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Church of England Policy on Domestic Abuse

The Church of England is committed to raising awareness about domestic abuse and its impact on individuals, children, the wider family and community.

It will work to ensure that:

* The safety of individuals suffering abuse or seeking help is the first priority, and to be aware of the need for confidentiality within the bounds of good safeguarding practice;
* Teaching and worship reflects awareness-raising about domestic abuse, uses appropriate language and says clearly that domestic abuse is wrong;
* Inappropriate behaviour is challenged, this needs to be done in an extremely careful way, in a way that does not place any individual including a victim at increased risk.
* Clergy and clergy spouses have the same access to support and resources as others who are experiencing domestic abuse. In addition the Diocesan Bishop will appoint a Bishop’s Visitor7 whose role is to support the clergy or clergy spouse at the time of the breakdown of the relationship, and for as long as possible after, as required

It is committed to all Church Bodies:

* Adopting and publishing a local policy on domestic abuse, including who to contact if there are concerns;
* Having clear procedures in place to respond to concerns about domestic abuse in line with Responding to Domestic Abuse Practice Guidance and Responding to Serious Safeguarding Concerns Against Church Officers Practice Guidance.
* Ensuring signage is in place in local venues to demonstrate that your Church or setting is willing to talk with everyone about domestic abuse and how to access support;
* Appointing a named individual who has responsibility for domestic abuse and violence and who is a point of contact for any advice and support. This maybe the DSA, PSO or the nominated safeguarding lead;
* Training those in leadership positions, safeguarding roles and with pastoral roles on domestic abuse;
* Discussing domestic abuse and violence in appropriate contexts such as marriage preparation, youth groups, ordinand training and in church settings;
* Organising and promoting training and awareness-raising sessions;
* Working with Statutory agencies and other support bodies. Supporting and publicising their work.

GKJ/DSA 03/05/2017

Taken from the Church of England Guidance:  **Responding Well to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Practice Guidance March 2017**