



Safeguarding Policy: Boat-bearer and Torch-bearer

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these". Luke 18.16

Introduction

- 1 The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary The Less, Cambridge is committed to safeguarding all those who attend worship and the other activities that we offer. We follow the House of Bishops' 2017 safeguarding policy statement, Promoting a Safer Church (<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/cofe-policy-statement.pdf>) and the Diocese of Ely's policy and procedures 2017 (<https://www.elydiocese.org/safeguarding/policy-and-practice-guidance>). All participants agree to follow the good practice guide with children and young people.
- 2 The participation of children at High Mass on Sunday morning (and festivals, when possible) is greatly to be welcomed.
- 3 The offering of worship by all the people of God should include the involvement of our children, for whom we have a special responsibility to nurture them in the faith.
- 4 We also have responsibility to the children to ensure that they can participate in this public worship safely.
- 5 To this end, at 10:30 High Mass the thurifer is responsible for the safety of the following children:
 - (i) any boat-bearer;
 - (ii) any torch-bearer who comes up in the offertory procession.
- 6 The thurifer will have been through the Diocesan child-protection procedures which include DBS checks every three years and the completion of the Basic Awareness and Foundation safeguarding training courses developed by the Diocese of Ely.
- 7 All officers, staff, and volunteers in the church who, either supervised or unsupervised, on a frequent or infrequent basis, teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children or provide advice/guidance on physical, emotional or educational well-being to children, including all those ordained and ordinands, will also go through the child-protection procedures mentioned in Item 6 above.

Boat-bearer

- 8 LSM has neither dedicated facilities for children, nor staff to supervise or assist them, while they put on their cassocks and cottas. The boat-bearer should be brought to the sacristy by their parent or carer, who are expected to help their children into cassocks and cottas. Parents or carers, on their own and exclusive responsibility, may leave a child to do this unaccompanied.
- 9 The boat-bearer should accompany the thurifer with the rest of the altar party and the celebrant round the back of the church to the parish room at the start of the Mass.
- 10 After the censing of the altar, the boat-bearer should remain in church in the choir stalls (or a chair adjacent, if there is no room in the stalls), while the thurifer exits.
- 11 If the boat-bearer goes to the Children's Group, they should go out with the other children after the Collect/before the Old Testament lesson, and come back down the aisle with the torch-bearers in the offertory procession.

- 12 If for any reason the boat-bearer does not go out to the Children's Group, they are to remain in their seat in the choir stall until the thurifer re-enters after having "stoked up" for the Gospel preparation. The boat-bearer then joins the thurifer as they go to the sedilia to have incense put on. At the end of the Gospel, the boat-bearer comes back with the procession and then resumes their seat in the choir stalls.
- 13 When the boat-bearer comes back into the church with the torch-bearers in the offertory procession, they will remain standing in the Church by the door to the sacristy area. The crucifer will have moved across from the north side to stand with them whilst the thurifer "stokes up".
- 14 When the thurifer re-enters the Church to have incense put on before the Eucharistic prayer start, the boat-bearer joins them.
- 15 When the thurifer and adult acolytes leave during the Eucharistic prayer, the boat-bearer stays by the choir stalls with the infant torch-bearers and waits for the thurifer and acolytes to return.
- 16 When the thurifer and adult acolytes re-enters during the Eucharistic prayer, the boat-bearer joins in with the others and kneels. When the thurifer and adult acolytes exit, the boat-bearer resumes their seat by the choir stalls.
- 17 Having received a blessing or communion at the altar rail, the boat-bearer resumes their seat in the choir stalls where they sit for final prayers, blessing, and dismissal. They then leave with the rest of the altar party.
- 18 At the end of the Mass, the boat-bearer should leave their cassock and cotta on the rail above the crypt chapel, and go and sit in the choir stalls and wait for their parents to collect them.

Torch-bearers

- 19 The torch-bearers will take part in the offertory procession and will then remain in church while standing by the altar rails, carrying their torches.
- 20 After the thurifer leaves the sacristy preparation area at the start of the Eucharistic Prayer, the torch-bearers remain standing at the altar rails while the boat-bearer moves with the thurifer.
- 21 They wait in that position while the thurifer and adult servers go out to the sacristy preparation area. When the thurifer and adult servers come back into the church for the Eucharistic prayer, the torch-bearers join them and kneel on the altar step.
- 22 At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, the torch-bearers go out with the thurifer and other servers, and having put their torches down in a safe place, they re-enter the church to join their parents or carer at the benches.

General Provisions

- 23 Written consent from parents or carers will be sought for the use and storage of photographs, the use of mobile phones.
- 24 The Coordinator of the Rota, Bill de Quick (billdequick45@gmail.com), will keep the register, contact details for the children, and consent forms in accordance to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 25 This policy is to be given to all parents or carers of children participating in the High Mass. If they have any queries they may direct them, in the first instance, to Fr Robert (vicar@lsm.org.uk) or to the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Patricia Boulhosa (safeguarding@lsm.org.uk).
- 26 This policy will be reviewed on January 2023.