

# **SECTION 1**

## **CREATING A SAFE SPACE**

- Why?
- What does a 'Safe Church' look like?
- How can we create a Safe Space?

## **CREATING A SAFE SPACE: WHY?**

### **We agree that all people have the right to:**

- live in a safe secure, stable and loving environment
- be protected from all forms of harm, including abuse and exploitation
- have a voice, and to be heard
- be valued and respected
- be treated as a unique individual with particular needs and particular gifts.

It is the responsibility of the whole church to work together to create a **SAFE SPACE** for all.

## **WHAT DOES A 'SAFE CHURCH' LOOK LIKE ?**

A 'Safe Church 'will include the following general four areas, properly assessed and monitored. It will also include appropriate awareness of particular issues because of the nature of the work and the context.

### **People**

- Recruited only after references have been taken up and suitability ascertained;
- Working in teams, with support and supervision;
- Have a clear "role description" or role so they and others know what it is they are doing.

### **Place**

- A risk assessment to make sure the premises are suitable and safe for the planned activity
- Insurance and safety certificates in place (fire, electrics, etc.);
- Review of the suitability of the building for the purpose ( annually)

## **Practice**

- Risk assessment for activities;
- Appropriate number of leaders and helpers, with suitable training;
- Clear sense of what the work / task requires from all involved;
- Regular meetings to review what is happening, how things are done and to update on training, not least in response to potential emergencies;
- Accurate record keeping of attendance and incidents;
- Good communication.

## **Procedures**

- Written good practice guidelines;
- Regular review of policies;
- Clear understanding of confidentiality and acceptable behaviour.

All working with children or adults at risk must know what to do in case of allegations, disclosure,, or suspicions of abuse or neglect of whatever kind.

## **Leadership Support**

- Ensuring that ministers, lay or ordained, are supported and resourced.

## **A Safeguarding Policy**

## **HOW CAN WE CREATE A 'SAFE SPACE'?**

### **The Diocese will:**

- Make available required or appropriate training for clergy, staff and volunteers
- Provide guidelines to for parishes in proper recruitment practices so those who are actively seeking to exploit or abuse vulnerable people are deterred.
- Provide expertise and / or links to expertise for situations when parishes have problems, concerns or difficulties.
- Work to promote a common culture across the diocese in which the well-being of all, the protection of those at risk and good practices which make for safe community are implemented.
- Ensure proper confidentiality and information sharing related to the protection of adults, including those who may be at risk and the perpetrators of abuse, in a multi-agency context are maintained through agreed protocols
- Provide Diocesan Safe-guarding Policies which are in line with National Church of England policies, regularly revised and updated.

### **Clergy, staff and volunteers from Churches are expected to:**

- Undergo all training required of their role, not least in the areas of Safeguarding
- Follow and work by the Diocesan policies and guidelines in their area of work
- Ensure that their actions are not abusive or put themselves at unnecessary risk of allegations of misconduct
- Respond promptly to allegations or disclosures received of abuse or misconduct, by contacting the Police or Social Services in an emergency or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

### **Parishes are required to**

- Adopt, work by and review the Diocesan Parish policy , updating as required
- Report annually on their compliance and any issues

- Be pro-active in making the church building and other buildings as accessible as possible and safe for all users
- Recruit according to the guidelines
- Provide proper supervision, training and accountability for all working with children and / or adults at risk not least on what to do in the case of allegations or disclosures of abuse or suspected abuse
- Ensure other organisations using their premises have similar policies or will agree to work within the diocesan policies.

Allegations of abuse and suspected abuse **MUST** be reported to the Police or Social Services in an emergency or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.