

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Mrs Tina Douglas

safeguarding@bansteadallsaints.com

Parish Office: 01737 379289

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, BANSTEAD

Vulnerable Adults

The following guidelines apply whenever adults who may be vulnerable take part in church organised events and activities. These include:

- During worship
- Day trips or outings
- Home or Pastoral Visiting/Home Communion

LEADERSHIP AND SUPERVISION

One person must be designated Group Leader for every activity or event.

It is the Group Leader's responsibility to clarify with the worker or volunteer their roles and responsibilities regarding their relationships with vulnerable adults with whom they may be in contact. Regular supervision for staff and volunteers will ensure their work is monitored and also offers the opportunity for them to raise any issues.

For specific activities or groups for vulnerable adults, a minimum of two adults must always be present, and one of these should be the designated Group Leader, however a risk assessment may well indicate the need for an enhanced level of supervision and staffing for a particular activity.

RUNNING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Parishes should try to create an environment where all vulnerable adults are encouraged to participate and contribute. The Group Leader should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event or activity, and should ensure that:

- The activity, event and transport arrangements are covered by insurance. This should include public liability.
- The vulnerable adults and/or their carers are consulted in order to identify their specific needs, and how these can best be met.

- Vulnerable adults are informed about the aims and objectives of any trips or activities and the dates, duration and details of venue and travel arrangements.
- Vulnerable adults are given choices about where they sit, and what activities they participate in, and offered assistance in such a way as to maximise their independence.
- Vulnerable adults are given a chance to do things that other people might take for granted.
- Vulnerable adults are given the best quality of support and protection.
- The needs of carers are taken into consideration, and they are offered breaks and practical assistance if feasible.

Good Practice Regarding Visual Impairment

Find seats near the front so the partially sighted person has the option to sit closer to what is going on.

Ensure large print versions are available for songs/hymns and other written material (e.g. bible, news sheets etc.). Print for partially sighted people should be in a easily-readable Sans Serif typeface (e.g. Arial).

The international symbol for visual impairment can be shown on literature and notice boards to indicate what facilities are provided for blind and partially sighted people

Good Practice Regarding Hearing Impairment

- Address hearing-impaired people directly, rather than speaking to them 'through' someone who has accompanied them. Ensure that your face and mouth can be seen clearly. Look directly at the person and speak at normal speed and volume with clear lip patterns. Avoid exaggerated lip patterns that are harder to read. Don't speak directly into the person's ear.
- A hearing induction loop should be provide whether you are aware of people using hearing aids or not. It is not always obvious

someone has a hearing aid and most people do not like to draw attention to the fact.

- Be aware that background noise can make life very difficult for people who use a hearing aid because it can distort what they are trying to hear. Do not raise your voice if someone is wearing a hearing aid as this too can distort sound.
- Be prepared to write things down if necessary; the important thing is not to give up if communication is difficult. Change/simplify your language if the deaf person does not understand, avoiding jargon.
- The international symbol can be shown on literature or notice boards to indicate that facilities are available for the hard of hearing.

Good Practice Regarding Reduced Mobility

- Ensure access both to and within your building(s) through the use of level floors or ramps.
- Avoid designating one area for wheelchair users; this unnecessarily draws attention to their disability. Think about a seat being reserved alongside a wheelchair user so that a friend can sit next to them.
- When talking to a wheelchair user it is polite to sit down so that you are on the same level, making eye contact easier. Remember that a wheelchair is part of the user's personal space – so don't lean on it, hold it or attempt to move it/push it unless asked.
- The international symbol can be shown on literature, notice boards and facilities such as toilets to indicate that there is access for those with impaired mobility.

Good Practice Regarding Learning Disability

- Adults with learning disabilities may well have limited or no reading ability so where possible signpost facilities and directions (fire exits, toilets etc.) using images as well as words.
- Offer discreet assistance if people seem to be experiencing difficulties understanding or if they require help with certain instructions. Consider their level of understanding when you are speaking with them.

- Beware of “vener skills” where someone gives the impression of understanding when they do not.
- Be patient if individuals are noisy or move about when it seems inappropriate. Do not expect immediate pick up on the norms of how things are usually done within your place of worship.

HOME VISITING (including Residential homes)

There are some church activities where home visits are an integral part of the work.

In these circumstances it is essential that the following safeguards are put in place to protect both the vulnerable adult and the worker/volunteer.

Wherever possible, workers should avoid lone working with a vulnerable adult.

- A risk assessment should be undertaken before visiting someone in their own home and if there are any concerns or risks, careful consideration should be given as to whether the visit is absolutely necessary, and whether another adult should be present.
- The worker/volunteer should always carry a mobile phone on a home visit, and ensure that someone else within the activity/group knows about the arrangement, including times and location.
- Don't call unannounced – call by arrangement, if appropriate telephoning the person just before you go.
- Carry identification, or a note of introduction from your church at all times.
- Rather than give out personal information, give those you visit a central contact point within the church.
- Be clear about boundaries – keep to agreed limits on how much time you will spend with someone and how often you visit.
- Be clear about what behaviour is acceptable – and what is not – from the vulnerable adult.
- In the event of any problems, seek advice from the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

TRANSPORT

Checks on the Driver

It is recommended that all those who drive vulnerable adults on church organised activities should be over 25 years and should have held a full current driving licence for over two years.

Driving licences should be checked to make sure that the volunteer does not have any recent or serious driving convictions. Where a driver has penalty points on their licence, the PCC will need to decide on a case by case basis whether or not it considers the driver to be suitable for a volunteer driver role.

If the volunteer is regularly driving vulnerable adults they must complete a DBS Application.

Checks on the vehicle

The vehicle needs to be safe. A MOT certificate should be requested from the driver if the vehicle is over three years old.

Cars must have front and rear seatbelts and all passengers must wear seatbelts.

Passengers are legally responsible for ensuring that they are wearing a seat belt.

Sports cars, vans and off-road vehicles could well be unsuitable for taking passengers. The vehicle must be easy for the passengers to access.

Insurance

All cars that carry vulnerable adults should be comprehensively insured, and the owner of the vehicle is responsible for arranging this.

It is recommended that vehicle owners inform their insurance company in writing that they will be driving during church activities, otherwise the policy could be invalidated, which would result in the driver being personally liable for any damage or injuries sustained in an accident.

Voluntary drivers should not be paid anything more than expenses actually incurred, because it could invalidate the insurance policy if the drivers are making a 'profit'.

PHOTOGRAPHS

For vulnerable adults, images should only be used for a purpose which is explained to them, and to which they give their recorded and preferably signed consent, i.e. they understand and agree. They should see the photograph before being asked to give consent. All images must respect the dignity of the person being photographed. If the vulnerable adult cannot give informed consent, the images should not be used, unless the individual cannot be identified from the photograph.

Storage of Images

Be clear about whether the image is to be retained for further use. Store the image securely, and ideally store consent forms with the image/s for future reference.

Good Practice Guidelines

- Pictures of vulnerable adults should not be taken without another adult present.
- The photograph/video should focus on the activity rather than a particular person, avoiding full face and body shots.
- Photographs submitted for publication where vulnerable adults are recognisable and there is insufficient evidence that their consent has been obtained should not be published. Permission **should not** be assumed, even if images have been submitted by parishes for publication.
- If at a church-related event vulnerable adults use cameras to take photos of each other they should be advised that these can be used for personal use only, and should not be displayed in any publicly accessible space, including on internet or web-based communication channels such as Facebook.

If you are approached by a reporter, photographer or film-crew who wants to use images from your parish, do emphasise that your policy is to obtain permission from the persons involved, and refer them to the Diocesan Communications Adviser.

We strongly recommend that you take note of the advice in the two-page guidance document ‘Code of Safer Working Practice’. It is also well worth reading the recent advice from the Church of England contained in ‘Safer Environment and Activities’. Both are available on the C. of E. national website - see <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/promoting-safer-church/policy-practice-guidance>

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Ms Tina Douglas

safeguarding@bansteadallsaints.com

Assistant Safeguarding Officer

Mrs Janice Povey

churchallsaints@tiscali.co.uk

Tel: 01737 379289

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

Ian Berry, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

ian.berry@cofeguildford.org.uk

Mobile: 07544566850

Ian acts as a contact point for those in the church and community to ensure that the Diocese of Guildford maintains the highest standards of safeguarding for all children and adults. Promoting good practice in safeguarding, ensuring an appropriate pastoral and professional response to concerns and issues.