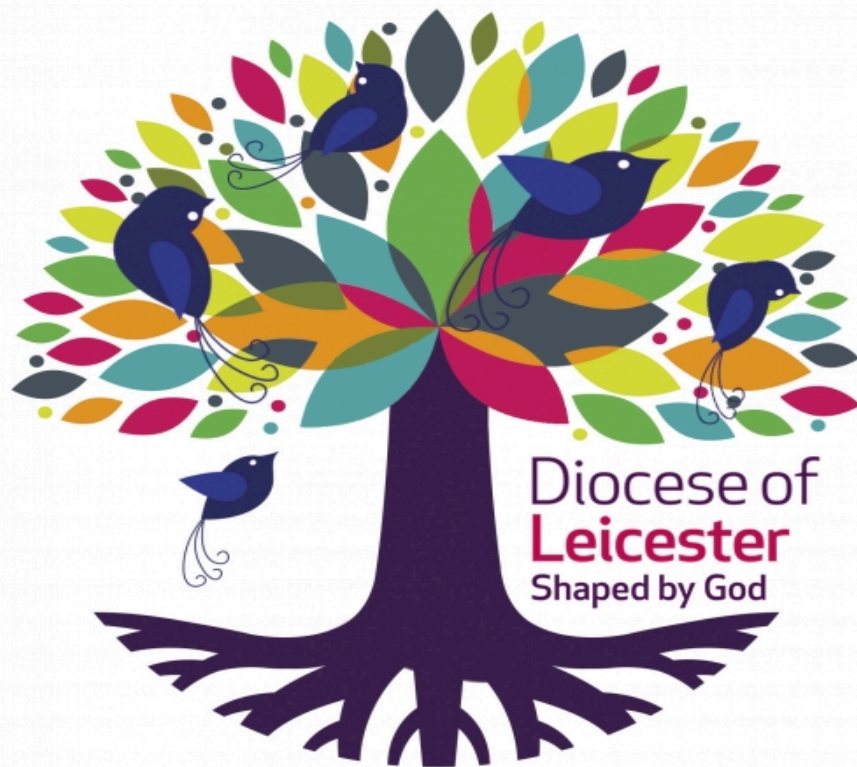


Safeguarding Policy Promoting a Safer Church

The Benefice of Sheepy



**The Sheepy Benefice comprising the Ecclesiastical Parishes of
Orton on the Hill, Ratcliffe Culey,
Sheepy Magna, Shenton, Sibson and Twycross**

.....

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is 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.**

Each person who works within these church communities will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this Benefice PCC.

The Benefice appoints ... Mrs Catherine Bunney as the Parish Safeguarding Officer [PSO]

Incumbent ... Revd. Julia Hargreaves, Rector Benefice of Sheepy

This policy statement will be renewed annually and progress in carrying it out will be monitored by the..

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Mrs Catherine Bunney

Who may be contacted at:

Email: cathbunney@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 07920 032599

This Policy was agreed by Parochial Church Council.

Date: 25th August 2021

Signed:

Priest in Charge

Signed

PSO

2. Contact details for the main leader of each children's/youth group		
Open the Book	Sue Houghton sdhoughton@btinternet.com
Tuesday Church	Sue Houghton sdhoughton@btinternet.com

3. The recommended minimum staffing levels set out in Promoting a Safer Church will be maintained. These are as follows:

Age	Number of Leaders
0 to 2 years	1 leader to every 3 children
2 to 3 years	1 leader to every 4 children
3 to 8 years	1 leader to every 8 children
8 +	1 leader for the first 8 children followed by 1 to 12

Notwithstanding these minimum levels, each group is to have at least 2 adult workers present and a gender balance should be maintained wherever possible, particularly in mixed gender groups. More help may be required if children are being taken off site, are undertaking physical activities or if necessitated by other circumstances. This will be assessed by the leaders of these activities.

Adults who assist very occasionally or as a one-off must be responsible to an appointed leader. The same applies to young people under the age of 18. Adults who assist more regularly will be appointed formally using the safer recruitment procedures.

Our uniformed organisations follow their own policies and procedures.

These organisations are:

❖ **Sheepy Beavers**

❖ **Sheepy Cubs**

❖ **Sheepy Scouts**

❖ **Sheepy Brownies**

❖ **Sheepy Rainbows**

4. Safer Recruiting

When appointing/recruiting leaders and helpers for work with children and young people, the PCC will follow the guidelines set out in Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment. This means:

- Providing a job/role description
- Ensuring the potential volunteer provides a CV or completed application form
- Ensuring the potential volunteer completes a confidential declaration form
- Conducting an interview

- Taking up references from two referees one of whom should be current employer, previous church, or organisation at which the potential volunteer currently volunteers or has recently been a volunteer. At least one referee should be from outside the church.
- Obtaining a DBS (criminal record) disclosure, unless the nature of the role is such that there is no entitlement to a DBS check
 - Offering the post subject to a probationary period
 - Confirming the appointment in writing
 - Ensuring the volunteer is aware of PCC policies and procedures and has been given a copy of the Pocket Guide to Safeguarding Children and the Child Safeguarding Policy.

5. Code of Behaviour

The PCC commits to the following Code of Behaviour which those who work with children and young people are expected to follow:

You should:

- ▶ Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- ▶ Provide a Christian example you wish others to follow.
- ▶ Provide an example of good conduct that you wish others to follow.
- ▶ Ensure that there are at least two adults present during activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.
- ▶ Respect personal privacy.
- ▶ Ensure that another adult is informed if a worker needs to take a child to the toilet.
- ▶ Be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted. ▶ Challenge unacceptable behaviour in a responsible way
- ▶ Report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.
- ▶ Recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- ▶ Operate within the organisation's principles and guidance.
- ▶ Only use social media and email in accordance with paragraph 14 below.

You should not:

- ▶ Ever hit a child or young person.
- ▶ Play rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- ▶ Touch inappropriately.
- ▶ Show favouritism to any one child, young person or group.
- ▶ Give lifts to children on their own or on your own. If it is unavoidable ask the child to sit in the back of the vehicle and inform another adult where possible.
- ▶ Invite a child or young person to the youth leader/worker's home alone unless responding to an emergency situation, in which case the relevant people should be contacted.
- ▶ Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.
- ▶ Allow unknown adults access to children. A known person should always accompany visitors.

6. Procedure to be followed in the case of an allegation or disclosure of abuse

If there is an allegation or disclosure of abuse by a child, young person or by an adult who is disclosing or alleging historic child abuse:

- ▶ Listen. Keep listening.
- ▶ Do not question or investigate – this is the job of the authorities. In particular do not speak to the subject of the allegation.
- ▶ Do not promise confidentiality; tell them that the information they disclose needs to be shared.
- ▶ Assure them they are not to blame.
- ▶ Tell them what you are going to do. Reassure them that the matter will be reported to the investigating authorities. If the person needs reassurance that the alleged perpetrator will be punished, do not make any promises. There can be no guarantee as to what happens as that will be dependent upon the outcome of the investigation.
- ▶ As soon as possible after the conversation, make careful notes of what was said, record dates, times, events and when you were told.
- ▶ If there is immediate danger to a child or young person, contact the Social Services or the Police.
- ▶ Report the incident to your priest or PSO immediately.
- ▶ If the allegation relates to your priest report the matter directly to the Archdeacon.
- ▶ Do not discuss the incident with anybody else.
- ▶ The priest or PSO must then report the allegation or disclosure to the appropriate Archdeacon within 24 hours. The Archdeacon will seek advice from the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser
- ▶ In the absence of the Archdeacon, the Assistant Diocesan Secretary should be contacted.

Do not contact anybody who is implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure.

Do not talk to the media under any circumstances. The Diocesan Communications Officer will handle any media statements.

If a child or young person makes a disclosure by email or other electronic means do not respond using electronic means, but report the disclosure to your priest or PSO.

The procedure is the same for abuse, which happened in the past, possibly many years ago.

7. Procedure to be followed where there are concerns that someone may be committing abuse

If you are concerned, or it comes to your notice that someone may be committing abuse:

- ▶ Make notes of your concerns and discuss them with your priest or PSO.
- ▶ The priest or PSO must then report the concerns to the appropriate Archdeacon.
- ▶ If your concerns relate to your priest report them directly to the Archdeacon.
- ▶ Dates and times should be recorded of any observations which have been made and of the referral to the Archdeacon.
- ▶ The Archdeacon will seek the advice of the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser who will decide whether to
 - ❖ Report the concerns to Social Services and/or the Police, who will then investigate while the Bishop's Adviser liaises with the parish; or
 - ❖ Continue to observe closely – the process will be repeated in the event of any more concerns.

- ▶ There should be close communication between the priest, the Archdeacon and the Bishop's Adviser until the situation is resolved.
- ▶ In the absence of the Archdeacon, the Assistant Diocesan Secretary should be contacted.

8. Procedure to be followed where people with convictions for offences against children or people under investigation are attending church

Where someone attending the church has been convicted of offenses against children (or they have received a formal police caution) agreement will need to be drawn up to minimize any risk to the safety of children within the church. If a person who attends the church is subject to investigation for alleged child abuse, thought will need to be given to drawing up a temporary agreement until the outcome of the investigation is known.

- ▶ The priest or, in the absence of the priest, the PSO, must inform the appropriate Archdeacon of the situation.
- ▶ The Archdeacon will seek the advice of the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser who will decide whether an agreement needs to be in place and will provide a template for the agreement.
- ▶ If the person is a convicted offender, there will need to be liaison with the person's Supervising officer (police or probation) who should be consulted about the agreement and, ideally, be a signatory to it.
- ▶ The offender or person under investigation will be asked to sign the agreement, which will then be reviewed annually.

9. Allegations or concerns about senior clergy

- ▶ If an allegation involves an archdeacon or dean it should be reported to the Bishop of Leicester.
- ▶ If an allegation involves a bishop, it should be reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

10. Registration

A registration form will be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities. This does not include activities such as church services, which would take place regardless of whether or not children are present. Neither does it include activities which are family focused but which children attend with their parents (eg Messy Church). The form will be updated annually and include the following:

- ▶ Name and address
- ▶ Date of birth
- ▶ Emergency contact details
- ▶ Medical information
- ▶ Any special needs including activities that the child or young person is unable to take part in
- ▶ Consent for emergency medical treatment
- ▶ Consent for photographs and videos if relevant

All personal details and registration forms will be stored securely, not used for any other purpose, and shredded or disposed of securely when out of date or no longer in use.

Separate procedures apply to youth drop-in centres. In the event that a drop-in centre is being planned, the Youth Ministry Officer will be contacted for guidance.

11. Activities away from the church premises

Adequate arrangements will be made for children's and young people's activities which take place away from church premises as follows:

- ▶ No child can be taken off-site for activities without the consent of their parent/guardian/ carer.
- ▶ Details of the event must be given in advance and consent forms received in advance of the event taking place.
- ▶ Details of the arrangements will be given to the PSO.
- ▶ A risk assessment will be undertaken and confirmation obtained that the event is covered by PCC* insurance.
- ▶ A detailed programme and list of contacts should be left with someone in the parish
- ▶ A leader will be designated to take responsibility for First Aid.

12. Support, supervision and training

All those involved in working with children and young people will ensure that there is always more than one responsible adult available so that there is mutual supervision. Should one of the adults become ill or get called away, the other adult will call for additional help. In emergency situations where an individual cannot avoid working with children on his/her own because an unforeseen situation has arisen, he/she will inform another leader (or the PSO or priest) of the situation, if at all possible at the time it arises, and a note will be kept by the PSO.

Those who work with children and young people will be given the opportunity to review their work with the leader of their group/PSO/priest/member of the PCC. This will enable them to comment on the work they are doing, give suggestions, review and further develop their work, if they so wish, and to discuss training opportunities.

From time to time the church may hold training events on Child Protection. There will also be other training events organised by the Diocese of Leicester which church staff, youth workers, volunteers and child protection coordinators may attend.

Every person who works with children will be given a copy of the Pocket Guide to Safeguarding Children and this policy. They will also be given information about how to access on the internet the Diocese of Leicester Child Protection Handbook and other national Church of England documents including Promoting a Safer Church. Paper copies of these documents will be provided to those workers who request them.

13. Health & Safety and First Aid

Health and Safety will be managed as part of all activities. All buildings where activities with children and young people take place will be inspected by an appropriate person at least annually and the results will be noted and reported in writing to the PCC or other appropriate church organisation. Health and Safety issues observed by those working with children and young people should be reported to the PSO or the person with responsibility for Health and Safety within the church.

A First Aid kit will be available on site and will be checked monthly and updated as necessary. An accident book is maintained at all places where activities with children and young people take place.

If there is an emergency involving injury to a child or young person:

- ▶ Stay calm
- ▶ Provide immediate first aid when needed
- ▶ Alert others to the need for help
- ▶ Ensure that somebody is supervising the other children or young people
- ▶ Call an ambulance if needed
- ▶ Contact the parents/guardians of the child or young person
- ▶ Provide an appropriate handover and information about the situation to the parents/guardians
- ▶ Complete the accident book
- ▶ Consider whether there are implications for the Health & Safety policy and/or practices and report these to the PSO.

14. Use of Social Media, email and texting

All those involved in working with children and young people will exercise care in the use of social media and respect the principles set out below. Communication by electronic means or by texting will not be used with children under the age of 11. All communication in these forms will be via their parents. The rest of the principles relate to communication with children and young people aged 11 and over. The key point is that communication should be in a context of transparency and accountability.

- ▶ Electronic communication and texting should only be used for reasons relating to work and not for general socialising purposes.
- ▶ Other leaders should be aware of the situations in which these means of communication are being used.
- ▶ Leaders, workers and volunteers should not invite children or young people from church activities to their personal social networking page but may respond to requests where appropriate, as long as the child or young person is 13 or over.
- ▶ Where possible, group pages should be used on social media for communicating.
- ▶ Care should be exercised in posting to Facebook, twitter etc as comments made on the spur of the moment may not always come out as intended and can be passed on extremely quickly around a large audience.
- ▶ Communication by electronic means or texting with children or young people should never take place during school hours and should be kept within the hours of 9am – 9pm.
- ▶ Where possible, email and messaging should take place to and within groups rather than individuals.
- ▶ Leaders, workers and volunteers should give very careful consideration as to whether it is necessary to give personal mobile phone numbers to children and young people.
- ▶ Webcams will not be used where internet chat or Skype is used for one to one conversations.
- ▶ Records of communications will be kept just as they would be for written communication. If a worker's mobile phone does not allow text messages to be saved then a written record should be kept.
- ▶ The principles for the use of social media will be communicated to children and young people.

The church does not have a dedicated mobile phone number for children's / youth work.

15. Identity Checking for DBS (criminal record) checks

The role of identity checker is an important one because the identity checker verifies the identity of the person applying for the DBS check. The identity checker will always be a person who has undergone a

DBS check. Identity checking will be carried out in accordance with DBS and Diocese of Leicester guidelines This is currently done by the Benefice administrator, PSO or by a member of the clergy.

16. Implementation of the Policy

PSO will be responsible for monitoring the policy to see that it is being put into practice. They will be supported by the PCC* members, who have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding.

17. Procedure for regular reporting to the PCC

The PSO will report annually to the PCC on child protection matters or after any incident with child protection implications (taking care to preserve confidentiality as necessary). The PCC will be kept informed on at least an annual basis of all regular and one-off children's activities as this is necessary for them to fulfil their duties as charity trustees and also for insurance purposes

The procedures and guidelines were last reviewed and agreed by the PCC on

Signed by the Priest in Charge:

Signed by the Vice-Chair of the PCC/Churchwarden:**

Date for policy review

The next review of this policy is due by

Date: September 2022

Please keep a copy for your parish records, give a copy to everybody involved in work with children and young people and send one to:

**Assistant Diocesan Secretary
St Martins House
7 Peacock Lane
Leicester
LE1 5PZ.
andrew.brockbank@leccofe.org**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church-safeguarding>