

## PROCEDURE IN RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE OF ALLEGED ABUSE

The PCC of St Barnabas and St Paul with St Thomas the Martyr, Oxford (hereinafter referred to as The PCC), follows both the national Church of England House of Bishops *Safeguarding Policy*, contained in *Parish Safeguarding Handbook: promoting a safer Church*, which advises to adopt the following action when a disclosure of abuse is made:

### RESPOND – RECORD – REPORT

#### RESPOND

##### WE WILL

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind me taking notes while they talk so we can make sure we capture the information accurately. At the end we will check with them that we have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell our activity leader/ Parish Safeguarding Officer/ DSA and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what we are going to do next.

##### WE WILL NOT

- Make promises that cannot be kept (eg that we won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.

## RECORD

### WE WILL

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Keep all original notes in case they are required by the DSA or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place and actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, but not our interpretations or assumptions.

## REPORT

### WE WILL

- Contact the police if there is immediate danger to a child or adult
- Otherwise report to our activity leader/Parish Safeguarding Officer/incumbent immediately.
- Within 24 hours the Parish Safeguarding Officer/incumbent reports the concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will advise regarding reporting to statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt we will seek advice from Children's/Adult's Social Care or the police.