



Safeguarding Report for AGM 28th April 2021

Safeguarding Officer:

Sarah Emmanuel is the Safeguarding Officer for the Point Church. Sarah has been a registered qualified Social Worker since 2003 with experience working in child protection teams since this time, currently managing a group within the Family Support and Protection Team in West Sussex.

The role of the Safeguarding Officer is to be the named person volunteers and church members would report any disclosures or child protection concerns to. If required the Safeguarding Officer will refer on any disclosures or child protection concerns to the Local Authority in which the child lives.

This role is regularly communicated within the church to ensure church members are aware of this role and who they should approach with any concerns. Information of the safeguarding officer and team can be found on the website and the information point.

Safeguarding Team:

The Safeguarding Team consists of Sarah Emmanuel (Safeguarding Officer), Will Kemp (Vicar), John Naude (Associate Vicar), Simon Shorey (Curate) Michael Holt (Youth Pastor), Liz Styles (Children's Pastor), Ellie Zaragoza (PA to Vicar) and Katy Trigg (Trustee responsible for Safeguarding). The team met on 31st March 2021 to review the safeguarding policies, training and continue to meet annually.

Importance of Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, protecting them from abuse or maltreatment and preventing harm to their health or development.

Proverbs 31v 8 says 'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.'

As a church we want to ensure that the children and vulnerable adults in our community are protected and recognise the calling and duty to love and care for the vulnerable and marginalised and protect all from abuse.

At the Point we want to ensure we have clear procedures in place and a culture where ensuring children are safe is a key priority and taken seriously. We want to ensure we are a church where people are able to speak out about any concerns they have and any concerns are dealt with in a professional manner, with no covering up or matters being brushed under the carpet.

We are aware that the wider church has failed in this area with regards to historic abuse and where church leaders have abused their positions of authority and exploited church members and this highlights the importance of having clear policies and procedures with regards to safeguarding.

Volunteers/DBS checks:

All youth and children's volunteers are overseen by our staff youth pastor, Michael Holt, and children's pastor, Liz Styles, who both have enhanced DBS clearance.

All volunteers working with the youth and kids team have a DBS check prior to undertaking this role and an induction pack detailing all the policies and procedures. DBS checks are renewed every five years.

Over the last 12 months our kids ministry for those age 0-11 years has been very different. Online sessions, at home packs and zoom events have meant that less of the team have been involved than normal.

Similarly with the youth ministry a lot of the sessions have taken place via zoom and there has been less face to face sessions.

All team members, trustees, safeguarding team have DBS checks and these updated every five years.

In addition to those who have a current DBS working within a team there are other members within the congregation who have DBS checks from having been on a mission trip for example but not in a current role but who could be called upon should there be team shortage.

Training:

Chichester Diocese have agreed that Sarah Emmanuel can run the Foundation Training (formally C1)

which is mandatory for volunteers, staff and trustees to attend. These are run twice per year.

There has been no training run during the pandemic however online training was available to access and it was felt that sessions should take place nearer to when face to face meetings are due to resume in order for the training to be the most meaningful and be put into practice.

Two training sessions have been set for Wednesday 16th June and Thursday 8th July 7:45pm.

In addition the diocese also now offer the Basic Awareness (C0) online training which all new staff and volunteers undertake.

It is agreed that volunteers will be required to attend training every two years. The diocese require training to take place every three years but at the point we made the decision for our volunteers to attend every two years so that training is refreshed more regularly but also to allow a little leeway where people haven't been able to attend but can still remain on team.

In addition all members of the safeguarding team and clergy are required to attend Safeguarding Leadership training (formally C2).

Will, John, Simon, Michael, Liz and Katy have all undertaken this training and I have booked for my renewal course on 15th May 2021.

'Keep Safe':

As well as communicating about the role of the Safeguarding Officer as a safeguarding team at The Point we share the view that it is important to be a church that promotes children learning more about what they can do to try to keep themselves safe and promote a message which encourages to speak up, at the same time recognising the challenges and reasons why children might not feel able to.

We have communicated the NSPCC keep safe message the 'PANTS' underwear rule annually over the last few years and continue to do so.

This will next be communicated during the Sunday online service on 16th May 2021.

Disclosures:

Any disclosures made are dealt with and referred on where required. The safeguarding team are made aware of any disclosures made.

Safeguarding Policies:

The Safeguarding team have reviewed Chichester Diocese Safeguarding Policy and completed the mandatory 'Simple Quality Protects'.

Current policies can be viewed on our church website. In line with the new diocesan policy our new website has a link on its home page directly to these policies.

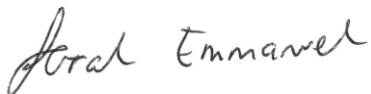
Specific policies are in place regarding work with young people around social networking and texting.

With regards to COVID-19 polices have been updated to include that Zoom or other video chats will not take place on a 1-1 basis between a team/staff member and a young person of the opposite sex and another team member would always be included. With regards to Kids work video calls are taking place via parents' phones.

Conclusion:

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Acting on your concerns or seeking advice is rarely a bad idea. People often question 'What if I'm wrong' but we have to also ask ourselves 'what if I'm right'. We can't assume that someone else has seen what we may have seen or will pass on concerns.

I am always willing to be asked for advice around any concerns or 'niggles' people have and chat things through.



Sarah Emmanuel
Safeguarding Officer
19/04/2021