stewards are required to undertake an induction course which provides information on “signposting” concerns to the appropriate member of the Abbey team should this be required).
- Adult choir members
- Welcome team members
- Sidesmen and sideswomen
- Those serving refreshments
- Flower arrangers
- Bellringers not involved in teaching or supervising young people

6.3 Notes

Other adults may help with children or young people’s groups on an occasional basis but must be accountable to an appointed worker. If they are to join the team on a regular basis they must be recruited using the procedures defined in this policy.

Young people aged 16 or 17 may help with groups but must be supervised by an adult worker and cannot be counted as part of the staffing. They will also need to be recruited using the procedures defined in this policy, including undergoing a DBS check.

Young people aged under 16 may act as helpers but should not have responsibility for children and must be supervised. If they are on work experience a reference should be obtained from their school, with a specific question as to whether there have been any safeguarding issues.

6.4 Safer Recruitment Process – voluntary roles

The Parish will appoint people to voluntary roles which involve “Regulated Activity” using the CofE Safer Recruitment Process

1. Initial informal discussion about the role and responsibilities with the group leader and clergy as required;
2. Once the applicant has decided that they wish to apply to undertake the role, they must contact the Parish Safeguarding Administrator to obtain a Parish “Application for a Voluntary Position” form and a “Confidential Declaration” form to provide details of any criminal record;
3. The applicant will also be asked to complete an DBS Application Form if it is appropriate to the role;

4. The Parish Safeguarding Administrator will write a letter or email each referee asking them to provide a reference for the applicant;
5. The Parish Safeguarding Administrator will make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for an Enhanced Disclosure via the Winchester Diocese (which is the “Umbrella Body” that is authorised to process DBS checks on our behalf);
6. The Parish Safeguarding Administrator will receive the results, including the completed application form, references and the results of the DBS check. They will record the date on which they saw the Certificate on the Parish records, together with the issue date and serial number of the Certificate and provide this information to the Diocese.
7. The Parish Safeguarding Administrator will consult the Parish Safeguarding Officer for authorisation to inform the appropriate person (e.g. Vicar, churchwardens or group leader) that the appointment can proceed. If the process identifies issues, the Parish Safeguarding Officer will review the situation with the Vicar, Churchwardens and Diocesan Director of Safeguarding as required.
8. The Parish Office will send a confirmation or rejection letter to the applicant according to the decision.

6.5 Safer Recruitment Process – paid roles

Appointment to paid roles will be handled individually according to the requirements of the role. All paid roles will require completed application form, interview and references. Procedures used for such appointments will conform to Church of England Safer Recruitment Guidance. The requirement for DBS checks will depend on the job description.

6.6 Retention of Data

The following information is retained on a computer database for each person:

Name, Address, contact details (phone, email), DBS certificate number, DBS certificate date, DBS workforce type (adults, children or both), date of continuous update check (if applicable), parish role, application form, confidential declaration form, references.

In addition, a spreadsheet is maintained containing a record of training undertaken.

The Parish is required to hold these records for 75 years so they may be transferred to different IT systems and technologies over time so that they remain accessible.

Data on safeguarding concerns will be held securely in paper form in a locked filing cabinet drawer in the Parish Office. The only keys will be held by the Vicar and Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Copies of DBS certificates made during the application process will be destroyed when the information has been transferred to the computer system

6.7 Notes on the appointment process

6.7.1 Equal Opportunity Policy

The Parish is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, volunteers and users of its services regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical or mental disability or offending background. We actively promote equal opportunity for all, including those with criminal records. In selecting people we assess their skills, qualifications and experience.

6.7.2 Renewal of DBS disclosures

DBS disclosures will be renewed every 5 years. The renewal schedule is maintained by the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

6.7.3 Blemished DBS disclosures

All people with blemished DBS disclosures will undergo a risk assessment from a suitably qualified person. The Diocesan Director of Safeguarding will be consulted.

Old, minor and unrelated offences will not prohibit otherwise suitable people from work with children. While not being complacent about risk, the Church understands that those who have done wrong are often capable of reform.

No-one who has been convicted or who has accepted a caution for a sexual offence against a child will be permitted to undertake work with children and young people or to have unsupervised access.

A person convicted of, or who has accepted a caution for, any other offence against a child or for whom there are unresolved serious allegations outstanding, will only be allowed to undertake work with children and young people or to have unsupervised access to children with the express agreement of the Vicar, following consultation with the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding.

Any person known to be convicted of, or to have accepted a caution for, an offence against a child will be subject to an individual agreement defining attendance at worship and other activities.

6.7.4 DBS Portability

DBS applicants who subscribe to the DBS Update Service may use their existing DBS which will be checked by the Diocese using the DBS online service. They are required to provide identity documents and all other aspects of the Safer Recruitment process.

DBS applicants who do not subscribe to the DBS Update Service cannot use their existing DBS checks and must undertake a new DBS check.

7 Responding to allegations of abuse

7.1 How to respond to concerns or suspicions

Anyone who has any concerns or suspicions about the possibility that a child or adult who may be at risk of harm may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm must contact the Vicar or the Parish Safeguarding Officer. They will inform the appropriate authorities including the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding. All serious allegations will be reported to the police.

If the person with concerns is unable to contact the Parish authorities or has any reasons why they feel that this is not appropriate, they should contact the Diocesan Director of Safeguarding directly and/or the relevant Statutory Authorities.

7.2 “Whistleblowing” policy

Any individual, whether a member of the Abbey community or the wider public, who raises concerns with regard to a child or vulnerable adult will be treated with respect and their concerns taken seriously. Such persons will not be viewed as trouble makers or treated with suspicion.

8 Positions of trust

It should be noted that in legal terms the Position of Trust has a clear definition – but is used here in a more general context.

All those who work with children and young people or who have significant contact with them and their families on behalf of the Church are in positions of trust. The Parish has the following expectation of those who are in Positions of Trust

- They will be seen as role models by the children with whom they are in contact at all times, including when they are off duty;
- All church workers should, therefore, conduct themselves in accordance with the reasonable expectations of someone who represents the Church;
- They should take care to observe appropriate boundaries between their work and their personal life. For example, they should ensure that all communications they may have with or about children and young people are appropriate in their tone; they should seek advice immediately if they come across a child or young person who may have been harmed (including self-harm) or a colleague whose conduct appears inappropriate;
- They should not expose themselves or others to material which is sexually explicit, profane, obscene, harassing, fraudulent, racially offensive, politically inflammatory, defamatory, or in violation of any British, European or international law.

It is contrary to the policy of the Church of England and Parish of Romsey for those in a Position of Trust, including priests and youth workers among others, to have sexual or inappropriate personal relationships with those aged 16 or 17 for whom they are responsible. A breach of this is likely to be considered as a disciplinary offence and in some cases may also constitute a criminal offence.

Anyone found guilty of a criminal or disciplinary offence of this kind is likely to be dismissed and referred to the DBS for possible barring.

9 Training and awareness

On appointment, all workers will be sent a letter of confirmation which will include information on their responsibilities for Safeguarding. They will also be referred to the documents available on the Diocesan Website and will be provided with information about available training.

The Parish will make safeguarding training available and ensure that all workers with children and/or with vulnerable adults undertake the training recommended by the Church of England.

10 Parish Activities

The following Parish activities have been identified associated with vulnerable groups:

- Toddler Group
- Sunday Schools
- Way In, Lego church, singing storytime and other services focussed on children and young people
- Youth Groups
- Choir
- Bellringers
- Pastoral Care including home visits
- Healing Ministry

For each of these activities and events we will designate a Group Leader who is responsible for organising the group and the associated volunteers. They are to comply with Safeguarding Best Practice and to ensure new volunteers are recruited using the Safer Recruitment Process. Group Leaders are expected to complete appropriate Safeguarding Training.

11 Hire of premises

Anyone hiring our premises, including the Church Rooms, must ensure that children, young people and adults who may be at risk of harm are protected at all times by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and that they carry full liability insurance for this.

The hiring body should abide by their own child protection or safeguarding policy if they have one, otherwise they will be given a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Policy and must agree to abide by it.

For one-off bookings, the hirers are not expected to obtain DBS disclosures for leaders.

For regular bookings the group's safeguarding policy must at least meet the requirements of the Parish safeguarding policy. The responsibility for implementing a safeguarding policy rests with the hiring organisation.

Any group that intends to care for children under 8 years for 2 hours or more without their parents or carers present may need to register under the Children Act 1989 with the Local Authority. No booking with such a group will be accepted until evidence of its Ofsted registration has been produced, if it is required. It is the hirer's responsibility to register with Ofsted, but they may need to work with the PCC in order to address any premises requirements raised by Ofsted.

If we are informed of allegations or concerns in the context of groups or individuals who hire our premises, we will follow the procedures for responding as defined in our Safeguarding Policy, working in partnership with the group's own procedures.

12 Further information

The following documents are available

Document name	Description	Available from
Documentation on various aspects of Safeguarding	Guidance and information for everyone in Parish who works with Children or adults who may be at risk of harm	https://www.winchester.anglican.org/safeguarding-resources/
Application for a Voluntary Position form and Confidential Declaration form	Form to be completed by all volunteers who will work with Children or Vulnerable Adults.	The Parish Safeguarding Administrator
DBS Application Form	Application to the DBS for an Enhanced Disclosure	The Parish Safeguarding Administrator
Proforma reference request letter	Letter that will be sent to referees by the Parish Office in order to request a reference	The Parish Safeguarding Administrator
Reference request form	Form sent to referees with the Letter for them to complete	The Parish Safeguarding Administrator
Registration form for Activities	Parental Consent Form for church activities	The Parish Safeguarding Officer
Consent form for taking and publishing images of Children and Young People	Parental Consent Form for taking and making use of images of children	The Parish Safeguarding Officer
Church of England Policy and Practice Guidance		https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/policy-practice-guidance

13 Contact information

13.1 Church authorities

The Vicar	Revd Thomas Wharton, 01794 513125 (office), 07796 104800 (emergencies)
Parish Safeguarding Officer	Nigel Herriott, 07525 867012, safeguarding@romseyabbey.org.uk
Parish Safeguarding Admin	Patricia Brown, safeguarding.admin@romseyabbey.org.uk
Diocesan Safeguarding Manager	Jackie Rowlands, 01962 737317, safeguarding@winchester.anglican.org

13.2 Statutory Authorities

Police	Emergency	999
	Non-emergency	101
Hampshire County Council Childrens' Services	Daytime	0300 555 1384
	Out of hours	0300 555 1373
Hampshire County Council Adult Services	Daytime	0300 555 1386
Domestic Abuse Helpline		0808 2000 247
NSPCC Child Protection Line		0808 800 5000
Childline		0800 1111