



# Safeguarding Complaints Policy

## All Saints' Church, Walsoken

Please refer to Document S&S\_Doc\_001 for all Safeguarding and Social requirements.

### Specific Policy

This Safeguarding & Social (S&S) sub-policy controls complaints concerning safeguarding policies and procedures at church.

#### What are Safeguarding Complaints

A complaint can be made, verbally or in writing, when someone feels the safeguarding policies of the PCC of All Saints' Church, Walsoken, have not been followed correctly or they have been implemented unfairly. Disagreement with the professional decisions taken by those appointed by the PCC is not by itself grounds for a complaint. If someone who is a volunteer, authorised by the PCC, wishes to make a complaint against the way the PCC's safeguarding policies and procedures have been followed, they should follow the PCC's general complaints policy.

**This complaints procedure must not be used when someone is being harmed**

When there is a concern or an allegation that a child or vulnerable adult has been harmed or is being harmed or is at risk of harm and/or when there is a concern or an allegation that an adult or a child may have caused harm to another child or adult who may be vulnerable. This must be reported in accordance with the parish's safeguarding policy and procedures.

Report abuse to your Parish Safeguarding Officer or the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser (or in an emergency the police on 101 or 999).

#### Complaints Against Ministers

This complaints procedure cannot be used for complaints against ministers. A complaint against a member of clergy should be addressed to the archdeacon or the Bishop of Ely. A complaint against a Reader or Lay Minister must initially be addressed to the incumbent.

### Reference Documents

Valuing All God's Children' 2019 (Church of England).

Promoting a Safer Church (2017)

Safeguarding (Code of Practice) Measure 2021

The Church of England National Safeguarding Standards and Quality Assurance Framework

### Procedure

#### Managing Complaints

Complaints concerning safeguarding policies and procedures at church will be dealt with by the churchwardens who will:

- 1) Respond promptly to the person raising the matter.
- 2) Listen carefully to the issues of concern.
- 3) Impartially examine the issues to ensure fairness to all.
- 4) Rigorously explore ways the issues can be resolved.
- 5) Accurately and sensitively feed back to the person who raised the issues.

#### Making a complaint

A person who wishes to make a complaint concerning safeguarding policies and procedures at church should...

##### *Firstly...*

Talk to the person or group concerned, whenever possible, explaining what the issues are and what they would like to see happen to resolve them. This should be done at the earliest opportunity.

# Safeguarding Complaints Policy

## All Saints' Church – Walsoken

### ***Then....***

If the complaint can't be resolved through discussion with the person or group concerned, they should speak or write to a churchwarden. This must be done within a reasonable period of the issue arising.

The church warden will have a conversation with the person and listen to their concerns and what they would like to happen to resolve the issue.

The church warden will then speak to the person or group the complaint is about (and anyone else who may have information to help them consider the complaint) and listen to their response.

Within a reasonable period, after considering all the information, the churchwarden will decide and inform both the person who has made the complaint and the person or group against whom the complaint has been made

### ***If this decision does not resolve the issue ....***

Within a reasonable period, the person bringing the complaint can ask for their concerns to be reviewed by the standing committee.

The standing committee will consider all the information gathered so far. They may also have conversations with any of the persons involved in the complaint, and any other person who may have information relevant to the concerns, where this would assist them in reaching a decision.

Within a reasonable period, after considering all the information, the standing committee will decide and inform the person who has made the complaint and the person or group against whom the complaint has been made. Their decision will be final.

### ***External***

If, despite all stages of this procedure having been followed, the person making the complaint remains dissatisfied, they may choose to escalate their concerns to an archdeacon or an independent or statutory agency as appropriate.

If the complaint refers to a breach of the PCCs responsibilities as Charity Trustees, they may refer their concerns to the Charity Commission.

If they believe that the PCC or any of the volunteers they have appointed has committed a criminal offence they should report this to the police.

## **Forms**

None

## **Diagrams**

None

## **Appendices**

None