

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

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY for Children & Young People**

Policy approved at the PCC meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> 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 children and young people**

The abuse of children and young people can take many forms. They have the same right to protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities (physical, sensory and/or learning difficulties) are especially vulnerable and need special care and protection.

## **Statutory definitions**

The UK government document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' categorises and defines abuse in terms of:

- Physical abuse including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.
- Emotional abuse including conveying to a child that they are inadequate, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, verbal abuse, isolation, seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying).

- Sexual abuse including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. It may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.
- Neglect, including failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, to provide adequate supervision and/or access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

## **Domestic abuse**

Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.

## **Sexual exploitation**

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol.

They may also be groomed and exploited online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

## **Bullying and cyberbullying**

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at

school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there is no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

## **Online abuse**

With the ever-growing use of the internet, mobile telephones and online gaming (e.g. Xbox/ PlayStation), there has been a corresponding rise in the use of the internet and other electronic communication to target, groom and abuse children. Adults may target chatrooms, social networking sites, messaging services, mobile phones, online gaming sites and the internet generally. Children are particularly vulnerable to abuse by adults who pretend to be children of similar ages when online and who try to obtain images or engineer meetings.

## **Electronic images**

The downloading, keeping or distributing of indecent images of children are all classified as sexual offences. Such offences are sometimes referred to as non-contact sexual offences. However, it must be remembered that children will have been abused in the making of the images. The texting of sexual messages and photographs (sometimes referred to as 'sexting') can be particularly problematic and abusive amongst children and young people.

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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](mailto:helen.swann@blueyonder.co.uk) 07487 842820

### **Diocesan Safeguarding Caseworkers**

Jill Thirlaway [j.thirlaway@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:j.thirlaway@newcastle.anglican.org) 07738 415238

Lisa Wardlaw [caseworker@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:caseworker@newcastle.anglican.org) 07825 167016

### **Contact details of organisations outside the church who can help**

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are worried about a child.

Child-line: 0800 1111 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are a child or young person and are worried about anything.

Newcastle Children's Social Care Initial Response Service 0191 277 2500 Out of Hours call Emergency Duty Team 0191 278 7878

Northumbria Police Safeguarding Department call 101

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

# Other people you can contact

## The Incumbent

The Reverend Robert Lawrance [robert.lawrance@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:robert.lawrance@newcastle.anglican.org)  
078 88 693 850

## The Churchwardens

Ms Dorothy Frankland [d.frankland166@icloud.com](mailto:d.frankland166@icloud.com) 07530 813 191  
Ms Susan Flood [tilleyhca@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tilleyhca@yahoo.co.uk) 07792 830026

## Children's Advocate

Ms Elizabeth Thompson [tinliz60@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tinliz60@yahoo.co.uk) 07841 505521

## DBS Administrator

Dr Jennifer Germain [jenny\\_germain@talk21.com](mailto:jenny_germain@talk21.com) 0191 266 5144

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

[www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/safeguarding)

or The Church of England Safeguarding Page:

[www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding](http://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](mailto:m.creese@newcastle.anglican.org) 07826 405972

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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: 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025

Next Review due by end of May 2026