

# **ST DUNSTAN'S CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Parish Priest and people of St Dunstan's Bellingham takes seriously and recognises the importance of child protection and that this has happened within church communities. We therefore resolve to raise awareness and adopt guidelines at St Dunstan's that are designed to protect children and young people.

Underlying our responsibility to protect children from abuse, we note the following principles identified by the Diocese of Southwark.

- children will be protected in their vulnerability.
- the welfare of the child is paramount.
- all allegations of abuse will be taken seriously.
- we will collaborate with statutory and voluntary agencies.
- volunteers in our church will be recruited, trained and supported.
- declarations of offense will be sought for all volunteers and paid staff that have regular contact with children.

## **OUR WORK WITH CHILDREN**

The church premises are used by other groups and organisations working with children to promote their all-round development. The church premises are also used by ad hoc groups, children's parties, wedding parties etc

### **The following recommendations will apply to all groups-**

1. There will be a list of all paid staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children. Each of these persons will make a declaration of any criminal offences, these will be stored securely and confidentially and will be revised annually. Currently, the list for St Dunstan's includes the Parish Priest (who  
  
1. details are held by the Bishop), all Sunday School leaders, Safeguarding representative, the Secretary and the Servers. We recommend that the Safeguarding representative of the PCC be responsible for ensuring the declarations of criminal offence forms for church groups are completed, collected and stored securely.

1. In any group there will be two leaders, small groups with one leader may meet co-jointly in a large room, or in adjoining rooms with an open door between them. If a child or young person is interviewed alone, there should also be another adult within sight and hearing. At St Dunstan's this will include Confirmation classes.
  
1. Any group whether all male/all female/mixed gender, should normally have at least one male and female leader, except where the group meeting has already an established protection policy.
  
1. No person under the age of 18 years shall be left in charge of any children of any age.
  
1. No child or group of children under the age of 16 years should be left unattended at any time.
  
1. A register of children attending any activity should be kept, this to include name, address and next of kin.
  
1. Leaders of all occasional groups to ensure that all children attending do so with parental consent.
  
1. There will be an attachment added to the booking form for hiring church premises to outline the Child Protection Policy.

### **APPOINTING VOLUNTEERS**

All new volunteers will complete an application form, with two references taken up prior to interview by a group comprising of the Parish Priest, Safeguarding representative (an enhanced DBS check) and one other person nominated by the PCC.

### **TAKING CHILDREN OFF THE PREMISES**

If children are to be taken off the premises for any reason, written permission shall be obtained from the parents or people with parental responsibility. Parents should always

be informed if their children are to be transported in a car or other vehicle and there should be two adults in a car.

A list of names, addresses and next of kin (or person responsible for the child at the time of the outing) of all children, young people and leaders who are away from church premises, must be available with an appropriate person from the relevant organisation.

Group leaders accompanying children should also have a copy of this list.

When a group of children or young people are out or away there should always be a known contact person in the parish who is available at a telephone number in case of emergencies.

### **PARISH SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE**

A Safeguarding representative shall be appointed. The role of the representative will be:

- To ensure that the Parish Child Protection Policy is implemented.
- To be a contact for advice reference any child protection concerns.
- To liaise with Diocesan Child Protection Advisors.