

St Paul's Shadwell

Confidentiality Summary

General statement

At St Paul's Shadwell our desire is to create the best possible conditions for pastoral care in the church. The Pastoral Care Team at SPS are not professionally trained counsellors and this is one reason we have created safeguards, in order to make the process as helpful and secure as possible.

Confidentiality

SPS is able to offer limited corporate confidentiality where confidentiality is respected within a pastoral care team. The pastoral care team consists of a few select and agreed-upon individuals from the church leadership who are kept informed and consulted. The team would include the Rector and/or other clergy, the Pastoral Care Staff team, Connect Group Leaders and the pastoral carer (and could also include any ministry leaders that are connected to the person and in some cases also the church wardens). Communication within the team is guided by principles such as:

- treating a confidence with highest level of love and respect
- practicing discretion and stewardship
- avoiding all forms of gossip and slander
- personal information not being shared beyond the pastoral care team

Corporate confidentiality is also expected in return from the person until the end of the pastoral care meetings. This is to limit the spreading of rumours, which might otherwise harm the conversation. The person is free to consult with the agreed pastoral care team to raise any concerns or queries during the course of the pastoral care ministry.

Disclosure of information & limitations of confidentiality

There are reasons why it may be necessary to release information about a person without the person's written permission such as 1) required by law (when there is danger of threat or harm) and 2) when a pastoral carer needs professional support.

Serious moral breaches will mean that a person in a leadership position within the church will be required to step down. In such a case, to limit damaging speculation within the wider church the team-based corporate confidentiality may need to be widened so that relevant parties are informed.

