

Holy cross Parish Lone visiting procedure

Holy Cross Parish Catford is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its clergy and lay ministers who, in the course of their work and ministry, may have to work alone.

Holy Cross Safeguarding Policy **and** should be read in conjunction with this procedure.

The procedure provides a framework for managing the **potential risks that could be encountered** when **presented by lone** working **alone**.

The procedure relates to all church personnel who work out in the community and/or in other people's homes.

Principles

It is recognised that lone working is an everyday and essential practice for clergy and church workers, and it is therefore important that risks are identified and fully understood in order that work can be carried out in safety.

All workers and volunteers should avoid working alone, if however this is not feasible, they should be aware of personal safety, and take all reasonable precautions to safeguard themselves from harm, as they would in other circumstances.

The perception of risk can be seen differently by each individual, and, it is important that all lone workers receive relevant information about the risks identified within their role.

Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker other arrangements should be made.

Procedure

- Initial Assessment of a person's need and risk must be initially carried out by two people ideally the visiting Coordinator and Parish Priest. Potential risks may include the remoteness of the setting, whether there is safe access, whether the person is unknown, if there is potential for physical or verbal abuse and the perceived vulnerability of the visitor.
- The initial assessment will gather information about contact details for next of Kin or relevant others who can be contacted in an emergency and to discuss feasibility and details of visits.
- Any identifiable risks will be assessed and a plan of reducing the risks drawn up, for example, Pets, Environmental Hazards, access issues, Mobility problems of person being visited, signs of dementia and memory impairment.
- If there are risks and signs of vulnerability identified the coordinating team will advise of visits in pairs.
- If it is deemed safe for lone visiting then the lone visitor must be given adequate information about the person being visited including the best time to visit is.
- All lone workers should make every effort to ensure the coordinator or an identified other within the parish is aware of when visits are likely to take place.
- All Lone workers who undertake home visits should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times, which is in good working order.

- All home visits should be planned and recorded on the initial assessment sheet. If circumstances change and the visitor has concerns another assessment by the visiting Coordinators should take place before another lone visit. Any concerns or incidents should be reported to the Visiting coordinator, who will contact the parish Safeguarding Representative.
- Personal information is confidential in pastoral ministry unless it is agreed it can be shared with the informed consent of the individual. However if the individuals behaviour or situation threatens the wellbeing of themselves or others, disclosure to a **relevant authority who would this be?** may be necessary, and in some cases a legal requirement.
- A safeguarding issue where a vulnerable person may appear at risk of abuse, or may present risk to others **must** be raised with the Parish safeguarding **team** **Lead who will take the required action** **who may raise it with the diocesan safeguarding team and possibly report it to statutory authorities.** If a person discloses or discusses matters which seem serious or urgent a fuller record must be made of the situation, and what action was taken.
- No lone worker should ever undertake a visit to a child or young person in their home unless another adult is present.
- Lone visitors should be alert to any signs of potential danger during a visit and be prepared to leave immediately if they have any concerns. Confrontation should always be avoided.
- Where possible home visits should be conducted in the morning or early afternoon avoiding visiting in the dark.
- The person being visited should be aware of the visits and be expecting a visit.
- The visiting coordinators will keep records of those being visited by whom and when as well as keeping the initial risk assessment in a locked box or pin protected device.
- All records should be held in line with the parish safeguarding policy.