



St Giles' Church, Exhall

# Responding to Safeguarding Allegations and Concerns

**This procedure must be followed by all church officers and is strongly recommended for all other church members.**

There are many situations whereby a member of the church may have concerns or be made aware of concerns regarding a child, young person or adult. Allegations/concerns do not only relate to someone at church. It can be elsewhere (house, work, school). This could also be a current situation or something that happened in the past, do not dismiss it.

## Situations

- A child, young person or adult discloses abuse;
- Someone discloses concern for a child, young person or adult;
- Someone notices signs of potential abuse of a child, young person or adult;
- A child, young person or adult makes a disclosure about their own behaviour towards another child, young person or adult;
- Someone witnesses concerning behaviour during a church activity or during a home visit.

## Listen carefully to what is being said

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Explain that information will need to be shared with the appropriate people.
- Only use open questions that begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. These cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to report what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- At the end, check that you have understood everything correctly.
- Check out what the person hopes to result from the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.

## When speaking with a child, young person or adult

- Do NOT make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information).
- Do NOT lead the child, young person or adult.
- Do NOT make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Do NOT investigate.
- Do NOT contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do NOT carry out a physical or medical examination.
- Do NOT share with anyone other than appointed/elected officers on behalf of the church to a post or role whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid.

## Keeping records

The person making the allegation or sharing their concerns need to be listened to and brief notes made during the conversation. All notes need to be written up in full as soon as possible. You must not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or other statutory authorities.

- Record the date, time, place and how the person appeared to you. If possible, try to record the actual words used, (verbatim) including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.

- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

## Report promptly

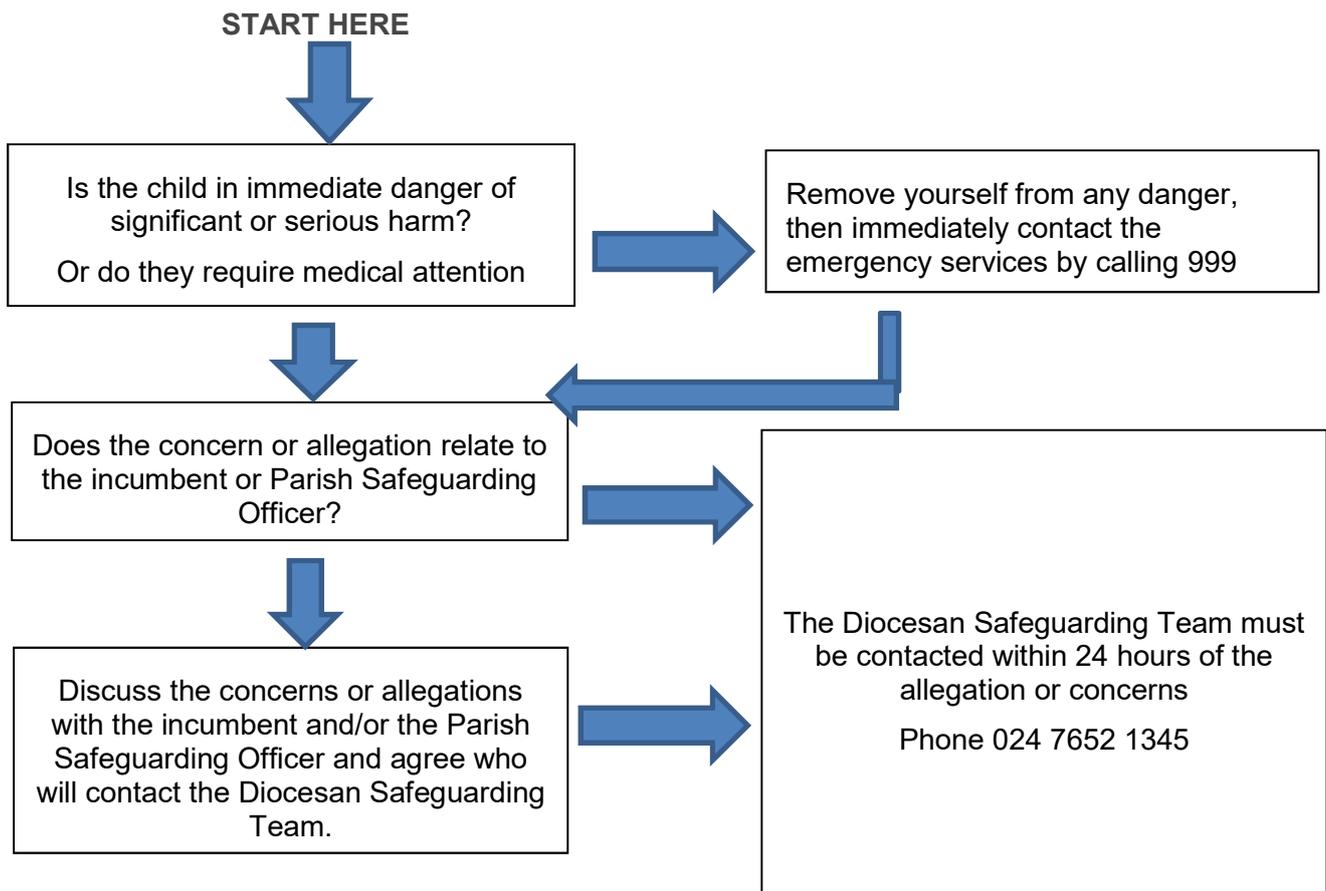
## Never do nothing

Any allegations/concerns need to be reported in the first instance to the leader of the group/activity with the exception that the allegation/concern is about or involves the group/activity leader. These allegations/concerns need to then be reported as soon as possible by the group/activity leader to either the incumbent Rev Gail Phillip on [024 7767 7461](tel:02477677461) or to the Parish Safeguarding Officer Muriel Ganley on [079 8847 7659](tel:07988477659). This should be done as soon as the allegations/concerns have been disclosed. If it has not been possible to contact the named people above within 12 hours of the allegation/concern or the allegation/concern relates to the incumbent or Parish Safeguarding Officer please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on [024 7652 1345](tel:02476521345).

When contact has been made with either the incumbent Rev Gail Phillip or the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Muriel Ganley they will report the allegation/concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on [024 7652 1345](tel:02476521345). They must report this within 24 hours.

If contact is needed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team outside of office hours contact can be made with the Diocesan Safeguarding on [024 7652 1345](tel:02476521345) in the first instance or alternatively contact the Emergency Duty Team on [024 7683 2222](tel:02476832222) for Coventry and [01926 886 922](tel:01926886922) for Warwickshire or the police on [999](tel:999).

### Always follow the procedure below



This procedure should be distributed to all group/activity leaders and all church officers. If there are any changes to group/activity leaders, new group/activity leaders or changes in church officers, the Parish Safeguarding Officer Muriel Ganley, should be informed either by the incumbent or the Parish Administrator. The Parish Administrator or the incumbent will also be responsible for distributing this procedure to them.