

Safeguarding Statement to Parish 2021

The Bishops' Conference has stated that 'the Catholic Church in Scotland is concerned with the lives, safety, wholeness and well being of each individual person within God's purpose for everyone. It seeks to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved in whatever capacity with the Church and its organisations. As a Church community, we accept that it is the responsibility of all of us, ordained, professed, paid and voluntary members to work together to prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults'.

Pope Francis has asked that our families are made aware that they have every right to expect that they are safe and secure in 'Our Father's House'.

As part of our commitment to Safeguarding, it is vitally important that we remember those who have been harmed or abused either by a member of the Church, members of their family or any other person. It is asked of us that we pray and care about them. In 2019, the Bishops of Scotland established an annual Day of Prayer for those who have suffered abuse and individuals and communities who are affected by abuse. This Day of Prayer is to be marked each year on the Friday following Ash Wednesday. This year the Day of Prayer falls on the 19th of February. This day allows the Church to renew its apology to anyone who has suffered and to stress its commitment to the essential work of safeguarding across our parish communities. In our parish we will mark this with prayers during the morning Mass and during our Divine Mercy devotion on Friday evening.

The Archdiocese of Glasgow is fully committed to Safeguarding as an integral part of life in the Church. Both the Archdiocese and our own parish of Saint Helen embrace the special responsibility we have for all children, young people and vulnerable adults who are part of our faith community. In our church and hall there are posters which highlight our Safeguarding manual and have contact details for the parish, the parish coordinator(s) and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. This information is also available in the Safeguarding section of our parish website. Please make contact with them or the Parish Priest if you have any concerns regarding the abuse or harm of any child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Safeguarding in our parish is with us in all aspects of our living faith. Each year, as Parish Priest, Parish Safeguarding Coordinators and volunteers, we commit ourselves to these principles and to renewing and improving our practice. We adhere to the protocols and procedures laid out by the Bishops' Conference of Scotland in the document *In God's Image*. These procedures, and the vigilance of those involved in the life of the parish, helps us to ensure that everyone should feel safe when they come to Mass, services, groups or social events.

All of us involved in Safeguarding within the Archdiocese are grateful for all the hard work done by all our Parish Priests, Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinators and our parish volunteers.