**The Parish Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Coleshill**

*Standing for Christ* *at the heart of the community - Inspired to share God’s love with everyone*

**The Parish Church of Saint Michael & All Angels, Maxstoke**

Church at the heart of the community – Community at the heart of the church

**Parish policy for**

**RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE**

**We are committed to promoting and supporting environments which:**

* Ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
* Protect those vulnerable to domestic abuse from actual or potential harm.
* Recognise equality amongst people and within relationships.
* Enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to appropriately and consistently.

**We recognise that:**

* All forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the survivor and express an imbalance of power in the relationship.
* All survivors (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
* Domestic abuse can occur in all communities.
* Domestic abuse may be a single incident, but is usually a systematic, repeated pattern which escalates in severity and frequency.
* Domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour.
* Working in partnership with children, adults and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.

**We will endeavour to respond to domestic abuse by:**

**In all our activities –** valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse whilst appreciating the need to ensure distance between the parties and refusing to condone the perpetration or continuation of any form of abuse.

**In our publicity –** raising awareness about other agencies, support services, resources and expertise, through providing information in public to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**When concerns are raised –** ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help and working with the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.

**In our care –** ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse and identifying and outlining the appropriate relationship of those with pastoral care and responsibilities with both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**Guidance as to what to look for if you suspect abuse may be happening.**

It includes all violence and abuse of power within a household between:

• Men & women, married & unmarried, parents to children, children to parents, including elderly parents, children to children and between non related parties

• Physical: Punching. Kicking. Hurting in any physical way

• Psychological: Bullying. Undermining through word and action

• Spiritual: Prevention from Worshiping and following Faith

• Financial: Taking money

• Sexual: Demanding sex and rape

• Emotional: Making a person insecure. Turning friends and family against them, especially children or in other ways isolating them

• Neglect: Depriving a person of food and everyday essentials We feel that any of this behaviour should not be an accepted part of Christian life.

 Where you know, or suspect, that children are at risk from witnessing domestic violence then you are LEGALLY REQUIRED to report it to the police or social services. If both victim & alleged perpetrator are church members or the alleged perpetrator is a church officer, staff or volunteer in any ministry the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor MUST be informed and a record kept by the Parish Safeguarding Officers

**If you have any concerns or need to talk to anyone at any time, please contact:**

**Deborah Leary 07747103429**

**Angela Davies 0121 730 1673**

 **07759726073**

 **Steph Haynes -** Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser

Tel: 0121 426 0407
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