

Safeguarding Policy Statement

St Margaret's Church, Ridge

The following statement has been agreed by the PCC of St Margaret's Church:

This Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, and to ensuring their well-being. We recognise and accept the House of Bishops recommendation on the Safeguarding of Children and Young People.

- We believe that all children and vulnerable adults should know that they are valued within the church and safely enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of our church.
- We respect the personal dignity and rights of children and vulnerable adults (for example, as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) and will ensure that our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, Emotional, psychological, discriminatory abuse and neglect of children under 18 years of age.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, financial, discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults.
- We recognise that domestic abuse affects both adults and children and believe that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and inconsistent with a Christian way of living.
- We will promptly report any abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults that we discover or suspect.

- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, the Police will be contacted as a matter of urgency.

- We recognise that Children's Services has responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child, and that Adult Services do so for vulnerable adults.

- We recognise that safeguarding is a whole church responsibility.

We are committed to:

- The establishment of an environment which is safe and caring, and where there is an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse.

- Following the relevant legislation, statutory, denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

- Ensuring that we keep up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.

- Building constructive links with the relevant Voluntary and Statutory Authorities.

- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that as a church, everyone works within the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policies.

- Supporting the Incumbent and Parish Safeguarding Officer in their work and in any action they may need to take to protect children and vulnerable adults.

- Following safer recruitment principles in the appointment and selection of all those who work with children and vulnerable adults, be they volunteer or paid staff, lay or ordained.

- Training and supporting all those of all those who undertake work on behalf of the parish with children, young people and vulnerable adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse
- Ensuring that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- Displaying in church and on the Parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listening to and taking seriously anyone who discloses abuse
- Supporting and supervising those undertaking work with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Ensuring that the children and adults we have contact with know that they are valued and feel empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- Promptly reporting any abuse of children or vulnerable adults that we discover or suspect.
- Caring pastorally for anyone in our church who is a victim / survivor of abuse and other affected persons affected
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Supporting and supervising any person known to pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults, whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties, bearing in mind the overarching principle that the welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount.
- If an assessment is made that someone poses an unmanageable risk to those in need of protection and could not safely attend our church, we will ensure that they continue to be offered pastoral care and will signpost them to appropriate agencies for support.
- We will have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Our safeguarding policy, procedures and practices will be reviewed annually

