**Holy Trinity Tewkesbury Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

**Safeguarding Report - April 2025**

Author: Duncan de Gruchy, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)

Safeguarding continues to be a key priority in the life of Holy Trinity Tewkesbury. Together with Gloucester Diocese, we are committed to providing training, advice, guidance and support to reduce risk and improve the physical, mental and spiritual outcomes of those we serve.

Holy Trinity continues to have 3 Safeguarding Officers as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Name*** | ***Role*** | ***Responsible for*** |
| Duncan de Gruchy | PSO | Adults, Children & Young People |
| Liz Williams | Safeguarding Officer | Adults |
| Liz Walker | Safeguarding Officer | Children & Young People |

Key points to note since the last ACPCM Safeguarding Report (April 2024) include:

**Safeguarding Sunday**

* Safeguarding Sunday! It was really exciting to deliver our first Safeguarding Sunday – a big ‘thank you’ to Sam Williams for speaking, but to all others involved in its preparation. Feeback was positive, and it was encouraging to compare our commitment to this to other churches involved in this initiative.

**Safeguarding Reports**

* Over the year, volunteers have continued to raise safeguarding concerns – the majority concerning vulnerable adults. Our monitoring has identified ongoing concerns and we are escalating these (through referrals to Adult Social Care) to help ensure appropriate support is available to those concerned.
* All written (handwritten, typed & email documents) are stored in a secure folder on the church’s One Drive cloud. This has limited access to ensure privacy and confidentiality are maintained for individuals and families involved.
* Chronologies (ie ongoing records of reports, actions and progress) have been created as necessary and have helped to identify if and when the threshold of need has been met to escalate our concerns to either the Diocese or Adult Social care as appropriate.
* The Diocese have records of all our concerns at this level.
* Once again, the concerns raised illustrate how the culture of safeguarding, and people’s vigilance is improving all the time – THANK YOU everyone for all you do to keep our children, young people and vulnerable adults safe.

**Policies**

* Policies – both Safeguarding Policies (ie Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy, and Adults at Risk Policy) have been updated with minor changes as follows:
  + *Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy:*
    - Update to Appendix 3 (Chronology of Reporting Concerns form)
  + *Adults at Risk Policy:*
    - Include references to Appendix 3 in Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy
* Please can I propose that both these policies are approved and adopted at the meeting. Then to be published on our church website.

**Safeguarding Action Plan**

* No significant progress has been made towards updating this dashboard.

**National Safeguarding Standards**

* Last year I reported that The Church of England’s National Safeguarding Team have published a set of 5 National Safeguarding Standards. Over the year, at PCC level, we looked at standards 2 & 4:
  + ***Prevention****: We have discussed Safer Recruitment, Lone Working, Risk Assessments and Training as part of this standard and are satisfied this area is well addressed.*
  + ***Victims and Survivors:****We have discussed how as a church we respond to disclosures, and their subsequent support. We identified many ways support is provided and have put posters to sign post where and how this can be accessed.*
* This year we plan to look at standards 1 & 3:
  + ***Culture, Leadership and Capacity****: Church bodies have safe and healthy cultures, effective leadership, resourcing and scrutiny arrangements necessary to deliver high-quality safeguarding practices and outcomes.*
  + ***Recognising, Assessing and Managing Risk****: Risk assessments, safety plans and associated processes are of a high quality and result in positive outcomes. The assessment and management of risk is underpinned by effective partnership working.*

**Training & DBS**

* Training has been delivered to 2 tranches of volunteers (in July 24 and January 25) and is reportedly well received using new resources from the Diocese.
* To keep me abreast of safeguarding issues, I have accessed some PSO training/support via a couple of ‘drop-in’ sessions provided by the Diocese.
* The bulk of volunteers requiring DBS certificates and Safeguarding Training have received this meaning our compliance is in better shape than it was this time last year! Thank you especially to Helen Hart for her relentless work on this.
* ‘*Is it ok to have untrained and unchecked volunteers caring for our children, young people and vulnerable adults*?’ If you volunteer and answered ‘*no’*, please can I urge you to check you have up-to-date training and DBS checks appropriate to your role.

**Actions moving forward**

* Develop Social Media Use Policy – including a focus on how young people with some leadership responsibility manage their existing social media communications with other young people.
* Continue to Parish Safeguarding Dashboard and create an action plan from any issues identified – especially relevant training for all groups and developing a list of all church activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults.
* In line with the Safeguarding Policy, ensure all staff and volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults have completed the necessary training within the last 3 years.