



Safeguarding Allegations Management: Policy and Guidance

- The parish of St Cuthman's, Whitehawk recognise that in all matters that involve allegations that someone has, or may have, caused harm to another person (whether child or adult), the welfare of the alleged victim is paramount and is the primary concern. No other consideration, however legitimate or important, can outweigh this primary responsibility.
- We recognise that all allegations regarding harm to a child or adult must be taken seriously. Unless there are extremely exceptional circumstances we will let a safeguarding specialist know about the allegation.
- The PCC, staff and volunteers of St Cuthman's, Whitehawk recognise that it is not our responsibility to investigate allegations and that it would not be appropriate for us to do so. Our responsibility is to pass allegation on to the person/people who can respond appropriately. Firstly, this will normally involve informing the incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Officer (unless the allegation is about them).
- We will inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Team upon becoming aware of any allegations that someone in our church community has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult. This informing will normally be done by the incumbent or the Parish Safeguarding Officer (unless the allegation is about them).
- If any allegation that a person in position of responsibility for children, whether paid or voluntary, has behaved in such a way that indicates they may present a risk to children, the allegation will be referred by the Diocesan Safeguarding team to the Local Authority Designated Officer. If the alleged behavior is criminal in nature, the police will always be notified and be involved.
- If any allegation that a person in a position of responsibility for adults, whether paid or voluntary, has behaved in a way that indicates they may present a risk to adults, the allegation will be referred by the Diocesan Safeguarding Team to the local Adult Services team manager. If the alleged behaviour is criminal in nature, the police will always be notified and be involved. St Cuthman's, Whitehawk recognise that the issues of consent are more complex with harm to adults and so in each individual case this complexity will be discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
- We understand that human behaviour is complex and any individual can have motives or intentions that are not obviously apparent, even to those who believe they know them well. In practice, this means that we are committed to ensuring that any allegation that a person has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult will be

taken seriously, even when that person is a highly respected individual whose integrity appear to be without question.

- We recognise that the best way to identify any false or malicious allegation is to treat all allegations the same. A fair, accountable and transparent process that is consistently applied for all allegations is best for all involved, including those against whom allegations are made.
- We understand that in all situations where allegations are made all involved require pastoral support. The persona making the allegation and their family, and the person against whom the allegation is made and their family, will require skilled and careful pastoral support. It may be complex in providing this support and we are committed to working with the Diocese of Chichester should this situation arise.