

The Parish of St Andrew's Handsworth
SAFEGUARDING RECRUITMENT OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS
POLICY
PROMOTING A SAFER CHURCH

Our commitment

St Andrew's Church recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for all. We acknowledge that any person can be a victim of abuse. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". Everyone has a responsibility for the safety, well-being and protection of others.

St Andrew's Church adopts the procedures set out in accordance with statutory guidance, informed by the House of Bishops and its local expression in the Diocese of Birmingham and established good practice.

Our Church community should be a place where all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse. Further, we are committed to the establishing of safe, caring community which provides a loving environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse and where they can find support and best practice that is implemented to contribute to the prevention of abuse.

When recruiting volunteers and paid workers we will carefully select, support and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with the principles of safer recruitment, ensuring that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.

We will take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children, or adults who may be vulnerable, from taking up positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others, following legislation, guidance and recognised good practice.

Brief description of church and activities

St Andrew's Church is part of the Church of England in the Diocese of Birmingham. Beside worship services, it has varied activities throughout the week for children, youth and adults, offering both friendship, and support in a variety of ways. Beside Clergy and employed staff, there are a large number of volunteers involved in differing capacities throughout the life of the church.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our church. However small or large their contribution each volunteer needs to know that we value and appreciate them and the work they do.

The Church welcomes everyone, including those who are vulnerable and those who may pose a risk to vulnerable people and therefore we have a particular responsibility to pay attention to safe recruitment. St Andrew's Church commits to safely recruiting and supporting all workers and volunteers who have any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults who attend Church activities.

Legislation

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, with subsequent amendments in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, establishes:

- It is an offence to knowingly apply for a post (paid or otherwise) to work with children or vulnerable adults in regulated activity if the person is included on the Children's Barred List and/or the Vulnerable Adults Barred List overseen by the Disclosure & Barring Service;

- It is an offence to knowingly recruit anyone to work with children or vulnerable adults in regulated activity who is included on the Children's Barred List and/or the Vulnerable Adults Barred List overseen by the Disclosure & Barring Service;

All activities working with those under 18 and adults at risk, formally provided by the church are covered. Volunteers appointed to any role within the Church are deemed as 'Church Officers'. A 'Church Officer' is anyone appointed by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid. With this designation, comes responsibility.

The Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline measure 2016 require all clergy, Church Officers and parochial church councils to have 'due regard' to safeguarding policy and practice guidance issued by the House of Bishops. A duty to have 'due regard' to guidance means that the person under the duty is not free to disregard it but is required to follow such guidance unless there are cogent reasons for not doing so.

PCC

As a Church where the PCC approves activities with children, young people and adults who are vulnerable due to being at increased risk due to age, disability or illness then all PCC members must have an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service Check even if they do not work directly with vulnerable groups.

This requirement is because they are Charity Trustees who are responsible for safeguarding in the parish. All PCC members should be made aware that the role is eligible for a DBS check before standing for election and should complete a confidential self-declaration form and apply for a DBS check as soon as they are elected.

Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders

St Andrew's Church recruits suitable staff and volunteers to serve in a variety of roles including work with Children and Adults at Risk. This requires assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). St Andrew's Church complies fully with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly.

- We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check based on a conviction or other information revealed.
- We ask individuals to provide details of convictions and cautions that St Andrew's Church are legally entitled to.
- St Andrew's Church is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, volunteers, or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- St Andrew's Church promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.
- We select all candidates based on their skills, qualifications, experience and after a successful interview with a Ministry Lead.
- This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, is available to all applicants during the initial recruitment process.
- An application for a criminal record check is submitted to DBS. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, the application form, and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being recruited to the position.
- The Parish Safeguarding Officers, Parish Safeguarding Coordinator and Vicar or nominee will refer all offences to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser for advice and assessment.
- St Andrew's Church ensures that they have appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

- At interview, or in a separate discussion, St Andrew's Church ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or voluntary service.
- An individual subject of a DBS check will be made aware of the existence of and access to the code of practice.
- St Andrew's Church after consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor, undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position.

This policy will be reviewed and adopted annually along with the Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policies. In view of the current situation regarding Covid-19 this statement has not been physically signed by the signatories as listed below. This will be undertaken as soon as safe working practices allow.

Each person who works within this church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints **_Valerie Powell_** as the Parish Safeguarding Officer

Incumbent **..VACANT.....**

Churchwardens: **Carl Hart and Ms Elaine Powell**

Date: **4th August 2020**