



# A Safe Church

**Policies, Procedures and Guidelines  
for Safeguarding Children, Young  
People and Adults**

***A manual for parishes in  
the Diocese of Southwark***

*First edition published November 2008  
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## Commendation by the Right Reverend Christopher Chessun



The Diocese of Southwark is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults and for many years this commitment has been at the heart of our work across the parishes. As a result we have developed policies, procedures and training at all levels of the Diocese and I commend them to you. The following pages are the latest version of our safeguarding manual *A Safe Church* and they should be widely available to those in your churches.

*A Safe Church* has been updated during 2018 and 2019 in line with current safeguarding guidance and policies adopted by the House of Bishops. All authorised clergy, licensed and commissioned lay ministers, lay workers and volunteers, churchwardens and PCC members must have due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

It is my prayer that the policies and practice followed here in the Diocese of Southwark will help to contribute to making the Church a safe and welcoming place for all.



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**“The Church of England is called to share the good news of God’s salvation through Jesus Christ. The life of our communities and institutions is integral to how we address this task. The good news speaks of welcome for all, with a particular regard for those who are most vulnerable, into a community where the value and dignity of every human being is affirmed and those in positions of responsibility and authority are truly trustworthy. Being faithful to our call to share the gospel therefore compels us to take with the utmost seriousness the challenge of preventing abuse from happening and responding well where it has.”**

**— from *Promoting a Safer Church*,  
the Church of England’s Safeguarding Policy Statement**

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## Acknowledgements

Material for this manual has been obtained from a variety of sources, including the Archbishops' Council, other Dioceses within the Church of England and other relevant bodies.

The original content of this manual drew on the experience of a number of individuals from within the Diocese of Southwark involved in the safeguarding of children, young people and adults. The layout is by the Diocesan Communications Department.

*A Safe Church* was first published in 2008. The contents of the manual were reviewed, after consultation, by the Safeguarding Reference Group in 2010 and agreed by Bishops' Council.

Significant amendments have been made in 2018 and 2019 in line with a number of new and revised policies from the National Safeguarding Team and to reflect changes in wider safeguarding procedure and legislation.

## How to use this manual: a quick guide

These policies, procedures and guidelines are designed to enable all activities and environments to be kept as safe as possible for children and adults who may be vulnerable, while at the same time maintaining realistic common sense.

They also provide very clear guidelines for what to do when something goes wrong, or if there are concerns.

Where possible, there is a single policy or procedure to apply to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. This is to make the system easier to use, but it is important to remember that these groups are different, and people need to be treated according to their individual needs.

While all those involved with working with children and adults who may be vulnerable are encouraged to read and familiarise themselves with the whole manual, it is designed to be used as a tool as and when necessary. Some sections will be of more relevance to some people than to others.

Some of the 2018 and 2019 revised content of this manual has been taken from the Church of England safeguarding website: [www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding](http://www.churchofengland.org/more/safeguarding). Where there has been a straight lift of a policy from this website, this has been acknowledged.

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*If you are concerned that a child or adult who may be vulnerable has been harmed or is at risk of harm, contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser on 020 7939 9423 (office hours) or 07982 279713 (out of hours), and go straight to Section 6 of this manual.*

**IF YOU HAVE IMMEDIATE CONCERNS ABOUT THE SAFETY OF A CHILD OR ADULT, PLEASE CONTACT THE POLICE ON 999 AND YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN OR ADULT SERVICES DEPARTMENT.**

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## Contact details

The work of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team includes:

- responding to and supporting parishes where there are concerns about situations regarding children or adults who may be vulnerable, or when allegations of abuse have been made
- taking a lead role when allegations are made or safeguarding concerns expressed about church officers
- advising parishes on safeguarding policy and practice.

For a fuller description of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser's role, see [A Safe Church, Section 3, Responsibilities within the Diocese](#).

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