

ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT FOR APCM, Sunday, 18th May 2025

Over the past few years, the Church of England has issued much clearer and more detailed expectations for parishes with regard to safeguarding. We also now receive more support and guidance from York Diocese, such as a monthly safeguarding news bulletin and an annual Safeguarding Week in the autumn with a range of events. It has sometimes felt as though, as soon as we have adopted a new policy or increased the safeguarding training we ask people to do for various roles, the guidance has moved on again! We are now using a Church of England national safeguarding tool called The Dashboard to help us keep up to date and ensure that the required safeguarding measures are all in place. The Dashboard shows us what we should be doing, alerts us if we need to take action to renew or review any aspect of safeguarding and produces a Safeguarding Action Plan to inform the PCC.

The House of Bishops guidance for this report is that the PCC should state whether St. Edward's is complying with the code of practice issued by the House of Bishops as far as safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is concerned. It is confirmed that the PCC is complying with the requirements imposed by the code under Section 5A of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, which assigns the following responsibilities to the PCC:

1. Adopt the House of Bishops' 'Promoting a Safer Church: Safeguarding Policy and Statement'. This policy is in place. It can be viewed on the Safeguarding section of our website or on noticeboards in church and in the cafe.
2. Appoint at least one appropriately experienced Parish Safeguarding Officer. My working life was divided between teaching and working as a Probation Officer. I have completed all the Church of England training modules identified for this role.
3. Safely recruit, support and train all church officers who work with children and vulnerable adults, including all volunteers. Our recruitment process includes, but is not limited to, DBS checks, the completion of a Confidential Declaration Form and the taking up of references where appropriate. All leaders and helpers with activities for children and young people are now required to complete the Basic and Foundation safeguarding training modules during their induction period. As all members of the PCC are trustees of a charity that works with children, young people and vulnerable adults, they are DBS checked and need to complete the above-mentioned safeguarding training, plus the Awareness of Domestic Abuse module. All safeguarding checks and training are currently up-to-date.
4. Display appropriate information, such as contact details for designated safeguarding officers, information about the parish's safeguarding policy, contact details for specialist support organisations and guidance on how to report concerns. These can all be found on noticeboards and other places around the buildings, or on St Edward's website which includes a copy of the Parish Safeguarding Handbook.
5. Review and report progress regularly. Safeguarding is a standing item at every PCC meeting, which at some meetings takes the form of training or a detailed discussion of an area of safeguarding.
6. Create a respectful environment within which safeguarding concerns can be raised. This is at the very heart of safeguarding and, in my view, there will always be more to do as we strive to achieve and maintain this aim. There will never be room for complacency.

I would like to thank the many people who have played their part in supporting safeguarding at St. Edward's over the past year, with special thanks to Richard Carew, Helen Cross and the PCC.

Pat Wilson
Parish Safeguarding Officer
22nd April 2025