

National Safeguarding Standards:

Our Parish

THE FIVE STANDARDS

1 Culture, Leadership and Capacity

Church bodies have safe and healthy cultures, effective leadership, resourcing and scrutiny arrangements necessary to deliver high quality safeguarding practices and outcomes.

2 Prevention

Church bodies have in place a planned range of measures which together are effective in preventing abuse in their context.

3 Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk

Risk assessments, safety plans and associated processes are of a high quality and result in positive outcomes. The assessment and management of risk is underpinned by effective partnership working.

4 Victims and Survivors

Victims and survivors experience the timeliness and quality of Church bodies' responses to disclosures, and their subsequent support, as positively meeting their needs, including their search for justice and helping their healing process.

5 Learning, Supervision and Support

All those engaged in safeguarding related activity in Church bodies receive the type and level of learning, professional development, support and supervision necessary to respond to safeguarding situations, victims and survivors, and respondents, effectively.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding

THE FIVE STANDARDS

1. Culture, Leadership and Capacity

- Fosters and promotes a safe and healthy culture.
- Engages with and promotes the welfare and voice of children, vulnerable adults, victims and survivors of abuse, as well as those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse.

2. Prevention

- Follows 'Safer Recruitment and People Management' House of Bishops' Guidance.
- Discusses safeguarding understanding in individual reviews and/or supervision meetings.
- Uses a range of good materials and methods to promote safeguarding to all audiences (e.g., children and young people).
- Regularly discusses safeguarding at PCC, volunteer, congregational, and children and youth meetings and activities.
- Develops, adopts and shares good safeguarding practice.
- Considers the needs, experiences and voices of children, vulnerable adults, and survivors in prevention planning.
- Raises awareness of different kinds of abuse (e.g., domestic and spiritual abuse) and contemporary safeguarding issues (e.g. modern slavery, county lines).
- Manages risk for all church activities, identifying safeguarding risks to both those delivering and those receiving activities.
- Avoids lone working (appropriate precautions are taken to keep everyone safe when it is necessary and unavoidable).
- Understands appropriate boundaries (e.g., touch, in respect of passing the peace and hugs by the Welcome Team).
- Is aware of the safeguarding risks that are associated with the layout of the church building (e.g., access to toilets and potential blind spots).

3. Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk

- Identifies, reports and responds to concerns that constitute a safeguarding matter, in accordance with House of Bishops' Guidance/Code and statutory guidelines.
- Records all concerns in a clear and concise manner.
- Stores and shares all personal information in ways which are compliant with data protection legislation and the GDPR.
- Shares safeguarding information through work-provided (non-personal) forms of communication.

4. Victims and Survivors

- Hears, respects, believes and genuinely cares for those who are reporting abuse.
- Responds to safeguarding disclosures in a victim-centred and trauma-informed way.
- Is aware of the routes to disclosure and the processes that follow and can communicate that to those who report abuse.
- Acts on safeguarding concerns appropriately, transparently and in a timely manner.
- Fulfils the support requirements set out in the 'Responding Well to Victims and Survivors of Abuse' House of Bishops' Guidance.
- Also supports victims and survivors of non-Church based abuse, abuse within churches other than the Church of England, and those with broader safeguarding issues (e.g., mental health, homelessness) in accessing relevant support services.
- Ensures that the Bible and Christian theology is used with victims and survivors sensitively and with their consent, to provide care and support.

5. Learning, Supervision and Support

- Ensures church officers are up to date with their safeguarding learning and development requirements.
- Supports Clergy and Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSOs) in their safeguarding roles.
- Ensures that new PSOs have attended induction programmes.

What are the Standards?

The Standards are broad statements of what the Church of England wants to achieve in the most important dimensions of its safeguarding work.

Each Standard has several ‘What Good Looks Like’ indicators, to identify safeguarding strengths as well as areas for learning and development.

Using the Standards is NOT a compliance-based, tick-box exercise.

The Standards and their indicators have been developed over a three-year period, working with dioceses, cathedrals, parishes and victims and survivors and were approved nationally in 2023.

A series of tools and resources have been developed to assist in measuring or evidencing of how well the Standards are being met, as well as to help share best practice.

What is ‘Our Parish’?

An online resource that highlights what aspect of the Standards and their ‘What Good Looks Like’ Indicators are relevant for parishes.

www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding-standards

All relevant ‘What Good Looks Like’ Indicators have been tweaked to ensure that each one now forms part of a sentence that begins with ‘Our Parish ...’. This is to ensure it is clear what good safeguarding practice looks like within a parish.