



**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 Parish Safeguarding Officer

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 in order to ensure that Romsey Abbey is following the best possible practice in our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. It has been put together using both expertise from within our own community and external advice and 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 all the work that has gone into it will be a helpful support to all those engaged in this important work and will ensure that we protect both the children and vulnerable adults in our community effectively.

Nigel Herriott

1 Purpose of this policy

1.1 Why we have a policy

- To safeguard, care for and nurture the children and vulnerable adults 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 vulnerable adults.
- To protect members of the church who undertake this work from false or malicious accusations of abuse

1.2 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.
- *'vulnerable adult'* is used to refer to any person aged 18 years and over who is in receipt of the following regulated activities. It should be noted that there is no condition of regularity (e.g. frequent / weekly as for children). This means that a person providing health or personal care for example, need only do so once to come within the definition.
 - provision of healthcare treatment by a health professional or someone acting under the direction of a health care professional;
 - provision of personal care that is needed due to illness, age or disability;
 - provision of social work by a social worker;
 - provision of assistance, in relation to general household matters, due to illness, age or disability;
 - provision of assistance where there is a formal arrangement in place to make decisions on financial or welfare matters on behalf of another person;
 - transportation where this is due to age, health or disability.
- *'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.

2 Policy statement

The PCC of Romsey will:

- ✦ Create a safe environment for Children and Vulnerable Adults by implementing all relevant Statutory, Church of England and Diocesan Policies and Procedures;
- ✦ Ensure that all those who work with Children or Vulnerable adults in the Parish on a paid or voluntary basis are carefully selected and vetted which will include the requirement for a Criminal Records Bureau (this will include an Enhanced Disclosure and Barred List check where appropriate for the role);
- ✦ Promote the empowerment and inclusion of those who may be Vulnerable, recognising that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives;
- ✦ Provide training and guidance to those working with Children and Vulnerable Adults;
- ✦ Respond without delay to every complaint made that a Child or Vulnerable Adult may have been harmed or is in significant danger of harm;
- ✦ Fully cooperate with statutory agencies during any investigation into allegations concerning abuse of a child or young person in the church community. We will inform the statutory agency of any suspected criminal offence that we are made aware of concerning Children and Vulnerable Adults;
- ✦ Offer pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse;
- ✦ Supervise and support any member of our church community known to have offended or who is thought to pose a threat to Children and Vulnerable Adults;
- ✦ Review this policy annually, checking that our procedures, guidance and training are up to date and making any necessary amendments.

3 Safeguarding Responsibilities

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible with the Vicar for ensuring the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults 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 Parish vision for work with children and young people. He will ensure that the policy and procedures are adopted by the parish and that a safeguarding culture is adopted in all work with children and vulnerable adults. 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 and alleged abuser and families).

The Parish Safeguarding Officer provides safeguarding expertise to the PCC and to groups working with children and vulnerable adults in the Parish including providing advice, support and training.

The Parish Administrator is responsible for collating the results of the application process (results of DBS checks and references), recording information and deciding whether the appointment can proceed or whether the application is to be referred to the Parish Safeguarding Officers

4 Policy on the Recruitment of ex-Offenders

1. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Parish complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure based on information revealed.
2. The Parish is committed to the fair treatment of its parish staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical disability or offending background.
3. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
4. A Disclosure is only requested after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
5. Where a Disclosure is to form a part of the recruitment process, we encourage applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate confidential cover, to a designated person, and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
6. Unless the nature of the position allows the Parish to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
7. We ensure that all those in the Parish who are involved in the recruitment process have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
8. This policy should be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
9. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place about any offences or other matter that might relate to the position. Failure to disclose information that is directly relevant to the position sought may lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
10. We make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
11. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working for us.

5 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.

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
 - Verger
 - Readers
 - PCC members (in accordance with the recommendation of the Charity Commission that all Charity Trustees of Charities who direct childrens’ work should be DBS checked)
- Children's Workers
 - All Toddler Fellowship Leaders and regular Helpers
 - All Sunday School Leaders and regular Helpers
- Youth Group workers
 - Unchained Leaders and regular Helpers
 - Reloaded Leaders and regular Helpers
- Music Groups
 - Director of Music
 - Assistant Organist
 - Youth Orchestra Leader
 - 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.

- Parish Safeguarding Officer
- 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 Appointment process – voluntary roles

The Parish will appoint people to voluntary roles which involve “Regulated Activity” using the following 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 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;
4. The Parish Administrator will write a letter or email each referee asking them to provide a reference for the applicant;

5. The Parish 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 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. If no issues are raised, the Parish Administrator will inform the appropriate person (e.g. vicar, churchwardens or group leader) that the appointment can proceed. If the process identifies issues, the Parish Administrator will refer the case to the Parish Safeguarding Officer who 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 Appointment 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

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 investigations will be held securely in paper form

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 Mindful Employer

The Parish is a **Mindful Employer** and is committed to showing a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues. People who have experienced mental health issues will not be discriminated against. We will provide non-judgemental and proactive support to individual staff who experience mental health issues.

6.7.3 Renewal of DBS disclosures

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

6.7.4 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.

6.7.5 DBS Portability

Volunteers with a clear DBS check may volunteer for other roles in the Parish without undertaking a further check provided that the DBS check is with the same "workforce" (children or adults).

DBS applicants can subscribe to the DBS Update Service at the time of a new application. Once subscribed, their certificate is portable and may be used for other roles where the same level and type of check are required.

All Volunteers in the Parish are encouraged to subscribe to the DBS Update Service which must be done within 30 days of the date of issue of the DBS certificate. This is free for volunteers and makes future rechecks simpler and quicker. The process is as follows:

1. The DBS disclosure is shown to the Parish Administrator in the same way as if the Parish had undertaken the DBS check and recorded in the same way.
2. The DBS disclosure must be appropriate for the Parish role proposed.
3. The applicant must still be in good standing with the employer or voluntary organisation given on the Disclosure and a written reference obtained.
4. The Parish Administrator completes a form to be sent to the Diocese together with a copy of the DBS certificate who will carry out an online check with the DBS.
5. The results of the check are returned to the Parish Administrator.
6. The result of the check should be that "*This Certificate did not reveal any information and remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue.*" If any other result is obtained, a new DBS check will be required.

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 vulnerable adult may have been harmed or may be at risk of harm should 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 sent the Parish Handbook and information about available training.

The Parish will make safeguarding training available and encourage all workers with children and/or with vulnerable adults to attend.

10 Hire of premises

Anyone hiring our premises, including the Church Rooms, must ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults 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.

11 Implementation

This Policy will be implemented from the date of the issue of this document. However, it is recognised that there are a considerable number of people already working with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults in the Parish who were appointed using the previous appointment procedure that has been replaced by this new Policy. The previous Policy included the use of CRB (now DBS) Enhanced Disclosures.

The new appointment process will be implemented in a phased way as follows:

1. All new applicants to work in the Parish in any of the roles defined in this Policy will be subject to the new Appointments Process
2. Existing workers will be subject to this process when their current DBS disclosure is due for renewal. DBS disclosures are renewed every 5 years.

12 Further information

The following documents are available

Document name	Description	Available from
Safeguarding Handbook (Children and Young People)	Guidance and information for everyone in Parish who works with Children and/or Young People.	The Parish Office
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 Office
CRB Application Form	Application to the CRB for an Enhanced Disclosure	The Parish Office
Proforma reference request letter	Letter that will be sent to referees by the Parish Office in order to request a reference	The Parish Office
Reference request form	Form sent to referees with the Letter for them to complete	The Parish Office
Registration form for Activities	Parental Consent Form for church activities	The Parish Office
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 Office
Protecting God's Children	Church of England Safeguarding Policy	https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/protectingallgodchildren.pdf
Safer Recruitment Practice Guidance	Church of England guidance document	https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/safeguarding%20safer_recruitment_practice_guidance_2016.pdf
Child Protection Manual	Diocese of Winchester document	http://www.winchester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/CHILD-PROTECTION-MANUAL-2016.pdf
Vulnerable Adults Manual	Diocese of Winchester document	http://www.winchester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SAFEGUARDING-ADULTS-MANUAL-JULY-2015.pdf
Domestic Abuse Guide	Diocese of Winchester document	http://www.winchester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/SIDomesticAbuseGuideApr14.pdf

13 Contact information

13.1 Church authorities

The Assistant Curate	Revd. David Potterton	01794 513125 (office hours) 07468 527820 (emergencies only)
The Parish Safeguarding Officer	Nigel Herriott	07525 867012
The Parish Administrator	Amanda Taylor	01794 513125
	Adele Beston	
Director of Safeguarding, Diocese of Winchester	Jackie Rowlands	01962 737317

13.2 Statutory Authorities

Police	Emergency	999
	Non-emergency	101
Hampshire County Council Children's Services	Daytime	0845 603 5620
	Out of hours	0845 600 4555
Hampshire County Council Adult Services	Daytime	0845 603 5630
	Out of hours	0845 600 45 55

13.3 Voluntary services

NSPCC Child Protection Line	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111