

### **Statement of Aims**

Relating to all ministry with children and young people:

- To enable young people to experience the love of God
- To help young people realise their full potential physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually
- To provide a safe meeting place for young people
- To promote equality of opportunity for all
- To encourage young people to become responsible adults
- To nurture wholesome relationships across ages
- To provide indoor and outdoor leisure activities for young people

### **Additional aims relating to Sunday ministry:**

- To help young people in their Christian discipleship through a programme of learning and thereby to deepen their Christian faith
- To encourage a strong Christian fellowship
- To encourage children and young people to take a full part in the life and worship of St Matthew's

This document covers the ministry of St Matthew's with children and young people conducted on Sundays and throughout the week. Currently, this includes the following groups:

Sundays 11-12.30

Children's Choir Practice Occasional Sundays 12.15-12.45

Fridays 10:30-12

Little Prints Baby and Toddler Group (children 0 – 4 years and their parents / carers), term time only

Children and Serving

We delight in the ability of children to join our serving team at St Matthew's. Children must not be left alone and must always be accompanied by at least two adults from the serving team at any one time.

This policy also covers additional ministry with children and young people undertaken within the church buildings, grounds or further afield carried out under the auspices of the PCC.

Groups hiring church premises for activities with children and young people are required to provide evidence of their own safeguarding policies and/or acceptance of the principles this policy espouses: they will require their own insurance cover.

### **Policy statement**

This PCC adopts the policy statement of the Diocese of Sheffield and will display it prominently in all church premises:

As members of the Church of England we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community, of all ages. It

is the responsibility of each one of us to protect children and young people from physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual abuse, and from neglect.

## **Application of the Policy**

All persons, whether paid or voluntary, working with children and young people under the auspices of St Matthew's PCC will be given a copy of this policy as well as the Guidelines, Practices and Procedures defined in the Diocesan Safeguarding Children dossier and be expected to adhere to them. This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC. The PCC appoints a Safeguarding Officer and informs the administrator at Diocesan Church House of that person's name and contact details.

## **Staffing**

There must be at least two adults present in the meeting space of all the groups listed above. If the group is of mixed sex, it is good practice for there to be a male and a female leader present. If the group is all of one gender, it is good practice for one of the leaders to be of that gender. The PCC adopts the ratios specified in the Children's Act:

Age	Adult Leader : Children
0-2	1 : 3
2-3	1 : 4
3-5	1 : 8
5-8	1 : 8
8+	1 : 8 (first 8 children), then 1 : 12 (additional children)

On no account should an adult be alone with any age group. Staffing ratios should always take account of the need and nature of the group.

## **Insurance**

St Matthew's provides insurance, covering public liability and personal accident, for all groups listed above whose activities have been authorised by the PCC according to the requirements of its insurer, Ecclesiastical Insurance Group.

## **Registration and Parental Consent**

Every group will keep a register (in a fixed leaf, hardbound notebook) of all those attending each session, including leaders. Parental consent forms, including emergency contact details, must be completed for all participants, and must be available to group leaders whenever the group meets. This applies to all groups, whether meeting on church premises or elsewhere. Additional consent forms will be required for special events (eg day trips, residentials, Walsingham pilgrimages).

## **The Voice of the Child and Young Person**

Children and young people should have the opportunity to raise any concerns about any health and safety or protection matters. A notice will be placed on the notice boards in the entrance with the name and contact details of St Matthew's Safeguarding Officer, the Childline telephone number and contact details of any other appropriate independent persons or agencies.

## **Recruitment**

The Parochial Church Council will follow the recruitment process included in the Diocese's Safeguarding Children dossier. References, the Confidential Declaration and a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) via the diocesan system will be obtained. Appointment to any post, paid or voluntary, will not be made until these processes are complete.

## **Safe Working Practice**

All those working with children and young people will follow the Safe Working Practices Guidelines in the Diocesan Safeguarding Children dossier. In Particular St Matthew's is committed to treating all children and young people with dignity and respect, to creating the best possible environment for their nurture and to providing a wholesome example for them to follow.

## **Fire Regulations and Security**

All group leaders should be aware of evacuation procedures in case of fire as well as of fire regulations including the positions of fire extinguishers. They should know who to contact in an emergency relating to the building. Leaders must be vigilant at all times as to who else is in the parts of the building or space occupied by their groups. They must be aware at all times of the whereabouts of the children in their care. Group leaders should have access to a telephone at all times.

## **Food and Hygiene**

If any group is involved in the preparation or selling of food, at least one leader should have completed a food hygiene and food safety course to ensure good practice is followed.

## **First Aid and Accidents**

Each group will have at least one adult present who has attended a basic course on first aid or who is medically trained. A Register of such persons will be maintained by the Churchwardens There should be a properly stocked first aid kit accessible to each group. In the event of any accident, an incident and the accident report form should be completed. This should be kept securely in a marked file. Parents or guardians should also be informed of any accident.

## **Church Premises**

Any organisation booking the use of church premises will be informed of the need to observe the policy via a statement on the Booking Form. They should be expected to confirm in writing that they have a Safeguarding policy and appropriate insurance. Individuals booking church premises for private functions will have the policy drawn to their attention and accept their responsibility for protecting children at that function.

## **Allegations**

If an allegation is received concerning the behaviour of an adult, the Allegations Policy contained in the Diocese's Safeguarding Children dossier will be followed.

## **Concerns About or Reported by a Child**

This parish will follow the Guidelines contained in the Diocese's Safeguarding Children dossier and report the concern to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, or to the Archdeacon of Sheffield.

## **Review**

Leaders of all children and young people's groups will meet to review their work on an annual basis. This should include a review of safeguarding as well as health and safety issues relating to each group. Notification of this meeting should be reported to the PCC. St Matthew's Safeguarding Team will review the parish policy annually and report to the PCC, who will record this review in its minutes. Members of the families group will be included in this Safeguarding Subcommittee.

## **Representation**

It is highly desirable that there is representation from the leadership of the groups listed above on the PCC, ideally from both Sunday and weekday provision.

## **The Parish Nurses**

As Registered Nurses the Parish nurses must follow the Churches Safeguarding policy but also have a responsibility to raise a safeguarding risk with the Local Authority.

## **Training**

Safeguarding training is essential and must be kept up to date. Opportunities offered by the Diocese are shared regularly and a central record of completed training is held by the Safeguarding Team. It is a requirement that all people working with children under the auspices of St Matthew's participate in training either at St Matthew's or within the Diocese.

## **Resourcing**

The PCC is committed to ensuring that adequate financial resources are made available for furthering St Matthew's work with children and young people, and for implementing its safeguarding policy.

## **Policy Approved by the PCC on 17/07/2025**

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If you are concerned for the welfare of a child or young person call:

Call **999** for emergencies

Sheffield Safeguarding Hub (24/7) **0114 273 4855**

NSPCC Childline (National charity) **0800 11 11**