

## **Diocesan Statement on Domestic Abuse** **Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse**

**All forms of domestic abuse are wrong and must stop. We are committed to promoting and supporting safer environments which:**

- ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected, and safe from abuse
- work to protect those experiencing domestic abuse
- recognise equality amongst people and within relationships
- refuse to condone any form of abuse
- enable and encourage concerns to be raised and responded to openly 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 **against the child** 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:**

**In all our activities**

- by valuing, listening to and respecting both survivors and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse whilst appreciating the need to ensure a distance is kept between the two 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 and women-only areas of relevance to survivors, children and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**When concerns are raised**

- by ensuring that those who have experienced abuse can find safety and informed help
- by reporting abuse in line with our training and guidance and working with the appropriate statutory bodies.

**In our care**

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

**This policy was presented to the PCC for review and re-adoption at the PCC meeting held on 9 September 2024.**

**If you have any concerns please contact Hilary Stevenson, Parish Safeguarding Officer  
([safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk) / 07840 564221)**