



**R** Diocese of  
Rochester

*Proclaiming the Word and Work of God*

# **The Protection and Safeguarding of Children**

**Diocesan Policy,  
Procedures and Good Practice  
for work with  
Children and Young People  
in Parishes**

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 **THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND**

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER

Safeguarding is a relatively new term which is broader than child protection as it also includes prevention. The term safeguarding covers safer recruitment, safer working practice, responding to concerns, working with partner agencies, dealing with allegations against those responsible for children and other matters that may be relevant. The term child protection is used for responding to concerns where it appears that a child has or may have been harmed.

“Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government March 2015)” sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. It is important that all practitioners working to safeguard children and young people understand fully their responsibilities and duties as set out in primary legislation and associated regulations and guidance.

Safeguarding children and young people plays a vital part within the church community. Having safeguarding in place not only protects the welfare of children and young people, but also enhances the confidence of parents, staff, volunteers and the congregation.

While there is no single way to prevent opportunities for abuse, various measures can be used to lessen the risk of abuse occurring.

The House of Bishops has therefore published three safeguarding policies. Together these three policies provide the basis to promoting the safest possible environment:

1. Protecting All God’s Children (4<sup>th</sup> edition 2010)
2. Promoting a safe church 2006 (Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults)
3. Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment June 2015

In addition the House of Bishops in its pastoral duty has published a further two documents in order to give guidance on the church’s commitment to prevent or halt any abuse:

1. Responding to domestic abuse 2006
2. Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused 2011 (1<sup>st</sup> edition 2011)

The safeguarding and protection of children is everyone’s responsibility; procedures and formal processes alone (though essential) will not protect children. The Church, including all its members, needs to be aware of dangers and be prepared to report concerns and take action if necessary. The child’s welfare is paramount and where there is conflict between the welfare of the child and that of the adult, it is the welfare of the child that will be given priority.

## OUR THEOLOGICAL APPROACH

Every human being has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm. Christ saw children as demonstrating a full relationship with God. He gave them status, time and respect.

Every person is equally precious to God. Each one needs the assurance that respect for this brings. Individuals who suffer abuse often experience a loss to their identity and worth; there is often shame and a misplaced guilt. The Church is intended to be a place where men, women and children, including those who are hurt and damaged, may find healing and wholeness.

Safeguarding good practice is concerned with the development of safer expressions of care to all and underpins the love and welcome of God for all people. Nevertheless, those who have suffered child abuse have sometimes found an unsympathetic hearing. They may be disbelieved, discouraged and damaged further. Some people may side with the alleged perpetrator. This occurs in all parts of society, but it is particularly hurtful when it occurs within the Church. Such actions compound the sense of injustice that many feel.

Many who have endured child abuse consider that mercy towards those who have sinned is set above the need for the victims to be enabled to find justice. Both are essential. In creating humankind God made us to be together, to live in community. When one suffers we all suffer. We are all made poorer by every incidence of child or adult abuse as by all sin.

In similar ways, offenders may also be assured that they are precious to God, and find healing and wholeness. Because redemption and the possibility of forgiveness are so central to the gospel, the Church is not only well equipped to assist in the rehabilitation of offenders, but is also challenged by the issues their presence raises for us. The Church is part of a society where collusion with violence in families, emotional abuse or certain taboos on sexual abuse often holds sway. It is our calling to hold on to both justice and grace and to build safer church communities, often in challenging circumstances. Church people have sometimes required those who have suffered abuse to forgive. We need to understand forgiving and receiving forgiveness as a lifelong process.

Our congregations can be a refuge for those who have perpetrated abuse but are seeking help in maintaining a non-abusive way of life. We have also to be aware that some who abuse may see church membership as an opportunity to be close to children in order to continue their abusive patterns of behaviour. Experience shows that whether penitent or not, those who abuse need support in taking responsibility for their own actions and in stopping their abusive behaviour. In addition, of course, the vulnerable need protection from them. The genuine penitent will accept the need for careful arrangements, including some restrictions, for his or her return to church fellowship. This is in line with the Church's realistic understanding of sin and its effects, and the Church's responsibility to love all God's people. The Church must take seriously both human propensities to evil but also the God-given resources of goodness, peace, healing and justice: in short, God's love, God's life.

# **P O L I C Y**

**A general statement of principle and intent**

# DIOCESAN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

We, the Bishops, clergy and people of the Diocese of Rochester are committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of all the children in our care. Many children are involved in church life: in worship and in various activities under the guidance of a devoted group of leaders and helpers. These workers mostly give their time freely and generously so that our children can grow in their Christian faith. Both children and adults need a safe and secure environment in which to work.

The Diocese of Rochester adopts the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies and is committed to:

- ◆ the care, nurturing of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children and adults;
- ◆ the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults; and
- ◆ the establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of informed vigilance regarding the dangers of abuse.

In addition:

- ◆ The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group will be chaired by an independent lay person.
- ◆ The Diocese will provide a Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.
- ◆ The Diocese accepts responsibility for establishing procedures for responding to allegations of abuse and for providing guidelines for good practice. These will be updated from time to time.
- ◆ The Diocese will respond without delay to every complaint, allegation and disclosure that suggests a child could or has been harmed, co-operating with the statutory authorities.
- ◆ The Diocese will provide access to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for parishes, the Cathedral, the Bishop's office and the Diocesan office for those beneficed and licence clergy, paid workers and volunteers who need to obtain disclosure.
- ◆ The Diocese will offer training on the procedures and guidelines to clergy and those working with children and young people.
- ◆ The Diocese will monitor the use of safeguarding procedures and guidelines. The Archdeacons' Visitations will provide an opportunity for this and through their Articles of Enquiry.
- ◆ The Diocese will seek to offer informed pastoral care with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing, with him or her, an appropriate ministry.
- ◆ The Diocese will challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.



- ◆ The Diocese will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to statutory authorities, of any member of the church community known to have offended against a child.
- ◆ It is diocesan policy that anyone convicted of or who has accepted a caution, reprimand or warning for a sexual offence against a child or adult will not be permitted to work, in a paid or unpaid position which may bring them into contact with any vulnerable group.
- ◆ It is diocesan policy that all people with a blemished DBS disclosure will undergo a risk assessment from a suitably qualified person. The nature of the assessment will be proportionate to the information disclosed. Cases of a serious, complex or borderline nature will require a multi-disciplinary risk assessment panel.
- ◆ All church schools are bound to follow their Local Education Authority's Guidelines on Child Protection.

# PARISH RESPONSIBILITY

The Church is a community of volunteers, with members contributing to its life in different ways. In today's busy world it is often difficult for people to take on new responsibilities, but especially in the care and nurture of children a long term commitment is needed. It is, nevertheless, important that those working with children and young people should be carefully selected, checked, supported and trained. The Incumbent and the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are responsible for all parish activities and must satisfy themselves that everything is being done to provide a safe environment for children and young people. They are also responsible for making sure, as far as possible, that no false accusations can be made against their workers and volunteers.

## Each parish should:

- ◆ adopt and implement a safeguarding children policy and procedures, accepting as a minimum the House of Bishops' Policy, Protecting All God's Children (4<sup>th</sup> edition 2010) on Safeguarding Children. In addition each parish must follow the diocesan procedures and recommended good practice, while being responsive to local parish requirement;
- ◆ accept the prime duty of care placed upon the Incumbent and PCC to ensure the well-being of children and young people in the church community;
- ◆ endorse the Safeguarding Policies annually, at the first meeting of the new PCC, so that new members are aware of their responsibilities, and confirm the existence of their parish policy on child protection using the annual Parish Child Protection Policy Statement on page 45. This must be signed by the Incumbent and a Churchwarden. One copy is to be kept in the parish records, one copy sent to the Diocese and one copy displayed prominently in the church. When a parish is in a vacancy, the form should be signed by the chair of the PCC and a Churchwarden during the meeting at which the policy is endorsed;
- ◆ appoint at least one Parish Children's Representative (PCR) to work with the Incumbent and the PCC to implement policy, procedures and good practice. He or she will have an overview of all the children and young people in the parish, taking responsibility for the implementation of these procedures and guidelines and liaising as necessary with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. They could also act as an independent adult for children to talk to. See pages 39-40 for a role outline;
- ◆ the Parish Children's Representative should either be a member of the PCC or have the right to attend the PCC at least annually and should report on the implementation of the safeguarding policy within the parish;
- ◆ consider appointing a person, who may be different from the Parish Children's Representative, to be a Children's Advocate. This should be someone to whom children know they could talk about any problems, if they so wish;
- ◆ display in the church premises where children's activities take place, contact details of the Parish Children's Representative and/or Children's Advocate;
- ◆ display the "Childline" and "Parentline Plus" telephone number and Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) website;

- ◆ appoint a Lead Recruiter. It is recommended that this is a different person from the Parish Children's Representative. See House of Bishop's Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment June 2015 and Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) Disclosure Service document for the Diocese of Rochester.
- ◆ provide all authorised personnel with access to copies of parish, diocesan and House of Bishops' policies, procedures and good practice guidelines;
- ◆ ensure that all those authorised to work with children and young people or in a position of authority are appropriately recruited, trained and supported according to the safer recruitment documents produced by the House of Bishops and the Diocese of Rochester;
- ◆ ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and young people undertaken in the name of the parish; and
- ◆ ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken for activities (on and off parish property) involving children and young people.

If appropriate, in rural parishes or parishes held in plurality, consider joining together to implement the policy and procedures, while remembering that legal responsibility will continue to rest with the individual parishes.

If working within Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs), agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding children policy to follow, including where to seek advice in an urgent situation. This should be ratified both by the Bishop and other appropriate church leaders in the partnership. In the event of a safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are notified. See Safeguarding Guidance for Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships June 2015.

# **P R O C E D U R E S**

**Administration routines and  
other directives that must be followed**

## **PROCEDURE FOR SAFER RECRUITMENT**

We will carefully select and train those with any responsibility within the Church in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of a DBS enhanced disclosure.

For detailed guidance on safer recruitment, please refer to the House of Bishops' Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment June 2015 and the Diocese of Rochester.

## **RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS**

**Procedure to be followed if there are disclosures, allegations, complaints or suspicions**

***The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (tel: 07787445032), must be informed as soon as possible of all incidents concerning the church and of any referrals made or being made or being considered. If an allegation concerns a member of the clergy, the Bishop must also be informed.***

***Please refer to RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS – ACTION PLAN for easy reference and audit trail. This can be found on pages 43-44..***

### **Hearing a child's disclosure of abuse:**

If a child asks to talk in confidence DO NOT promise confidentiality. You have a duty to refer a child or young person who is at risk:

- Explain that you may have to get other people to help if they are being harmed.
- Ensure you have as much privacy as possible but try to have another adult present when the child is speaking to you.
- Stay calm.
- Listen to the child attentively.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Allow the child to talk, but do not press for information or ask leading questions.
- Take the allegation seriously.
- Tell the child they are not to blame for anything that has happened.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell.
- Let the child know that other people will have to be told so that the abuse can stop.
- Try to explain what will happen next in a way the child can understand.
- Reassure the child that he or she will continue to receive support during the difficult time to come.
- Make a written record, quoting the child's actual words. Sign and date this.

### **Imminent risk**

If you encounter a child in a situation where the child is in imminent danger, you should act immediately to secure the safety of the child.

Seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to children's social services.

If a child needs emergency medical attention, this should be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents, if available, should be kept fully informed.

### **What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused**

Agree with your group leader, Parish Children's Representative or Incumbent who will make the referral.

Make an immediate telephone referral to the children's social services. Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child protection referral – see Diocesan website.

Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family, for example the child's name, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP if known. These details may be available in the register. Remember to give as much detail as possible, distinguishing between fact and opinion and also what is first hand knowledge and what has been heard from others (hearsay).

Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form (sometimes available on the Local Authority website) or letter and send a copy of this to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. If there is no acknowledgement within 48 hours, chase it. Remember that the child and family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral *unless this would put the welfare of the child or another person at further risk*. If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The Duty Social Worker will give you advice over this if necessary.

Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigating team.

Say if you do not want your details disclosed to the family.

For out of hours referrals, call the emergency social work team or where urgent, the police.

Ensure that you notify your supervisor, Parish Children's Representative and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. You should also notify your Incumbent, if you have not already done so.

### **Sharing concerns with parents**

Where there are concerns that the parent(s) may be responsible for or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with parent(s) may place the child at further risk. In such a case advice must always firstly be sought from children's social services or police as to how and who informs the parent(s).

### **Domestic abuse**

If there is a child within the household, a referral will need to be made to either the police or children's social services as this then becomes a child protection matter. See Responding to domestic abuse: Guidelines for those with pastoral responsibilities, House of Bishops 2006.

### **Less urgent situations**

If the child is not in immediate danger, if you are not sure if child abuse is involved, or if you have concerns about a child and you need someone to talk things over with, then contact either your supervisor/Parish Children's Representative or children's social services or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

In all cases make notes as accurately as you can of the details of the allegation, all that happened and anything that was said that struck you as significant. Ensure you note from the church's registration records the child's name, age, address, telephone number and GP.

All notes must be kept in a safe, secure place indefinitely.

Notify your supervisor, Parish Children's Representative and/or Incumbent if you have not already done so.

Seek support for yourself from an appropriate person within the church.

***You must never attempt to investigate the situation yourself and never speak directly to the person against whom allegations have been made.***

### **Allegations against the church**

Where allegations or suspicions are received concerning clergy, church leaders, others holding the Bishop's licence, or church officers the Bishop should be informed immediately - see chapter 7, Protecting All God's Children (4<sup>th</sup> edition 2010).

### **Disclosures of historical abuse**

When such allegations are made, they should be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns, in terms of prompt referral to children's social services and discussion with the police. If possible it should be established by the person hearing the disclosure to the whereabouts of the alleged perpetrator in order to safeguard other children - see Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused (1<sup>st</sup> Edition 2011).

### **Communication with the media**

In the event of an incident all communication both within and outside the Diocese will be handled by the Bishop's Officer for Communications, after consultation with the Bishop, the Diocesan Secretary, the Incumbent and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Particular care should be taken regarding any public statement or public prayer.

### **What to do about inappropriate advances**

Children or young people can sometimes make suggestive approaches to an adult. They may have a crush or they may act inappropriately following previous abusive experiences. Sometimes inappropriate physical contact can happen accidentally.

It is vital that the worker takes the responsibility to:

- ◆ tell the young person that their language or behaviour is unacceptable;
- ◆ also tell their leader and Incumbent about the incident, however embarrassing this is;
- ◆ record the incident and what was done. This may be a necessary safeguard if later accusations are made; and
- ◆ decide with their leader and Incumbent, what measures will be taken to help the young person and prevent a reoccurrence.

### **Suspected abusers and known offenders**

The term “offender” applies only to those who have a conviction or who have accepted a caution, reprimand or warning for a criminal offence.

The term “suspected abuser” is used to refer to those who have been subject to an allegation(s) which has not been formally substantiated but which appears to be reasonably well founded.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 some old convictions and cautions are deemed spent after a period of time, which varies according to the offence. However, for the purpose of work with children or vulnerable adults no offence is considered spent.

A DBS check containing information is termed blemished or unclear disclosure.

Old minor and unrelated offences will not prohibit otherwise suitable people from working with children. Thus a risk assessment will be undertaken proportionate to the matter disclosed.

### **Convicted offenders against children**

Not all convicted offenders will have committed sexual offences against children; some will have been guilty of neglect, physical or emotional abuse. There are others who pose a risk including convictions for violence or sexual offences against adults including domestic violence, drug/alcohol abuse and mental health issues which can result in erratic behaviour.

### **Ministering to people who are known to have sexually abused children**

Where a sex offender is known, befriended and helped by a group of volunteers to lead a fulfilled life without direct contact with children, the chances of reoffending are diminished and the church has thus an important role contributing to the prevention of child abuse.

When it is known that a member of the congregation has sexually abused a child, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be consulted in order for a safe course of action to be agreed in conjunction with the relevant statutory agencies. A written agreement or contract will usually be entered into with the offender which reflects research evidence about the compulsive nature of child sexual abuse.

Where a small group is formed the membership should be chosen carefully. It should include the Incumbent or a delegated representative, a churchwarden and a representative of the



children or youth work team or the Parish Children's Representative. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser should be consulted on the constitution of the group, and training of the group may be necessary.

If the offender's victim, or in some cases the victim's family, attends the church, it is likely to be necessary to introduce the offender to another congregation. Consideration must also be given to other people who have been abused in the past.

The offender should not accept any official role or office in the church which gives him or her status or authority; a child may deem that person to be trustworthy. Some roles, for example that of Churchwarden, are statute-barred to people with convictions of this kind, including offences against the person.

A meeting should be held with the offender, explaining that the appointed small group and a few others from the congregation will need to know the facts in order to create a safe environment for him or her. Those needing to know are likely to include the clergy, churchwardens, the Parish Children's Representative and any befriending volunteers. Leaders involved with the recruitment of children's workers may need to be informed so that he or she does not inadvertently ask the person to volunteer. The police should be invited to the meeting, in addition to the probation service and children's social services, if they have a role.

Consideration should be given to whether, with the offender's agreement, the congregation should be told. The advantages and disadvantages of this course of action should be carefully considered, including the offender's need for protection as a vulnerable adult.

It must be made clear that no one else apart from those identified on the agreement will be informed of the facts without the offender's knowledge. The highest levels of confidentiality should be maintained unless there is a breach of the agreement and it is necessary to inform others to protect a child.

The group should offer support and friendship as well as supervision.

They should endeavour to keep channels of communication open.

Those with pastoral responsibility will need to discuss with the group appropriate ways for the offender to develop and grow as a Christian without putting him or herself and others at risk.

It will be necessary to establish clear boundaries, both to protect children and to lessen the possibility of the adult being wrongly accused of abuse.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser should assist in drafting a written agreement (see the model agreement on pages 54-56), which might include the following elements with regard to the offender, who should:

- attend designated services or meetings only;
- have an approved chaperone on specified occasions;
- sit apart from children;

- stay away from areas of the building where children meet;
- attend a house group where there are no children;
- decline hospitality where there are children;
- never be alone with children;
- never work or be part of a mixed-age group with children; and
- take no official role in the church.

The offender should be asked to sign the agreement. Other parties will be members of the group noted earlier. It should be made clear that as people change role, their successors will take on becoming involved.

The agreement should be enforced, and no changes made without consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and other parties involved. It should be made clear that a breach or other relevant information could lead to a referral to the police and probation service and advice that the offender attends a different church.

The agreement should include provision for close support and pastoral care.

The agreement should be reviewed at regular intervals, at least annually, with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. A review must take the form of a face-to-face meeting with the offender and at least two members of the group. The meeting should be recorded and the record retained.

An agreement must remain in place so long as the person is a part of the congregation, whether or not they are on licence or their name appears on the Sex Offenders Register.

If the agreement is breached, the police or the probation service should be informed. In some cases it may be possible to restrict attendance at church. If the person cannot be banned because they live in the parish, the advice of the Diocesan Registrar should be sought and a high level of supervision maintained. It may be necessary, following consultation with the police, to inform other relevant organisations that the person presents a risk.

If the person leaves the church for another church, then the police should be involved and a new agreement should be made. If the person leaves without informing anyone where or whether they might attend for worship, the police should be informed.

Whenever possible, the agreement should be drawn up as a two-way covenant: the church will agree to levels of support and appropriate access to worship etc. while the offender agrees to the appropriate behavioural guidelines included in the agreement.

### **Disclosures by perpetrators of past abuse**

In some cases offences only come to light after many years. In such situations it must be remembered that there may still be a substantial risk to children, therefore, the police should be informed. It is necessary to tell a person who admits an offence against a child that such information cannot be kept confidential.

## **Positions of trust**

All those who work with children or who have significant contact with them and their families on behalf of the Church are in positions of trust.

Codes of safer working practice and conduct make clear the importance of accepting the expectations of such a position and the possible grounds for disciplinary action if they are not met:

- They will be seen as role models by the children with whom they are in contact, including when they are off duty.
- All church workers (paid or unpaid) should conduct themselves in accordance with the reasonable expectations of someone who represents the Church.
- They should take care to observe appropriate boundaries between their work and their personal life.

It is inappropriate for those in a position of trust, including priests and youth workers to enter into personal or sexual relationships with anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. A breach of this is likely to be considered as a disciplinary offence and may also constitute a criminal offence.

## **Ministry of Deliverance**

It is sometimes suggested that a child is possessed by evil spirits and that this may account for behavioural issues in the child or be considered to justify harsh treatment by the parents or carers. Parents may seek the assistance of clergy or other church members. Incumbents and others should consult the Bishop and should note that most parish insurance policies do not cover deliverance ministry. (See Protecting All God's Children 4<sup>th</sup> Edition 2010, page 36.) All referrals to the Ministry of Deliverance must first go to the Bishop's Chaplain.

## **Insurance**

The PCC should make sure that they have adequate insurance cover, including public liability insurance, to cover all their activities both on and off site.

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group states:

*"Ecclesiastical considers that the implementation of the House of Bishops Policy Document by all church organisations is essential for the maintenance of liability insurance in relation to the issues it addresses".*

Policies of insurance require the insured to take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring. Failure to take such precautions may prejudice the insurance arrangements in force. A duty therefore exists upon the insured to research and adopt best practice based upon current and ongoing guidelines.

***It is also a condition of a policy of insurance that any incident or allegation is notified to the insurer immediately. Failure to comply with this requirement may prejudice any cover provided by the policy.***

*Public Liability insurance indemnity limits should be kept under regular review. Guidance is available from Ecclesiastical.*

- Notification should be directed to: The Claims and Risk Services Director, Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, Beaufort House, Brunswick Road, Gloucester, GL1 1JZ. It should be marked Strictly Private and Confidential. Failure to notify the Insurers could prejudice any cover by the insurance policy.
- Parishes insured by other companies should follow a similar procedure.

### **Hire of premises**

Many churches possess buildings which they hire out to community groups and/or private functions. It is recommended that all hiring agreements, both one-off and regular bookings, include a clause about child protection. Three Model Hiring Agreements are available on the diocesan website.

The hiring body is required to ensure that children and adults who may be vulnerable are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and that they carry full liability insurance for this.

The hiring body should abide by their own child protection or safeguarding policy if they have one, otherwise by that of the church with which they have a hiring agreement.

If the hiring body is required to register with OFSTED, the PCC must ensure the existence of such registration.

### **Registration with OFSTED (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills)**

Some parishes provide and manage groups for children under the age of six who attend regularly for more than two hours at a time or for more than fourteen days in any period of twelve months. These will need registration with OFSTED unless an exemption applies. Many children's groups provided by parishes will be exempt from OFSTED registration, but will still be required to inform OFSTED of the activity. For further details consult OFSTED (through their website or information line at 0300 1231231) or the children's information service of the relevant local authority.

### **Youth Work**

Youth workers should be trained and undertake their role in such a manner that protects them from unfounded allegations being made against them. All work with those under 16 must be adequately supervised according to at least the minimum OFSTED standards. Those aged 16 and 17 do not require the same level of supervision, but should still have an adult in charge. Although the age of 18 marks the legal division between adulthood and childhood, it may be appropriate to require a minimum three-year difference between the age of the young adult youth worker and the ages of the children he or she supervises. A risk

assessment should be undertaken for all activities and outside trips should be carefully planned, and detailed guidance sought.

The guidance in this section is a response to the statutory duties and codes of practice now in place for youth workers in the statutory sector. These do not technically apply to the voluntary sector. However, the Church is committed, in its own guidance and codes of practice, to reflecting the good practice required in the statutory sector.

### **Supervision and Training**

Leaders should be encouraged to support and observe helpers in action.

Paid and unpaid workers should be encouraged to meet together regularly with the Parish Children's Representative. An atmosphere should be encouraged where people can discuss any concerns and receive support.

Paid and unpaid workers who have responsibilities for children should attend suitable safeguarding training at least every three years

Comprehensive training on all aspects of youth and children's work is provided by the Diocesan Youth and Children's Team.

### **Individual tuition**

Choirmasters, organists, bell-ringers and others who are likely to give individual tuition should follow their professional code of ethics. It is recommended, however, that one to one tuition is not given on church premises without another adult present and the child must be made aware of the other person's presence.

### **Mixed age activities**

Care should be taken to ensure that children in mixed-age activities such as choirs, bell ringing and serving are appropriately supervised. It is not possible to request DBS checks for adults in those groups unless they have specific responsibilities for children. In such groups, at least one person as well as the person leading the activity needs to be recruited safely, including a DBS check and to be designated to supervise the welfare of children involved. It may be more convenient to have a team of such people taking responsibility on a rota.

### **Cell or home groups**

Cell groups or home groups for young people or for mixed-age groups need adult supervision if these groups are to be recognised by the church. The leaders must observe the diocesan policy, procedures and good practice. Mixed-age cell or home groups should include members named and recruited as responsible for safeguarding young people in the group.

## **Record-keeping and data protection**

The Data Protection Act 1998 contains principles governing the use of personal data. This means that the eight principles put in place by the Data Protection Act 1998 need to be applied. These say that the data must be:

- (i) fairly and lawfully processed;
- (II) processed for limited purposes;
- (III) adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- (iv) accurate;
- (v) not kept for longer than is necessary;
- (vi) processed in line with your rights;
- (vii) secure; and,
- (viii) not transferred to countries without adequate protection.

The parish should maintain records relating to parish appointments, including a note of when a DBS check was obtained. Records should be kept secure and retained after the people concerned have left the diocese. Records of child protection matters should be kept, together with a note of the outcome. These should be retained even if the information received was judged to be malicious, unsubstantiated or unfounded.

Records of known offenders against children should be retained indefinitely, together with a copy of any agreement and reviews.

Nothing in data protection legislation seeks to limit appropriate disclosure in order to protect an individual who either is, or may be, at risk. What matters is that the process of information sharing is reasonable and proportionate.

Further advice if necessary is available from the website of the Information Commissioner.

# **R E C O M M E N D E D G O O D P R A C T I C E**

**This section provides advice on good practice which is the main way that children and young people are protected. The advice should be followed as closely as possible. If changes are made for practical purposes, these should be equally safe.**

## **GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL WORKERS**

### **You should:**

- treat all children and young people with respect and dignity;
- ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful;
- avoid situations where you are one to one with a child, work within sight of another adult;
- ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet; toilet breaks should be organised for young children;
- ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern;
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around;
- administer any necessary first aid with others around whenever possible;
- obtain consent for any images to be taken, shown or displayed;
- record any concerning incidents and give the information to your group leader. Sign and date the record;
- always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or Parish Children's Representative; and
- if any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand.

### **You should not:**

- initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact, e.g. for comfort, should be initiated by the child;
- invade a child's privacy while washing or toileting;
- play rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
- use any form of physical punishment;
- be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun;
- touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively;



- scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult;
- permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying;
- show favouritism to any one child or group;
- allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature;
- give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own. In an emergency, a driver may transport one child on their own but the child must sit in the back of the car;
- smoke tobacco in the presence of children;
- drink alcohol when responsible for young people;
- share sleeping accommodation with children;
- invite a child to your home alone;
- arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organised group occasions;
- allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person;
- allow strangers to give children lifts.

## **Touch**

Church-sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people, while avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Parish Children's Representative. All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

## **Additional guidelines for group leaders**

In addition to the above, the group leader should:

- ensure any health and safety requirements are adhered to;

- undertake risk assessments with appropriate action taken and record kept;
- keep a register and consent forms up to date;
- have an awareness, at all times, of what is taking place and who is present;
- create space for children to talk – either formally or informally;
- liaise with the Parish Children’s Representative over good practice for safeguarding;
- always inform the Parish Children’s Representative of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The Parish Children’s Representative will liaise with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser; and
- liaise with the PCC.

### **Administration**

A register must be kept, and regularly updated, for all children and young people attending groups and activities. As well as attendances, it should include up to date details of home address and telephone number, any specific medical information and parents’ or carers’ names and contact numbers. At each meeting or activity a register of the young people and children attending should be kept, along with the names of the leaders and helpers present. Registers should be kept indefinitely.

### **Log book**

It is good practice to keep a log book of activities, incidents and observations for all sessions of a youth club or children's activity. A sample log book can be obtained from the Diocesan Board of Education.

### **Registration and consent forms**

Registration and consent forms are not required for attendance at worship, although if young children regularly attend without their parents, contact should normally be made with a parent. Contact details and special requirements should be noted for all who regularly attend other church activities, such as Sunday schools, youth groups and mixed age activities such as choirs, and registers taken. A registration/parental consent form should be completed for every child who attends regular group activities. Consent needs to be from a parent or person with parental responsibility and should be updated annually. Sample forms can be found on pages 46-47 of this policy.

### **Special events**

Forms giving permission for special activities should be used when undertaking one-off events and activities i.e. swimming, sleepovers, outings, going away. No child under the age of 8 can be taken away on residential activities without being accompanied by his or her parent or guardian. Consent forms should be completed for all children and young people under 18 in the group. It is helpful if all leaders and helpers also complete these forms so that if there is an accident or emergency they too have a contact number. A sample form can be found on pages 48-49 of this policy. Activities planned to take place away from church

premises must have the permission of the PCC in order to be covered by insurance. Parental consent must be given in writing.

***All personal details and consent forms must be stored securely.***

### **Recommended staffing levels**

The recommended minimum staffing levels for children's groups are given below. More help may be required if children are being taken out, are undertaking physical activities or if circumstances require it.

0–2 yrs 1 person for every 3 children 1:3

2–3 yrs 1 person for every 4 children 1:4

3–8 yrs 1 person for every 8 children 1:8

Over 8 yrs 1 person for the first 8 children then 1 extra person for every extra 12 children

Outings and outdoor activities are generally more demanding to supervise and consideration should be given to request extra qualified help when these are planned.

Each group should have at least two adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.

If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them, then it is possible to have only one adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity.

Young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping, should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding.

Adults who assist on one or two occasions must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.

### **Sleeping arrangements**

A risk assessment should have been completed.

Boys and girls must have separate sleeping and washing facilities which are private to each gender.

Separate sleeping areas need to be provided for each age group (under 8 years, 8 to 13 years and over 13 years). Where this is not possible, arrangements need to be made to ensure adequate separation of the age groups within the sleeping accommodation.

Adults should represent both sexes and have separate accommodation, but in close proximity to the young people.

Ratios of helpers to young people must be strictly followed (see recommended staffing levels).

Adults should avoid being alone with children or young people.

### **Guidelines for “off-site” activities**

All activities must be covered by the parish insurance and have undergone a risk assessment.

The leader should take a copy of the consent forms with them on the outing.

There should be a register of all children and adults along with the itinerary (times and destinations).

A first aid kit and accident book should be carried.

Phone contact should be maintained between volunteers.

In the event of an incident or accident, the leader or named person should take responsibility for speedily contacting the parents.

Parents should have given specific consent if it is intended to allow groups to go off unsupervised.

### **Information for Parents**

Parents/carers should be informed of the following:

Details of the activity or event;

Dates and duration;

Venue and arrangements for accommodation and supervision;

Travel arrangements;

Name and contact details of group leader, and

Information about financial, medical and insurance arrangements.

A briefing session for parents may be useful prior to the event

### **Health and safety**

Health and safety should be managed as part of all activities. A first aid kit should be maintained on site and one available for off site activities. The contents of the first aid kit should be stored in a waterproof container and clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents and restock on a regular basis.

An accident book should be available for both on and off site activities and all accidents recorded.

All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some first aid knowledge and the church should encourage access to first aid training. A list of first aiders in the church should be compiled and kept available.

Details of courses, often free for workers with children and young people, can be obtained from the youth and children's department.

Good hygiene should always be practised. Disposable protective gloves and a disposable apron should always be used when dealing with broken skin, body fluids and faeces. Confidentiality regarding a child's HIV or hepatitis status should always be maintained.

Buildings should be checked for health and safety regularly, at least once a year, and the results noted and reported in writing to the PCC. See Health and Safety Check List on pages 50-51 of this policy.

Also see diocesan website for Health and Safety Guidance document.

### **Special needs**

Welcome children and young people with special needs to the group. Try to make the premises, toilets and access suitable for people with disabilities. Ask the parent about how best to meet the child's special needs, and do not see this as the responsibility only of the child's parent. If premises are being designed or refurbished, take the opportunity to anticipate the possible special needs of future children and adults; advice is available. Disability legislation requires organisations to take reasonable steps to meet the needs of disabled people and this includes children. A minimum of two adult workers should be present from before the first child arrives until after the last one leaves.

### **Risk assessments**

Risk assessments of new and existing activities should be made in order to identify hazards and take action to minimise risk. The same approach should be taken if buildings are hired or let. Risk assessments should be made covering outside activities including travel arrangements. If specialised activities are to be undertaken, appropriate instructors should be engaged and their credentials confirmed. However, even when specialised instructors are involved, the parish retains the duty to supervise the children. See pages 52-53 for checklist for activities and model risk assessment forms.

## **SAFE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

### **E-safety**

Parishes must appreciate that we live in a constantly changing world of technology which is becoming more sophisticated and we therefore have to be aware of the implications this brings. Whilst children and young people may appear technologically competent, they do not necessarily have the maturity to understand the dangers they may be exposed to. It is important that children and young people understand and stay safe and the guidance should be followed:

- Ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional. If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- Communication between children and adults by whatever method should always take place within clear and explicit boundaries. This includes face to face contact, mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites and blogs.
- No images or video footage should ever be permitted in an area of personal privacy e.g. toilet or sleeping quarters.
- At camp or sleepovers, all mobile phones, cameras and video equipment will be collected by the group leader at a specified time prior sleep, stored in a secure place and given back to the young person in the morning. This is to prevent sleep disruption and inappropriate images being taken.
- Designated youth workers should be provided with a basic mobile phone supplied by the PCC.
- Adults should not give their personal contact details to children or young people, including their mobile telephone number and details of any blogs or personal websites.
- Do not make any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site. Only make contact with children for professional reasons, making sure that their parent/guardian has given permission.
- Maintain a log of any electronic contact with an individual regarding all matters or subjects which fall outside of the normal 'day to day' youth work contact.
- Any paid or unpaid worker will have a separate 'facebook' account for their work with young people and should not give out any personal information about themselves.
- Privacy settings and use of strong passwords should be used to keep personal data private. Ensure that all shared computers have a different password for all users so that they cannot be accessed secretly.

### **Receipt of inappropriate material by electronic means**

Receipt of any inappropriate material by electronic means should be downloaded in to hard copy if possible and any texts of such nature must not be deleted and should be shown to the leader and Incumbent. Please follow the guidance previously given under 'What to do about inappropriate advances' – see page 14-15.

The minimum age for social networking must be observed.

### **Photographs/Images**

Guidance from the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), reproduced with their permission, is as follows:

*Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. The worker should write to parents or carers to explain what is happening and leave the onus on the parent/carer to contact them if they have any objections. In addition to this:*

- It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.*
- When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or other personal details. These details include email or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.*
- Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website.*

Apart from the Data Protection Act requirements, none of this advice is binding, but it would be good practice to endeavour to follow it as far as possible. The best way of addressing this is to ensure that routine permission is obtained by the Parish. This can be achieved as part of the Registration/Consent form allowing parents/guardians who need to refuse consent the opportunity to do so. See pages 46-49.

Publishing images of children brings good publicity and usually gives pleasure to children and their parents, but also raises some issues worth noting briefly:

- Images count as personal data under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- There may be copyright issues.
- Images of children in media with a wide circulation may lead to children being traced by people who should not be able to find them. This affects children who have been involved in disputed custody matters, adoptions, abductions or other civil or criminal matters.
- Images of children may be used by paedophiles to target prospective victims, which is possible if identifying details are given.
- Images of children may be used or manipulated for the purposes of child pornography, which is a growing problem on the internet.
- Particular care is needed if children are lightly clad, e.g. in swimming costumes.
- See “Record-Keeping and Data Protection” on page 21 for the eight principles that need to be applied under the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Transporting children on behalf of the church**

Transporting children on behalf of a church is a regulated activity and DBS checks are required.

Transport, travel or escort arrangements to or from church activities are the responsibility of parents if they make informal arrangements among themselves. They are the responsibility of the PCC if the PCC formally organises them, however parental consent must always be sought in advance. It should be clearly understood by all concerned at which point

responsibility for the child is passed from parent to church officer and at which point it is returned to the parent.

Cars must be in a roadworthy condition and drivers need to have comprehensive insurance and ensure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church activities.

Drivers must comply with the law in relation to seat belts, child seats and booster cushions. At no time should the number of those travelling in a car exceed the usual passenger number. There should be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.

All those who drive children on church-organised activities should be over 21 and should have held a full and clean driving licence for at least two years.

Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children on behalf of the church.

### **Minibus or coach**

Appropriate arrangements, for example regarding insurance and driving qualifications, should be made by those driving minibuses on behalf of the church.

Workers and helpers should sit among the group and not together.

If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored.

Before using a minibus, ensure you know the up-to-date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive.

A mini-bus with seat belts must be used.

All children must have a proper seat.

An escort must always be taken.



# APPENDICES

## DESCRIPTIONS AND DEFINITIONS

### DEFINITION OF A CHILD (AS DESCRIBED IN WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN 2010)

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. “Children” therefore means children and young people throughout this document.

The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, prison or in a Young Offenders’ Institution, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

### HARM AND SIGNIFICANT HARM

Harm means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of children, and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. It is the threshold used by the court in deciding whether compulsory intervention into family life might be in the best interest of the child. Significant harm has no precise definition. It can be caused by a single traumatic event or a cluster of smaller incidents over a period of time. Any concern about significant harm requires careful investigation and assessment.

### CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse has many forms. There are four identified categories of abuse, from which the following definitions are taken:

- **Physical** abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in, a child.
- **Sexual** abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activity may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetration acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via

the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);

Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;

Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of adequate care-giving);

Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

- **Emotional** abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ridiculing what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capabilities, as well as overprotection and limitations of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may also involve:

seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, for example, in domestic violence situations;

serious bullying (including cyber bullying); and

causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger; exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child but it may occur as the sole or main form of abuse.

## **SPECIAL TOPICS**

### **Stranger abuse**

The majority of abuse is carried out by people known to the child, but abuse can also be carried out by strangers.

### **Internet-related abuse**

Adults may target chat rooms, social networking sites, messaging services, digital cameras, mobile phones and the internet generally in order to groom and abuse children. Children are

particularly vulnerable to abuse by adults who pretend to be children of comparable ages in social networking sites and who try to obtain images or engineer meetings. Children themselves can also misuse these facilities, sometimes inadvertently and sometimes with malicious intent.

### **Bullying (abuse by other children)**

There is no clear boundary between bullying and abuse, and a significant number of sex offenders are themselves minors. Young perpetrators of abuse are still children and are entitled to have their needs considered though steps may need to be taken to protect other children. Such cases should always be referred to children's social services.

### **Children affected by gang activity**

Such children are at risk of violent crime and are therefore considered vulnerable. Risk includes access to weapons (including firearms), retaliation violence and territorial violence with other gangs. Other risks include increased likelihood of involvement in knife crime, dangerous dogs, sexual violence and substance misuse.

### **Deliberate self harm** (e.g. overdose, cutting, misuse of drugs or alcohol)

Local Safeguarding Children Boards vary in their approach to deliberate self-harm. It will always be appropriate to discuss such a case with children's social services.

### **Domestic abuse**

Home Office Definition 2004:

"Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are, or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality".

If there are children in the household, they are witnesses to the abuse and are considered to be emotionally abused at least, whether or not they are in the same room. They may also be directly affected by abuse.

### **Allegation of possession by evil spirits**

See Ministry of Deliverance on page 18.

### **Female genital mutilation**

This is an offence and any suggestion that it is being sought or has been carried out should be referred to children's social services or the police.

### **Child trafficking**

Child trafficking is the bringing of children into the country, sometimes without proper immigration arrangements, for a variety of illegal purposes which can include domestic service, illegal adoption, organ harvesting, benefit claims or prostitution. Such children may have little English. The police or children's social services should be contacted immediately if a church comes across such a child.

### **Forced marriage and honour-based violence**

Disclosure of actual or possible forced marriage should not be treated as a family matter or be disclosed to family members. Children's social services or the police should be contacted.

### **Sexual exploitation and involvement in prostitution**

Children can be exploited by being given rewards in return for sexual activities. Internet and other media technology may be used in the abuse. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common. Regardless of the challenging behaviours they may display, exploited children should be viewed as victims of child sexual exploitation/abuse, not as criminals.

### **Spiritual abuse**

Spiritual abuse is not covered by the statutory definition but is of concern both within and outside faith communities including the Church.

Within faith communities, harm can also be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, or intrusive healing and deliverance ministries. Any of these could result in children experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. Such inappropriate behaviour should be referred for investigation in co-operation with the appropriate statutory agencies. Other forms of spiritual harm include the denial to children of a right to faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

### **Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

For the sake of simplicity the term Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will be used throughout this document, when referring to the position of Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults - see pages 37-38 for role outline.

### **Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB)**

LSCBs have been established to ensure that faith groups, among others, respond adequately to the demands of safeguarding, and publish procedures for use by anyone in their area who may find themselves dealing with possible abuse of a child. These procedures are usually available online and on open access. The area each LSCB covers is normally the same as that for each local authority.

### **Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs)**

LADOs advise faith groups on the management of children's workers who are alleged to have harmed children. All allegations of this kind must be reported to the LADO, who may arrange for an investigation by the statutory authorities which may be in conjunction with a disciplinary investigation by the employer. The LADO will work under the procedures of the LSCB. Reporting to the LADO does not transfer responsibility from the employer to take disciplinary action if appropriate. The LADO may convene one or more strategy meetings to plan the investigation.

### **Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)**

MAPPA provides a national framework in England and Wales for the assessment and management of the risk of serious harm posed by specified sexual and violent offenders. Guidance under MAPPA states that religious communities must put in place effective arrangements that allow them to ensure they are able to protect their community while allowing a sex offender to maintain his or her right to worship in a safe way when possible. An assessment of risk must be carried out and the statutory agencies will provide appropriate information and guidance in this. It is important that co-operation between the church and the agencies is assured at all stages.

### **Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO)**

Introduced by the Sexual Offences Act 2003, SOPOs are civil preventative orders designed to protect the public from serious sexual harm. A court may make a SOPO when it deals with an offence listed at Schedule 3 (sexual offences) or Schedule 5 (violent and other offences) to the Act and is assessed as posing a risk of serious sexual harm. The police can also apply for a SOPO to a magistrates' court in respect of an offender who has a previous conviction or caution for a Schedule 3 or 5 offence and who poses a risk of serious sexual harm. SOPOs include such prohibitions as the court considers appropriate. For example, a sexual offender who poses a risk of serious sexual harm to children could be prohibited from loitering near schools or may be prohibited from membership of mixed-age groups or activities in the church.

### **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)**

A MARAC is a Multi-Agency meeting which has the safety of high risk victims of domestic abuse as its focus. The MARAC is a process involving the participation of all the key statutory and voluntary agencies who might be involved in supporting a victim of domestic abuse.

# **The role of the Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

**The Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group and appropriate Diocesan officers will be responsible for:**

Developing and regular reviewing the Diocesan Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Good Practice Guidelines, ensuring that it is easily accessible and understandable to licensed and paid workers and to volunteers.

Assisting each parish with the implementation of the diocesan policy and procedures, providing advice and guidance on these.

Monitoring of annual declarations from parishes in conjunction with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group and Archdeacons.

Providing advice on a regular basis to clergy, paid staff, PCCs, Parish Safeguarding Representatives and volunteers about good practice in order to limit the opportunities for abuse and to diminish the risks of wrongful accusations being made.

Responding to requests for advice, information and guidance from individuals in the Church who are concerned about the welfare of a child or a vulnerable adult.

Providing guidance and direction where there are concerns about adults who may be a risk to any vulnerable person/group.

Providing advice and support to clergy, paid staff, PCCs, Parish Safeguarding Representatives and volunteers when a referral to social services or police is necessary.

Working in partnership with the statutory agencies, building professional relationships and effective communication.

Attending strategy meetings and case conferences as requested by statutory agencies. At times this will include preparing parish personnel for such meetings and attending with them.

Supporting parishes during and after child/adult protection investigations. This may include ensuring support is provided for individuals in the parish who may be affected by such an enquiry, for example, volunteers or other leaders.

Briefing the national adviser on all cases which go to public court or tribunal or which draw media attention.

Providing appropriate safeguarding training for all clergy and paid and unpaid workers and any other person who has responsibility for vulnerable groups.

Evaluating, reviewing and monitoring training programmes.

Providing a risk assessment process for those with blemished DBS disclosures and advising the Incumbent of the outcome.

Drawing up and/or monitoring safeguarding agreements with those known to be a risk to vulnerable groups.

Attending all meetings of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group and be part of the regional network of diocesan safeguarding advisers.

Preparing regular reports for the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group on contact with parishes and action taken.

Supporting Parish Safeguarding Representatives by keeping in touch by newsletter or similar communications.

Keeping a log of calls received from parishes.

# Parish Children's Representative

## Who Should Do It?

The task should principally be undertaken by a lay person - usually with experience of work with children, although not always currently involved in work with children in the parish. The role has frequently fallen on people with professional experience in the field - for instance, social workers, teachers - but if there is no-one in your parish with this background, fear not ... this person does not need to be an expert. Support is being offered from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

The following gives the basis of a possible role outline and person specification for the person or persons appointed as Parish Children's Representative. It is hoped these ideas will help you to define the role you have taken on, or to find the right person for the task if you have not already appointed.

All parish children's representatives may be required to have a DBS disclosure certificate.

## Role outline

1. To be familiar with The Protection and Safeguarding of Children Policy, Procedures and Guidelines, and ensure that they are carried out in the parish, in the following areas:
  - a. to ensure that procedures, in accordance with this Policy, for recruitment and support for all new paid and voluntary children's workers in the parish are in place and records are kept confidentially;
  - b. to confirm that a signed declaration has been obtained from all current paid and voluntary children's workers in the parish in church managed activities, and then initiate DBS checks with the Parish Lead Recruiter, where required;
  - c. to compile and update at least annually a list of names of paid and voluntary children's workers;
  - d. to ensure training and information on child protection policy and its implementation is offered to all volunteers and paid children's workers.
2. To be available for consultation or advice where there are concerns or allegations regarding a child or young person in the parish.
3. To be in contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser to keep abreast of Diocesan policy, procedures and guidelines and ensure the parish is informed of changes and developments
4. To be available for diocesan training in safeguarding.
5. To keep a log, dated, signed and kept secure, of incidents, allegations or concerns which may arise.
6. To contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser when any allegation is made or becomes known in the parish.



## **Person Specification:**

### **Knowledge/Experience**

Where possible to be someone with safeguarding knowledge and experience, who has been or is working with children.

### **Skills/Values/Personal qualities**

- A mature person, approachable, discrete and trustworthy
- A good listener
- Able to keep confidentiality
- Non-judgemental and unshockable
- Able to be objective
- Aware of his/her own limitations, willing to seek advice/refer on
- Administrative skills
- Time available for training

# **MODEL FORMS FOR PARISH USE**

## **IMPORTANT TELEPHONE/CONTACT DETAILS:**

*(Please write in your local numbers.)*

### **Local Agencies:**

Police (all non-emergency enquiries)

Local Police Child/Family Protection Unit

Children's Social Services

Local Emergency Social Work Team

Local General Hospital

CHILDLINE	0800 1111
PARENTLINE PLUS	0808 800 222
Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)	0870 000 3344

### **Diocesan and Parish contacts**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Incumbent		
Parish Children's Representative		
Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser		

## **RESPONDING TO CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS – ACTION PLAN**

### **Procedure to be followed if there are disclosures, allegations, complaints or suspicions**

#### **Hearing a child's disclosure of abuse:**

If a child asks to talk in confidence DO NOT promise confidentiality. You have a duty to refer a child or young person who is at risk.

#### **Imminent risk**

If you encounter a child in a situation where the child is in imminent danger, you should act immediately to secure the safety of the child.

Seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to children's social services.

If a child needs emergency medical attention, this should be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents, if available, should be kept fully informed.

#### **What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused**

Agree with your group leader, Parish Children's Representative or Incumbent who will make the referral.

Make an immediate telephone referral to the children's social services. Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child protection referral

Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family. Remember to give as much detail as possible, distinguishing between fact and opinion and also what is first hand knowledge and what has been heard from others (hearsay).

#### **For out of hours referrals, call the emergency social work team or where urgent, the police.**

Ensure that you notify your supervisor, Parish Children's Representative and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. You should also notify your Incumbent, if you have not already done so.

#### **Sharing concerns with parents**

Where there are concerns that the parent(s) may be responsible for or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with parent(s) may place the child at further risk. In such a case advice must always firstly be sought from children's social services or police as to how and who informs the parent(s).

**Local police tel:**.....

**Local children's social services tel:** .....

## CHECKLIST FOR THOSE MAKING REFERRALS

	<b>Easy reference and audit trail</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Action and Outcome Sign and Date</b>
1.	Information gathered and checked for accuracy i.e. child's details from register		
2.	Decision making process by whom and action agreed		
3.	Referral made by and who aware of referral		
4.	Has the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser been consulted?		
5.	Has the Archdeacon or Bishop been informed?		
6.	Does the alleged perpetrator hold a position in the church, if so was he/she suspended?		
7.	Media interest, if so has the Diocesan Communications Officer been informed?		
8.	Have the insurers been notified?		
9.	Has the Diocesan Registrar been informed?		
10.	What support is in place for the person who has suffered the abuse?		
11.	What support is in place for the alleged perpetrator?		

**Parish Policy Statement for Safeguarding Children 20...**

**Parish of** .....

in the Church of England Diocese of Rochester.

The following policy was agreed at The Parochial Church Council (PCC)

meeting held on .....

- We are committed to implementing a safeguarding children policy and procedures, accepting as a minimum the House of Bishops’ Policy, Protecting All God’s Children (4<sup>th</sup> edition 2010). In addition the Parish will follow the diocesan procedures and recommended good practice, while being responsive to local parish requirement.
- We will review and endorse all safeguarding policies annually, at the first meeting of the new PCC, so that new members are aware of their responsibilities and confirm the existence of their parish policy on child protection.
- The highest standards will be maintained in all the Church’s contacts with children and young people, and adult volunteers will be given appropriate support and opportunities for training.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that a child or young person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.
- This parish will cooperate fully with the statutory agencies in every situation and will not conduct its own investigations.
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse.
- We will care for and supervise any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.
- The Parochial Church Council of this parish acknowledges its responsibility for all work with children and young people done in the name of the Church and requires all those engaged in such work to be properly appointed and supported in accordance with current good practice and guidelines issued through the Diocese of Rochester.

We have appointed, as our Parish Children’s Representative (*please complete all details clearly*):

Name .....

Address (including postcode) .....

.....

Telephone ..... Email.....

Signed: *Parish Priest/Incumbent* **OR** *Chair of PCC in a vacancy*

.....

**AND**

*Churchwarden*.....

*Please keep one copy with PCC minutes, display one on a church notice board, AND return one copy to  
The Administrator, Diocesan Safeguarding Advisory Group,  
Diocese of Rochester, Diocesan Office, St Nicholas’ Church, Boley Hill Rochester, ME1 1SL  
Issued by the Diocese of Rochester*

## **Registration/Parental Consent Form For Regular Specified Group Activities**

**To be completed annually for all children and young people attending regular church groups**

Name of parish .....

Name of group .....

Name of group leader .....

Specified activities.....

.....

### **Parent(s)/Guardian(s)**

**Please read and complete the following section**

Full name of child ..... Date of birth .....

Home address .....

..... Postcode .....

Telephone number ..... Email .....

Name of parent(s)/guardian(s) .....

Medical details of the child .....

.....

Name and address of doctor .....

.....

Telephone number of doctor .....

Whilst your child is in our care it would be helpful for us to know whether he or she suffers from any medical conditions, allergies or phobias or is on any medication?

.....

.....

If your child is taking medication, does he or she need to carry the drugs on their person?  
.....

Is there any activity that your child should not be allowed to participate in?  
.....

### Consent

Full name of parent(s)/guardian(s) .....

I agree to any emergency medical treatment as considered necessary by the medical authorities if I cannot be contacted.

My child will be brought and collected from the group Yes/No\*

My child has permission to travel to and from the group without me Yes/No\*

I agree to images of my child taking part in the activities to be used within the church community and for possible publication including newspapers or internet  
Yes/No\*

\*(delete as applicable)

### For Young People aged 11 and over

I agree for my child to be contacted by the Youth Working Team for the purpose of activities approved by the PCC.

Telephone: Yes/No\*

Text message: Yes/No\*

Email: Yes/No\*

facebook (children 13 and over): Yes/No\*

**I give consent to my child attending the above group and taking part in the specified activities**

Signed.....

Date.....

Emergency contact details if different from above .....



# Parental Consent Form For Single Events

To be completed for all children and young people who are attending a “one off” event

Name of parish .....

Details of the event .....

Name of group leader .....

## Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Please read and complete the following section

Full name of child .....

Date of birth .....

Home address .....

.....Postcode.....

Telephone number .....Email .....

Name of parent(s)/guardian(s) .....

Medical details of the child .....

.....

Name and address of doctor .....

.....

Telephone number of doctor .....

Whilst your child is in our care it would be helpful for us to know whether he or she suffers from any medical conditions, allergies or phobias.

.....

.....

Give details of any medication and does he or she need to carry the drugs on their person? (Please make sure an adequate supply accompanies the child to the event).

.....  
.....

Give details of any dietary requirements.....

Is there any activity that your child should not be allowed to participate in?

.....  
.....

### **Consent**

Full name of parent(s)/guardian(s) .....

I agree to any emergency medical treatment as considered necessary by the medical authorities if I cannot be contacted.

I agree to images of my child taking part in the activities to be used within the church community and for possible publication including newspapers or internet. Yes/No

My child will/will not be in possession of a mobile phone.

If in possession of a mobile phone I am aware that this will be taken away throughout the night to reduce disruption and observe individuals' privacy.

**I give consent to my child attending and participating in the above event.**

Signed.....

Date.....

Emergency contact details if different from above .....

.....

# Health and Safety Check List

Name, activity and location of group.....

The following is a model check list to assist in safeguarding children and young people

## 1. Register and parental consent

Is there an up to date register of all those in attendance including leaders and helpers?

Has an annual parental consent form been signed for regular group sessions or has a parental consent form been signed for a single "one off" event/trip?

## 2. Staffing and security

Are adult/child ratios appropriate for the group and for the activity?

Have all adults been appointed in line with the Safeguarding Guidelines relating to safer Recruitment Interim Document 2010?

Are the places where children or young people meet safe and secure from unwelcome visitors?

Is it possible for children or young people to slip outside without a leader being aware?

## 3. Provision for people with special needs

Is there suitable access and provisions made for people with special needs?

## 4. Fire safety

Are fire notices displayed informing people what to do in case of fire?

Are there suitable fire fighting appliances that are serviced regularly?

Are smoke detectors fitted?

Are all adults aware of evacuation procedures should a fire occur i.e. fire exits and assembly point?

## 5. First aid

Is there a designated first aider with up to date training available during all activities?

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Is there an up to date first aid kit available both on the premises and for activities away from the premises?

Is there an accident book available both on the premises and for activities away from the premises?

Are all accidents recorded?

6. Has a risk assessment been undertaken of the premises and reviewed annually?
7. Has a risk assessment been carried out of the activities undertaken within the group/event and reviewed annually?
8. Is there access to a telephone on the premises?
9. Is food regularly prepared for children on the premises?

If yes, have the facilities been checked by the Environmental Health Officer?

Does anyone hold a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate?

10. If children bring packed lunches, are there refrigeration facilities?

Are cold drinks always available?

11. Is the venue warm, well lit and well ventilated?
12. Is the venue clean and free of clutter?
13. Are all electric sockets covered?
14. Are there adequate toilets and hand basins easily accessible with hygienic drying facilities?
15. Is appropriate space and equipment available for any intended activity?

Do not allow unaccompanied children to walk to or from premises along dark or badly lit paths.

Signed.....

Designation.....Date.....

**This should be stored**

## ACTIVITIES CHECK LIST FORM

**Group:**

**Activity:**

**Destination:**

**Dates:**

**Are all leaders DBS checked?**

**How many helpers are DBS Checked?** .....

**Please give staffing/child ratios (see diocesan policy)** .....

**Method of transportation:**

**Register of attendees including leaders and helpers**

**Copy of consent forms with emergency contact details**

**Knowledge of medical conditions**

**List of appropriate telephone numbers, local children's services office and out of office hours, local police service**

**Guidance/procedure policy to assist in untoward occurrence i.e. illness, injury, child going missing, child making a disclosure of abuse**

**Person responsible for first aid kit and incident book** .....

**Insurance**

**Has a risk assessment form been completed for all activities (inc sleeping/washing) and premises? (see reverse)**

**Group/party leader signature** .....

**Printed name** .....

**Signature of person authorised by PCC** .....

**Printed name** .....

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## RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

<u>Activity/Action</u>	<u>Potential Hazards</u>	<u>Control Measures</u>	<u>Action Plan in Place for Untoward Occurrences</u>
e.g. Sleeping, washing, food hygiene, cycling, transport.			

# **Model agreement with offender**

## **PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

### **An Agreement between JK and the churches of St Luke's benefice**

2 January 2012

#### **St Luke's and St Andrew's Churches agree to the following:**

1. To welcome JK into the fellowship of our church.
2. To encourage him to grow in his faith in Christ.
3. To help him live out his new life in Christ.
4. To assist him in his desire not to reoffend.
5. To guard against JK being wrongly accused of any offence.
6. To provide a local support group of Revd AB, Mr CD, Mrs EF and Mr GH who will meet regularly with JK to provide pastoral support and challenge where appropriate. This will be convened by CD and will meet monthly until the first Review, and bi-monthly or at JK's request thereafter. Proper notes shall be maintained and a copy of these lodged with EF or her successor as Parish Children's Representative, and the Incumbent.
7. To allow JK to practise the organ at either church by arrangement with the Incumbent and in the presence of the Incumbent or another person nominated by him.

To this end, the following people will know about JK's past offences and will offer fellowship, support, and supervision: Revd AA (Incumbent), Revd AB, Revd IJ, Mrs KL, Mrs MN and Mr CD (and their successors as Churchwardens), Mr PQ and Mr RS (and their successors as Churchwardens), Mr GH, Mrs EF.

No one else will be informed about JK's past offences, unless there is a perceived risk to children or any other member of the public. Appropriate levels of confidentiality will be maintained.

#### **JK agrees to the following:**

1. To sit apart from children and young people at church services and meetings.
2. To stay away from areas of the church where children or young people meet.
3. To ensure that he is never alone with children or young people.
4. To accept the supervision and guidance of members of the support group (see above).

5. Not to accept any official role in the church which gives him authority over others.
6. If visiting without Mrs K, not to visit the homes of church members without invitation and giving prior notice to the Incumbent or Revd AB.
7. Not to volunteer for any role that would involve responsibility for children.
8. Not to initiate any unsupervised contact with children.
9. To attend a cell group regularly as directed by the Incumbent.
10. To inform the Incumbent (or if the Incumbent is unavailable, the Parish Children's Representative, or failing that, another member of the Review Group) and the diocesan safeguarding children adviser of any arrangement to play the organ or be involved in any musical activity at another church within the diocese.
11. To inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (if unavailable the Parish Children's Representative) of any arrangement to play the organ or be involved in any musical activity at a place of worship outside the diocese, or of another religious denomination.
12. To inform any place of worship at which an arrangement has been made to play the organ or be involved in any musical activity that JK is subject to an agreement with this parish.
13. To inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser of any jobs or volunteer work applied for at other churches.

If this agreement is broken by JK he understands that this may result in further measures being taken and the Police or Probation Service being informed.

The operation of this agreement will be monitored by TU or her successor as benefice Parish Children's Representative. TU will also be responsible for convening review meetings.

### **Review points**

This agreement will be reviewed after three months, and thereafter every six months and at other times as determined by the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, or as requested by probation or police colleagues with the consent of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Adviser. JK may request a review at any time.

Reviews will take the form of a face-to-face meeting with JK and at least two members of the following group and will be recorded. A copy will be given to JK and a copy placed on the confidential file and supplied to the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Adviser.

### **Review group**

AB, TU, PQ or her successor as Churchwarden, GH or his successor as Churchwarden, VW (or his successor in the police public protection unit), XY (or his successor in the probation service), CD.

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**Reviews will also take place at the following milestones:**

1. On completion of an approved sex offender treatment programme, when subject to the receipt of a satisfactory report consideration will be given to JK being allowed to volunteer as an occasional organist for weddings, funerals and other occasional services.
2. When discharged from probation, when consideration will be given to JK being used as a regular volunteer organist for any service, subject to the advice of the professional colleagues working with JK.
3. When JK's name is removed from the sex offenders register.

**Signed .....** (Revd AB, Incumbent)

**Date .....**

**Signed .....** (Mr JK)

**Date .....**

**In the presence of:**

.....

**References:**

HM Government "Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015"

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004

House of Bishops' policy "Protecting All Gods Children 4<sup>th</sup> edition 2010"

House of Bishops' policy "Promoting a safe church 2006"

House of Bishops' document "Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment June 2015"

House of Bishops' policy "Responding to domestic abuse 2006"

House of Bishops' policy "Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused 2011 (1<sup>st</sup> Edition 2011)"

Data Protection Act 1998

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) "Filming and taking photographs"

Kent Safeguarding Children's Board "Safer Practice with Technology"

Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre (CEOP) "Internet Safety"