

Guidelines for Working with Children and Young People at Christ Church, Abingdon, Northcourt Road and Long Furlong *(version 3g, May 2017)*

The following is to be read, understood and 'owned' by clergy, youth and children's workers, members of the Church Council, and all those involved in leading and helping, on a regular basis, work with children and young people.

Christ Church, and the Church of England, are committed to:

- The care, nurture of and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children and adults
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults when they are vulnerable
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse

'Protecting All God's Children', 2010 House of Bishops Policy for Safeguarding Children

These **Guidelines** encourage good practice as they recognise the responsibility of care that we have as a church towards our children and young people and will help us work towards preventing the physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of children and young people while they are in our care. They also protect those who work with children and young people from unfounded accusations or from behaving in ways that may be well intentioned but inadvisable. These guidelines do not attempt to be comprehensive. For further information please read the **Sources** below.

Responsibility for implementing these **Guidelines** rests with the Church Council, who have appointed a Parish Child Protection Representative to oversee compliance and implementation. The Council can be legally liable if the duty of care for children is neglected. The Church Council takes responsibility for those who work with children, including appointment and support, and asks those in children's/youth work to follow the **Guidelines** attached.

The guidelines are divided into 3 areas:

- Safe recruitment principles
- Guidelines for safer working practice
- What to do in suspected or disclosed cases of child abuse
(child in this document refers to all children and youth under 18)

SOURCES

The following publications are all available online

Protecting All God's Children, House of Bishops, 4th Edition 2010

Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment 2015, House of Bishops, 2015

Safeguarding Handbook for the Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults, Oxford Diocese Mar 2012

Working together to Safeguard Children, Dept of Education Mar 2015

Keeping children safe in education, Dept of Education Mar 2015

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, Dept of Education Mar 2015

Children's Act 2004

Useful Websites

www.oxford.anglican.org/mission-ministry/safeguarding

www.nspcc.org.uk

PLEASE READ AND KEEP SAFE *(destroy previous versions)*

SAFER RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE

All paid staff and volunteers are appointed under the same procedure.

All those who work/wish to work with children and young people aged 0 to 17 yrs will be interviewed (informally in the case of volunteers) before they are appointed. Every applicant must:

- Fill in an application form and provide names of two referees
Applicants will be asked about previous experience of working or contact with children, but lack of experience will not be a bar to the role.
- Complete a Confidential Declaration form (*per Oxford Diocese model*)
- Complete an Enhanced DBS disclosure
An Enhanced DBS disclosure previously issued through another organisation (e.g. Scouts, or schools) may be acceptable subject to certain conditions.
All convictions (for example, offences such as drink-driving) are relevant and must be declared, however old. They will not automatically be a bar to the role.
- Receive a copy of these guidelines, a volunteer agreement and a letter of appointment.
This will outline what you have been asked to do, and the person you report to.
It also asks you to read these guidelines and you agree to keep them.

16 & 17 yr olds helping with younger age groups are not to be given sole responsibility for a group. They will sign a Confidential Declaration and be given a copy of this policy.

All application documents will be kept confidential.

We will continue to guide and support people appointed to both paid and voluntary posts by routine team working and ensuring they receive formal Safeguarding Training at least every 3 years.

Outside groups using the premises

Anyone from outside Christ Church invited to be involved with our children's/youth work will be recruited using the principles of this document. People using our premises for children's/youth work will be shown a summary of these Guidelines and asked to abide by them. A copy of the full Guidelines is also available to them

GUIDELINES FOR SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

Remember these are not exhaustive guidelines. Further information can be found in the Diocesan Handbook (see page 1) or from the Children's or Youth Minister.

Team working is an important part of working with children and young people. It is important for all volunteers and paid staff to meet together regularly in their groups to review their work, plan, and pray about the children/young people in their care. All groups will have a leader or coordinator.

Conduct

- Be aware that you are in a position of trust and your actions can impact the young people in your care. You should behave and dress in a manner appropriate to the role.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned, therefore:
 - Make sure that physical/verbal contact is appropriate. You may hug a child - but don't prolong it.
 - Do not make suggestive remarks or gestures.
 - All children should be treated equally - favouritism should be avoided, as should giving or receiving presents other than small tokens of appreciation
- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming himself or others. Use least possible force, inform the parents, record any concerning incidents and give the information to your Group Leader/Parish Safeguarding Representative (see last page)
- If you see another member of staff/volunteer acting in ways that might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to your group leader, or to one of those listed on the final page of these guidelines.

Pastoral Situations

- In a pastoral situation with a young person where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure another adult knows the conversation is taking place, and with whom. Avoid, if possible, being in a room/building alone with a young person without another adult nearby. Doors should be left open. A better alternative is to have the conversation in a public place e.g. coffee shop. Caution is always required.
- Avoid in-depth pastoral conversations via phone or electronic means e.g. text/email/instant message/Facebook. Instead arrange a face-to-face meeting. Any notes recorded should be hand written, not kept on a computer to comply with the Church's Data Protection Policy.

Off-site or Overnight

- Where children are transported by car, as far as possible have more than one passenger in the vehicle. If a child is the only passenger they should sit in the back of the car
- For events involving sleeping away from home do not sleep in the same room as children/young people

Supervision

- An adult should not be left alone with a child/young person where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others.
- Adults visiting groups should always be accompanied by a known person who has been through the Christ Church recruitment procedure
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy. Where possible when taking children to the toilet, wait outside. Inform another adult if it is necessary to go in.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around
- Recommended staffing levels (remembering that helpers under 18 count as children too). There should be sufficient number of persons present at all times to ensure the safety and welfare of the children. Whenever possible have at least two adults present with a group, with appropriate gender match. Staffing levels recommended by the Diocese are:

0-2 yrs	1 person for every 3 children
2-3 yrs	1 person for every 4 children
4-8 yrs	1 person for every 8 children
Over 8 yrs	1 person for the first 8 then 1 more for every 12 extra children

General Safety

- Leaders should make themselves aware of fire exits and fire equipment
- Leaders should know where the first aid kits are
- Leaders should be familiar with the Premises Guidelines concerning safe use and security of the buildings (these are posted in many of the rooms).
- Leaders need to be aware of potential dangers, e.g. misuse or poor storage of equipment; loose carpets; adults: child ratios; boisterous children; etc. and take appropriate action.
- Faulty equipment/toys should be taken out of use, labelled as faulty and the problem reported to the Administrative Assistant via the Church Office.
- A register of children present should be kept. The register should also contain details concerning parents, contact telephone number; relevant medical details etc and be readily available in case of emergencies. These details should be updated regularly and kept in line with the church Data Protection Policy.
- More detailed permission and medical forms should be used for activities off premises or overnight.

WHAT TO DO IN SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED CASES OF CHILD ABUSE

The church and all its appointed children's and youth workers are committed to the protection of children from physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

Types of abuse

- Physical - where children's bodies are hurt or injured
- Emotional - where children don't receive love or affection, may be frightened by threats or taunts, or are given responsibilities beyond their years
- Sexual - where adults (and sometimes other children) use children to satisfy sexual desires
- Neglect - where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development

Signs of abuse

The following *may* indicate abuse, but do not jump to conclusions. There could be other explanations.

- Physical - unexplained or hidden injuries, lack of medical attention
- Emotional - reverting to younger behaviour, nervousness, attention seeking, running away, stealing, lying
- Sexual - preoccupation with sexual matters in words, play, drawings; being sexually provocative with adults; disturbed sleep, nightmares; secretive relationships with adults or children
- Neglect - looking ill-cared for and unhappy; being withdrawn or aggressive

What do to if a child tells you about abuse

- Stay calm
- Listen to the child attentively
- Maintain eye contact
- Allow the child to talk but do not press for information except to clarify what has happened
- Do not use leading questions (questions which imply a certain answer)
- Tell the child that 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.

If abuse is disclosed or discovered (or if you have concerns you want to talk through with someone)

- Do not delay - ***if you believe the child to be in obvious danger contact the police on 999***
- Do not start to investigate
- Do not discuss details with anyone except those listed below:

Christ Church (for advice and support for yourself)

- **Parish Safeguarding Representative - Roland Knight** (01235) 412944, 07969 808776
- **Children's Minister - Heather Hughes** (01235),
- **Youth Pastor - Bea Ellaby** (01235) 539176,
- **Anne Taylor** (Long Furlong) (01235)

Oxford Diocese (for advice and support for yourself)

- **John Nixson** - Diocesan Child Protection 01865 208290 or 208257
<John.Nixson@oxford.anglican.org>
Out of hours (for cases involving church staff) the Bishops and Archdeacons have his contact details.
- **Yvonne Morris** - Diocesan Children's Advisor 01865 208255
- **Ian MacDonald** - Diocesan Youth Advisor 01865 208253

Other (for advice about disclosure or to refer):

- **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** 0345 0507666; 01865 335276
- **Children's Social Care Team (South)** 01865 323041 or 0800 833408 (out of hours)
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** if it concerns a church worker 01865 810603
- **Thames Valley Police** (non urgent) 101
- **Childline** 0800 1111
- **NSPCC** 0808 800 5000

Remember - you are trying to protect the child from further harm

You will be supported throughout by your group coordinator/leader.