

Safeguarding Policy

The Trustees of the Community of St Mary the Virgin (CSMV) takes the prevention, detection and cessation of abuse and neglect of children and adults very seriously. CSMV aims to incorporate awareness of any abuse or neglect into all aspects of its work and ensure that children and adults at risk who come into contact with CSMV are protected from abuse and harm.

In order to prioritise its responsibilities for safeguarding, the board of trustees of CSMV appoints at least one trustee to have specific concern for safeguarding matters, reporting regularly on safeguarding issues to trustee meetings.

The Trustees accept and abide by the House of Bishops' Guidance for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults in the Church of England. CSMV works in partnership with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Oxfordshire local authority and other organisations to provide support. Where it is known or suspected that a child or an adult at risk is being abused or neglected, CSMV will act promptly by notifying the appropriate bodies and will take immediate action. CSMV recognises it has a duty to safeguard children and adults at risk not only in places where they are known to live, or may live, but also where they may visit.

CSMV believes that everyone has the right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

CSMV acknowledges that its primary responsibility is the prevention of abuse or neglect, and that some of the CSMV Sisters and visitors may be vulnerable to abuse. There is an ongoing risk assessment and risk management approach to preventing the danger of abuse and neglect, by identifying individuals who may be particularly at risk of potential abuse.

Measures for preventing incidents of abuse and neglect include:

- Promoting an open culture where complaints and issues of concern may be raised;
- Ensuring that robust policies and procedures are in place and are being adhered to by staff who are sufficiently skilled and trained and have an awareness of abuse and neglect;
- Effective recruitment and selection processes, which involve enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and through checking of employment history references;
- Effective management, training, monitoring and supervision systems to enable early identification and assessment of risk;

- Maintaining effective partnerships with other external agencies, including the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, social care teams and the police, and working in line with local inter-agency guidelines to ensure vulnerable adults and children are safeguarded against all types of abuse and neglect.

Despite this preventative approach, CSMV acknowledges that incidents of abuse and neglect may still sometimes occur. In the event of this happening, robust measures are in place to deal with these incidents of abuse or neglect effectively. This includes supporting both the alleged victim of the incident and also the alleged perpetrator.

All staff at CSMV, whether or not they work directly with children or with adults at risk of abuse and neglect, will be trained to recognise, and know how to act upon, indicators that child or adult's welfare or safety may be at risk.

CSMV staff and their managers who work directly with adults at risk of abuse and neglect will be trained and supported in recognising and dealing with incidents of safeguarding, underpinned by the six principles which arise from the Care Act:

1. Empowerment – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

"I was asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens"

2. Prevention – it is better to take action before harm occurs

"I receive clear and simple information about what abuse and neglect is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do seek help"

3. Proportionality – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented

"I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them and they will only get involved as much as needed"

4. Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need

"I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want"

5. Partnership – local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

"I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me"

6. Accountability – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

"I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they".

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and persons working on behalf of CSMV, whether they work directly or come into contact with an adult at risk or a child, have a responsibility to raise concerns regarding their welfare. All staff are required to follow the CSMV Safeguarding Policy and its associated procedures.

- The Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding is Sandie Capel.
- The Sister in Charge has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with safeguarding policies and practices and for promoting a safer culture.
- The Steward (Gina Hocking) is the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) and is responsible for ensuring the adoption of and adherence to the Safeguarding Policy and its associated procedures. The DSP is the person to whom all concerns must be reported, unless the concerns are about the DSP, in which case the concerns should be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. The DSP is responsible for establishing links with a lead Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA).
- In the absence on leave of the Steward, the Warden will act as the Designated Safeguarding Person.
- All Line Managers are responsible for informing the Designated Safeguarding Person (the Steward) of any safeguarding issues raised to them by any members of staff.
- All members of staff are responsible for sharing any safeguarding concerns with their line manager or with the Designated Safeguarding Person (the Steward)
- As part of any Visitation the Episcopal Visitor will check safeguarding policies and procedures, and inform the Diocesan Bishop if they have any safeguarding concerns in relation to the community