



Safeguarding Policy

Churches of St John's, St Stephen's and St Francis'

Parish of Boxmoor, Diocese of St Albans

January 2025

Foundations of our policy

We are called to share the good news of Jesus Christ and are committed to living out His ministry to the vulnerable.

We believe all are created in the image of God and we affirm the value and dignity of every human being. We stand with those who are vulnerable and those who are suffering, those who need protection and those who need justice.

We believe that safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole Church. Everyone who participates in the life of our three Churches has a role to play in promoting a safer Church for all. Our ministry is rooted in the love of God and we are committed to ensuring our Churches are places where all are welcomed, heard and loved.

We affirm our commitment to integrity, transparency and accountability. Our Churches will be open to diverse voices and different perspectives, and we will be inclusive and open to challenge.

Purpose of this policy

To protect and support all children, young people and vulnerable adults who come into contact with the Churches of St John's, St Stephen's and St Francis' of the Parish of Boxmoor.

To set out the principles which guide our safeguarding work as well as the strategy and policies we will use to deliver on our commitments.

Scope

This policy applies to all Church Officers, namely anyone working on behalf of St John's, St Stephen's or St Francis' in the Parish of Boxmoor, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid. This includes, but is not limited to, the ministry team, PCC members, children's workers, home visitors, sidespeople and employees.

Policy commitments

Our parish is committed to the National Safeguarding Standards of the Church of England. We have adopted the House of Bishops' safeguarding policy, Promoting a Safer Church, and will comply with the Church of England's new Safeguarding Code as each section is published.

We have set out our policy according to the National Safeguarding Standards of the Church of England.

1. Culture, Leadership and Capacity: We are committed to having safe and healthy cultures at our Churches, with the effective leadership, resourcing and scrutiny arrangements necessary to deliver high-quality safeguarding practices and outcomes.

1. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) will actively support and promote engagement with safeguarding issues at our three Churches and demonstrate by example the importance of all Church Officers understanding their responsibilities and acting accordingly.
2. The PCC will appoint a lay Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures. If not already a member, the PSO will be co-opted to the PCC. Once the PSO is appointed, the incumbent will disclose to them in confidence all safeguarding issues being managed in the parish.
3. The PCC will appoint a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) administrator who may or may not also be the PSO.
4. Safeguarding will be on the agenda of every PCC meeting and every team meeting which oversees work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
5. To ensure that our Churches are safe spaces for disclosure, the PCC will undertake a review of our culture at least every three years and involve non-PCC members in this process.
6. The PSO will present six-monthly reports on safeguarding work to the PCC and write a report for the annual parochial church meeting.
7. The PCC will review this Safeguarding Policy annually and review all other related policies in accordance with Church of England requirements.
8. The PCC will display this Safeguarding Policy at all three Churches and publish the policy and all associated documents on our parish website.

2. Prevention: We are committed to putting in place a range of measures which together are effective in preventing abuse in their context.

1. The PCC will consider the needs, experiences and voices of children, young people and vulnerable adults in prevention planning.
2. We will work towards meeting the requirements of the Safer Recruitment and People Management House of Bishops' Guidance for all roles involving contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
3. All new Church Officers will submit any required DBS application and accompanying identity documents within ten days of appointment. Before a new Church Officer is appointed, the incumbent or relevant team leader will inform them of any DBS requirements and confirm the individual is willing to fulfil them by the deadline.
4. All existing Church Officers will renew any required DBS certificate before it expires.
5. A minimum of two adults, at least one of which must be a Church Officer, will be present at Church activities involving children and/or young people.
6. Lone visits to vulnerable adults may be necessary and unavoidable so in these circumstances home visitors will comply with the parish home visits risk assessment.
7. The PCC will appoint a risk assessor who will review risk assessments at least annually. The risk assessor will consult the PSO on safeguarding risks and the PSO will be responsible for managing these risks. Churchwardens will be responsible for managing all non-safeguarding risks. Should no risk assessor be available, the PSO will lead on writing risk assessments for activities aimed specifically at children, young people or vulnerable adults. Churchwardens will lead on writing risk assessments for all other events.
8. The PCC will ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children, young people or vulnerable adults undertaken in the name of the parish.

9. We will require any organisation hiring one of our church halls to 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 to carry full liability insurance for this. All organisations will provide us with a copy of their safeguarding policy or, if they do not have one or we consider it to be unsuitable, adopt this parish policy.
10. The PSO will raise awareness among our congregations of safeguarding issues at least once a year.

3. Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk: We are committed to high quality risk assessments, safety plans and associated processes which result in positive outcomes. Our assessment and management of risk will be underpinned by effective partnership working.

1. We will identify, report and respond to safeguarding concerns in accordance with Church of England procedures.
2. Church Officers will familiarise themselves with the parish policy, 'Responding to safeguarding allegations or concerns', including the responsibility to make a written record and inform the incumbent and/or PSO and, where the concern or allegation relates to the incumbent or a Church Officer, the Diocesan safeguarding team within 24 hours. The PSO and team leaders will highlight the policy to their teams at least annually.
3. The incumbent and PSO will work with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor and any relevant outside agencies to ensure any known offenders or others who may pose a risk to children, young people or vulnerable adults are effectively managed and in accordance with Church of England procedures.
4. The incumbent and PSO will work with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor regarding the support needs of any Church Officer who is the subject of concerns or allegations.
5. We will maintain all safeguarding records in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation.
6. During a vacancy, the departing incumbent will pass all safeguarding information to the PSO. The PSO and Churchwardens will ensure that all safeguarding information is securely stored before sharing the information with the new incumbent.

4 Victims and Survivors: We are committed to ensuring that victims and survivors experience timely and high quality responses to disclosures. We will provide support which positively meets their needs, including their search for justice, and helps their healing process.

1. We will promote the welfare and voice of children, young people and vulnerable adults; victims and survivors of abuse; and those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse.
2. We will offer care and support to all those that have been abused, regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
3. We will respond to safeguarding disclosures in a victim-centred and trauma-informed way.
4. We will support those with other safeguarding issues, such as homelessness or mental health issues, to access relevant support services.
5. We will fulfil the support requirements set out in the 'Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse' House of Bishops' Guidance. The PSO will provide clear and accessible information about how victims and survivors can report abuse within the Church, the support available, the processes which will be followed and how allegations will be reported to statutory services.

6. The incumbent and PSO will discuss at least annually how our churches might better respond to victims and survivors.

5. Learning, Supervision and Support: We are committed to ensuring that those engaged in safeguarding-related activity in our Churches receive the type and level of learning, professional development, support and supervision necessary to respond effectively to safeguarding situations, victims and survivors, and respondents.

1. The PSO will undertake all diocesan safeguarding leadership training at the earliest opportunity and proactively maintain and update their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues and Church of England policies.
2. The PCC will appoint a safeguarding steering group, comprising the incumbent, PSO, one Churchwarden and another lay member of the PCC. This group will meet as required to support the PSO in their work.
3. All new Church Officers will complete their Basic Safeguarding Awareness course within one month of appointment and any other required safeguarding training within three months of appointment. Before a new Church Officer is appointed, the incumbent or relevant team leader will inform them of the training requirements and confirm the individual is willing to undertake them within the required period.
4. All existing Church Officers will renew their required safeguarding training before their certificate(s) expire.

Date of next review: January 2026

Supporting documents

Church of England policies

- [Promoting a Safer Church](#)
- [National Safeguarding Standards and Quality Assurance Framework](#)
- [Safeguarding e-manual | The Church of England](#)
- [Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse](#)
- [Safer Recruitment and People Management](#)
- [Code of Safer Working Practice](#)
- [Safer environment and activities](#)
- [Responding to assessing and managing concerns or allegations against Church Officers](#)
- [Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework](#)
- [Fact sheet: types of abuse](#)
- [Safe Spaces: free and independent support service for anyone abused by someone in the Church](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy - The Diocese of St Albans](#)