

Vine Church Wynyard Safeguarding Policy

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Vine Church Wynyard Safeguarding Policy

*The following policy was agreed at the Board of Trustees meeting held on **27th October 2025** and will be reviewed **annually**.*

Each team member, both employees and volunteers, will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines. It is a condition of employment that team members will abide by this policy and failure to do so can result in disciplinary proceedings.

In Case of Immediate Risk

Notwithstanding the policy statement outlined below, anyone should feel able, if a child or vulnerable adult is under immediate risk, to contact either the police or local social services. Where possible consent should be given by the child's parents or the vulnerable adult, unless it is considered that seeking consent will increase the risk of harm.

Police: 999 (if an emergency) or 101

Hartlepool Social Services: **Adult:** 01429 523390 **Children:** 01429 284284
Emergency Duty Team: 01642 524552

Stockton Social Services: **Adult:** 01642 527764 **Children:** 01642 130080
Emergency Duty Team: 01642 524552

Further resources can be found at the end of this policy.

Safeguarding Contacts



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Purpose

The Leadership Team and Board of Trustees of Vine Church Wynyard recognise their responsibility to safeguarding as part of the church's call from God to care for people. The purpose of this policy is to promote a safe environment and culture for all: children, young people, and adults (including adults at risk). Vine Church safeguarding Policy has been written to reflect the guidance set out by HM Government's 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2023).

This Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with Vine Church Wynyard's other policies and governance documents, and with the following policies which have been formally adopted by the Board of Trustees: the Church of England's 'Promoting a Safer Church' and 'Responding Well to Domestic Abuse' documents, the Parish Safeguarding Handbook, and the Diocese of Durham's Safeguarding Policy.

The connection with Wynyard Primary School is also significant: activities which take place involving the school during school hours (i.e. those timetabled by the school) will be subject to the Wynyard Primary School Safeguarding Policy, and all other activities will be subject to this policy.

Our Commitments

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy, 'Promoting a Safer Church', the Leadership Team and Board of Trustees of Vine Church Wynyard commit to:

- Promote a safer environment and culture
- Take a child centred approach; by seeing and speaking to the child, listening to what they say, observe their behaviour and take their views seriously.
- Safely recruit and support all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and adults at risk within the church
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Care pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Respond to those that may pose a present risk to others
- Maintain appropriate insurance, health and safety policies and risk assessments
- Review safeguarding practice at least annually

The church will:

- Strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse and that create nurturing, caring conditions for children, young people and adults at risk. This is the responsibility of all who work and volunteer in the church, and particularly those who have regular contact with children, young people and adults at risk.
- Have a named Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO) to work with the Leadership Team and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults in accordance with the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management Guidance (2021).
- Train and support volunteers and employees to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse, adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge abuse of power. This will be done by arranging consistent and accessible safeguarding training. It will be a requirement of those who work or volunteer with these groups to undergo safeguarding training appropriate to the role they undertake.

- Display on the church website, and in any future church-owned premises, the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse, and take steps to protect children and adults when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following House of Bishops guidance, including notifying both the CSO and DSA and statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Care pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons. The Leadership Team and Board of Trustees of Vine Church Wynyard, in exercising their responsibilities to suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations of abuse, will endeavour to respect the rights under criminal, civil and (where appropriate) ecclesiastical law of any accused. A legal presumption of innocence will be maintained during the statutory and (where appropriate) Church inquiry process.
- 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. This will be done, where appropriate, in conjunction with police, probation and the DSA, and aim to mitigate any identified risks according to a safeguarding agreement.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the church.
- Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed regularly.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

Training

All church officers must complete the CofE safeguarding modules appropriate to their role and refresh these every 3 years as a minimum. The CSO maintains the training log on the Parish Dashboard.

Minimum training by role:

- All church officers: Basic Awareness
- Those working with children/adults: Foundation
- Leaders/ministry leads, Trustees, CSO, Clergy: Leadership, Awareness of Domestic Abuse
- Recruiters (involved in appointments/DBS): Safer Recruitment & People Management

Definitions

Child: Anyone under 18 years old.

Adult at risk: An adult with care and support needs who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves because of those needs (Care Act 2014).

Examples of types of abuse:

(This list is not exhaustive)

- Physical; Emotional; Neglect; Sexual (including online and non-contact)
- Domestic abuse (including coercive control and economic/financial abuse)
- Spiritual abuse / abuse of power in a faith context
- Exploitation (criminal/sexual), grooming, modern slavery
- Discriminatory/hate incidents, organisational abuse
- Online harms including image sharing, live streaming, and harmful contacts

Responding to Concerns & Immediate Risk (Children & Adults)

If someone is at **immediate risk of harm**, call **999**. You do not need permission to make an emergency referral.

Upon receiving a concern or disclosure:

1. **Listen** carefully; do not promise confidentiality
2. **Reassure** the person; avoid leading questions
3. **Record** the facts verbatim (who/what/where/when); sign/date your record
4. **Report** to the Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO) the same day. If the concern involves a **church officer**, please contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA).
5. **Refer** to statutory services as needed - the CSO/DSA will advise on this
6. **Do not** investigate or contact the subject of the concern yourself

If the concern or disclosure arises out-of-hours, contact police or the Local Authority Emergency Duty Team, and then inform the CSO/DSA at the earliest opportunity.

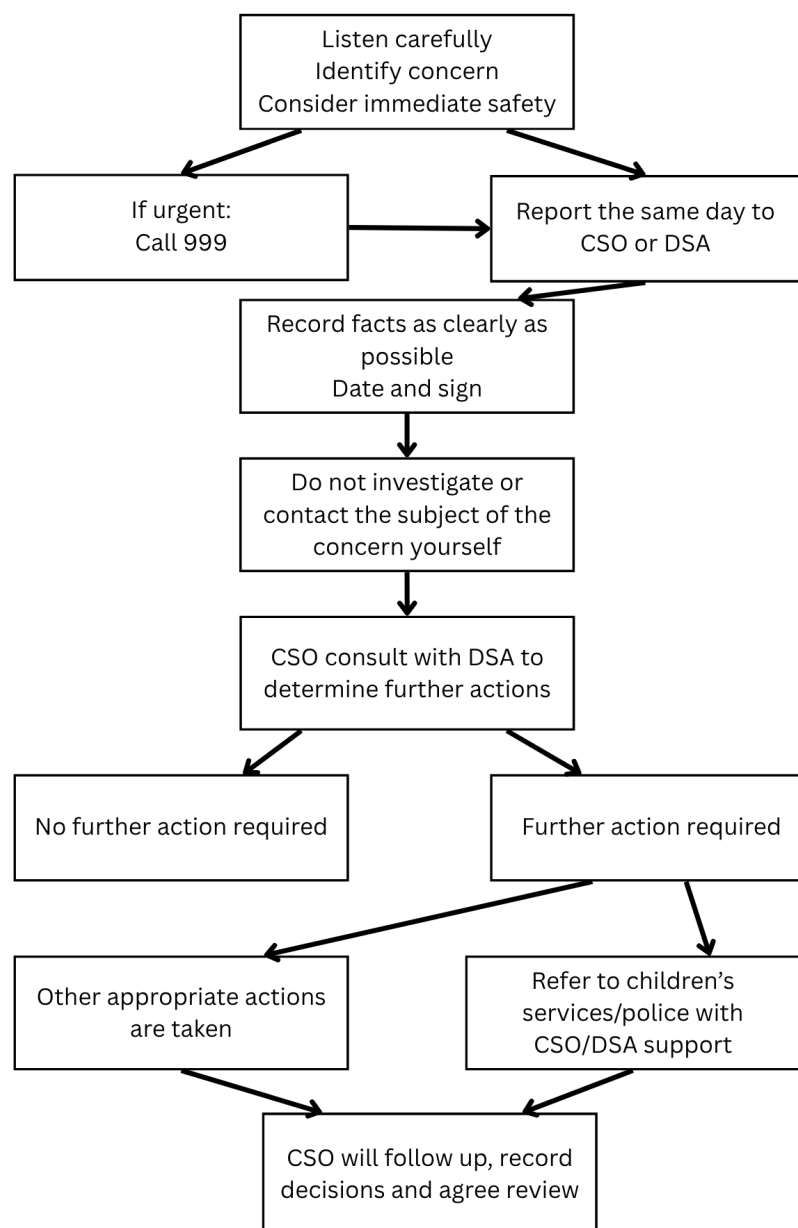
Adult Disclosures and Confidentiality

When an adult makes a disclosure, privacy should be respected and the adult's consent should be sought before sharing information. However, confidentiality cannot be promised. Information may be shared without consent where it is necessary and proportionate to:

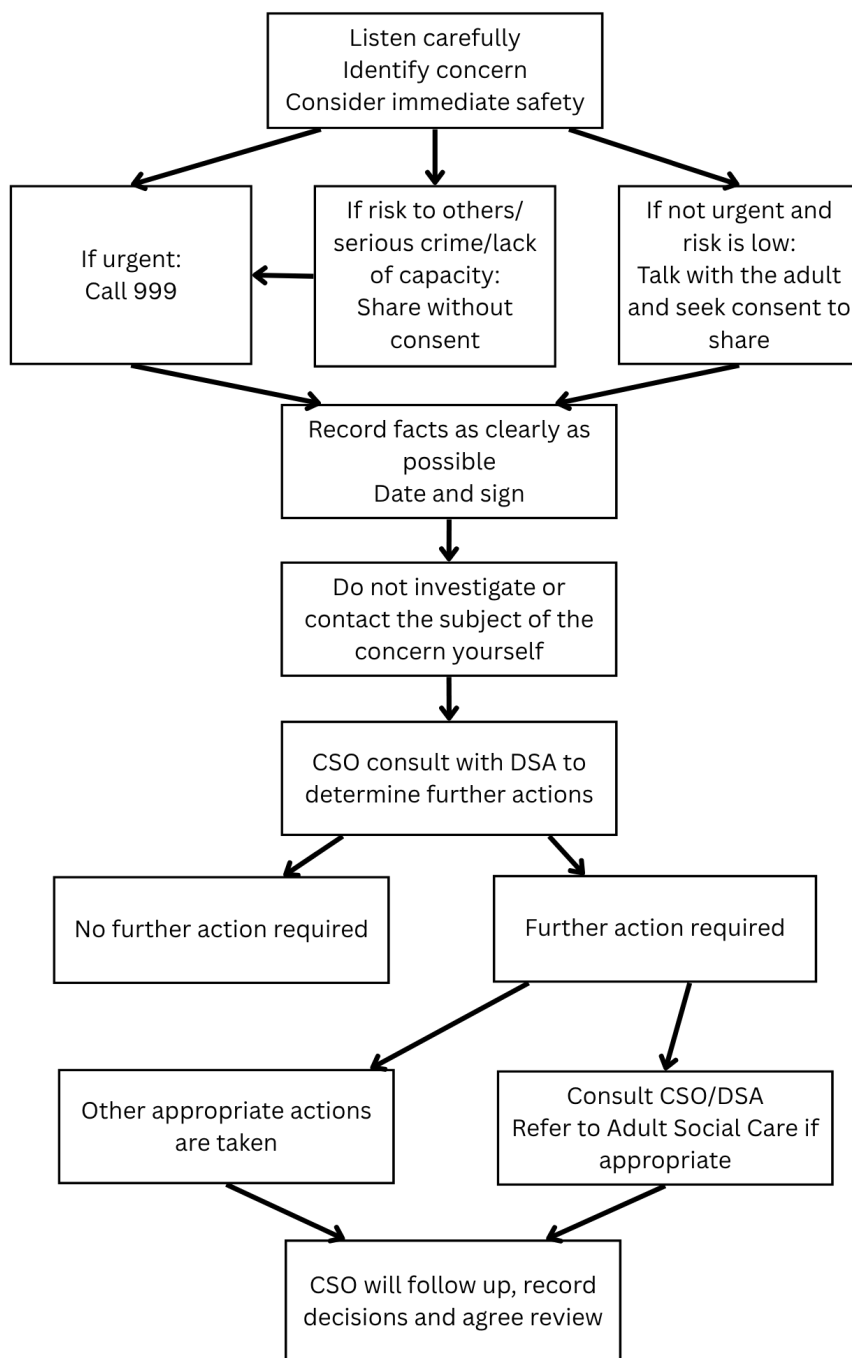
- Protect a child or another adult from risk of significant harm;
- Protect the vital interests of any person (e.g., immediate or life-threatening risk, medical emergency);
- Prevent or detect serious crime;
- Fulfil a legal duty; or
- When the adult lacks capacity to decide about sharing, in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and their best interests.

Any sharing will follow UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018 principles (minimum necessary, need-to-know), with records kept regarding what is shared, with whom, and why, and the decision will be explained to the adult wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Child Reporting Flowchart



Adult Reporting Flowchart



Template Disclosure Recording Form

Your name/role:

Date/time of incident or disclosure:

Person(s) concerned:

What happened / what was said (verbatim where possible):

Location & witnesses:

Immediate action taken:

Who informed and when (CSO/DSA/statutory):

Referral reference/incident number:

Decision & rationale:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Further Resources

Full copies of the Church of England, Diocese of Durham safeguarding policy and Safer Recruitment policy can be found online: <http://durhamdiocese.org/safeguarding-abuse-concerns/>

Helplines for Further Support:

NSPCC	For adults concerned about a child	0808 800 5000
ChildLine	For children and young people	0800 1111
Hourglass (was Action on Elder Abuse)		0808 808 8141
24hr National Domestic Violence Helpline		0808 2000 247
NAPAC	Offer support to adult survivors of childhood abuse	0808 801 0331
Stop It Now	Preventing child sexual abuse	0808 1000 900
Cruse	Bereavement helpline	0808 808 1677
The Survivors Trust	Rape and sexual abuse support	0808 801 0818
LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline		0800 999 542
Men's Advice Line	Domestic Abuse helpline	0808 801 0327
Age UK Advice Line		0800 678 1602
Samaritans	If you are struggling to cope and need someone to talk to	116 123

Websites for Further Support:

www.nspcc.org.uk	www.spiritualabuse.com
www.womensaid.org.uk	www.modernslavery.co.uk
www.restoringrelationships.org	www.thesurvivorstrust.org
www.stopitnow.org.uk	
www.scie.org.uk	
www.ceop.police.uk	
www.wearehourglass.org/action-elder-abuse-now-hourglass	
www.ageuk.org.uk	
www.barnardos.org.uk	