

The Parish of St Francis, High Heaton PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

SAFEGUARDING POLICY for Vulnerable Adults

Policy approved at the PCC meeting held on 17th March 2025 based on the Parish Safeguarding Handbook of the Church of England:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

We are 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.

Definition of abuse of vulnerable adults

All adults, including vulnerable adults, have a fundamental human right to choose how and with whom they live, even if this appears to involve a degree of risk. They should be supported to make those choices, to live as independently as possible and treated with respect and dignity.

Who abuses adults?

Potentially anyone, adult or child, can be the abuser of an adult. Abuse will sometimes be deliberate, but it may also be an unintended consequence of ignorance or lack of awareness. Alternatively, it may arise from frustration or lack of support. The list can include:

- Relatives of the vulnerable person including husband, wife, partner, son or daughter. It will sometimes include a relative who is a main carer.
- Neighbours.
- Paid carers.
- Workers in places of worship.
- People who are themselves vulnerable and/or are users of a care service.
- Confidence tricksters who prey on people in their own homes or elsewhere.

Relatives who are main carers

Carers can experience considerable stress, exhaustion and frustration without respite or support. This can lead to unintended poor care or abuse. Relatives who are the main carers may also be subject to abuse by those for whom they are caring. This abuse is often endured for long periods and unreported.

Institutions

All people living in institutions are more likely to have a degree of vulnerability. The Care Quality Commission in England has responsibility for inspecting and regulating the quality of care in institutions such as residential care homes, domiciliary care services and hospitals. In addition, the Local Government Ombudsman deals with complaints that relate to adult social care. HM Inspectorate of Prisons in England inspects prisons. Some members of the parish may be visiting adults in institutions – hospitals, prisons and residential homes. If, as part of these responsibilities, they have concerns about the care being given and/or the way that someone is being treated, the DSA should be contacted. You can also refer directly to the institution or raise concerns with the appropriate inspection and/or complaints body.

Definitions of adult abuse

The UK central government document 'Care and Support Statutory Guidance' categorises and defines adult abuse in terms of:

- Physical abuse including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

- Sexual abuse including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressurised into consenting.
 - Psychological abuse including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
 - Financial or material abuse including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
 - Neglect or acts of omission including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
 - Discriminatory abuse including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
 - Domestic abuse that is usually a systematic, repeated and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.
 - Organisational abuse including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one-off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
 - Modern slavery including human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude; and traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
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Key Contacts

If you have any concerns, please raise them with any of the people below:

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Helen Swann helen.swann@blueyonder.co.uk 07487 842820

Diocesan Safeguarding Caseworkers

Jill Thirlaway j.thirlaway@newcastle.anglican.org 07738 415238

Lisa Wardlaw caseworker@newcastle.anglican.org 07825 167016

Contact details of organisations outside the church who can help

Community Health & Social Care Direct (8am-5pm) 0191 278 8377

Out of Office hours 0191 278 7878 (for emergency social care needs)

National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are experiencing domestic abuse.

Samaritans Helpline: 116 123 (open 24 hours). Phone if you feel you are struggling to cope and need someone to talk to.

Action on Elder Abuse Helpline: 080 8808 8141 (free phone Monday to Friday 9-5pm).

Other people you can contact

The Incumbent

The Reverend Robert Lawrance robert.lawrance@newcastle.anglican.org
078 88 693 850

The Churchwardens

Ms Dorothy Frankland d.frankland166@icloud.com 07530 813 191
Ms Susan Flood tilleyhca@yahoo.co.uk 07792 830026

Children's Advocate

Ms Elizabeth Thompson tinliz60@yahoo.co.uk 07841 505521

DBS Administrator

Dr Jennifer Germain jenny_germain@talk21.com 0191 266 5144

For further information please go to the Diocese of Newcastle website:

www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding

or The Church of England Safeguarding Page:

www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding

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

Diocesan Chaplain to Survivors

Maggie Creese m.creese@newcastle.anglican.org 07826 405972

This church appoints Helen Swann as the Parish Safeguarding Officer

Signed: *Robert Lawrance*

Incumbent

Dorothy Frankland & Susan Flood

Churchwardens

Presented at Annual Parochial Church Meeting: 6th April 2025

Next Review due by end of May 2026