The following policy was agreed at the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting held on Monday 22nd January 2024

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

* Promoting a safer environment and culture.
* Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
* Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
* Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
* Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
* Responding to those that may pose a present risk to others.

The Parish will:

* Create a safe and caring place for all.
* Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
* Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
* Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
* Display in church premises and on the front page of the parish website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
* Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
* Take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying the Diocesan Safeguarding Team and statutory agencies immediately.
* Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
* Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
* Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
* Inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team if we use an alternative DBS Umbrella Body to APCS and if we receive any DBS Disclosures that are not clear.
* Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

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: Mrs Jan Rimmer safeguarding@dorchester-abbey.org.uk as the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Minister: Rev’d Jane Willis.. agreed at PCC meeting 22nd January 2024

Churchwardens : Malcolm Lucas and Catherine Paul agreed 22nd January 2024

**Appendix A - The Code of Safer Working Practice**

*The Code of Safer Working Practice expresses our commitment to demonstrating God’s love by placing the highest priority on the safety of those to whom we minister. It sets out what we expect from anyone who ministers in our church, in both paid or voluntary roles, and is one of the ways we ensure high standards of safeguarding in all we do.*

**Upholding the Code**

*All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Parish Safeguarding Officer. Staff and volunteers who breach this code may be subject to disciplinary procedures or asked to leave their role. Serious breaches may also result in a referral made to the relevant statutory agency.*

**All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must:**

• Treat all individuals with respect and dignity;

• Respect people’s rights to personal privacy;

• Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful;

• Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern;

• Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or the Parish Safeguarding Officer. All written records should be signed and dated;

• Obtain written consent for any photographs or videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.

**In addition, those working with children and young people must:**

• Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult;

• Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet;

• Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around;

• Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and of its nature before the activity takes place.

**All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not:**

• Use any form of physical punishment;

• Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual;

• Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group;

• Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying;

• Show favouritism to any one individual or group;

• Allow an individual to involve them in excessive attention seeking;

• Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person;

• Allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group;

• Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media;

• Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

**In addition, for children and young people, must not:**

• Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity);

• Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people;

• Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

**Acceptable Touch**

Sympathetic attention, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, can be wholly appropriate. However, abusers can use touch that appears safe to ‘normalise’ physical contact which then becomes abusive. As a general rule, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility and those with whom they are working or volunteering should be initiated by the person themselves, and kept to the minimum. In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

• Ask permission before you touch someone;

• Allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention);

• Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive;

• Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors;

• Touch should be in response to a person’s needs and not related to the worker’s needs. Touch should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.

**Appendix B – Safeguarding Concern Flowcharts**

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