



Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy v.6.5 May 2015

Changes to the previous version are highlighted in yellow.

Introduction

The following policy statement was agreed at the PCC meeting held on 28th Sept 2015

'As members of the PCC we commit our church community to the support, nurture, protection and safeguarding of all, especially the young and vulnerable. We recognise that our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the whole church community. We are fully committed to acting within current legislation, guidance, national frameworks and the Diocesan Safeguarding procedures. We will also act in an open, transparent and accountable way in working in partnership with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Children and Adult Social Care Services, the Police, Probation Services and other agencies to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. We welcome staff and volunteers who are recruited in accordance with House of Bishops' Interim Guidelines on Safer Recruitment 2013. This means we will ensure that those who are employed or who volunteer to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are suitable for the role, that they know what the role entails and that they are supported in carrying it out.'

Our child protection policy is taken directly from the Diocese of Exeter Safeguarding Policy. Additional advice has been taken from the House of Bishops' Interim Guidelines on Safer Recruitment 2013, Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) and St John's Ambulance.

Those involved in ministry with children or young people **must** be familiar with this document. The important key points are summarised below. We aim to ensure that-

- Children are safe from physical, emotional and sexual harm.
- The background, experience and suitability of employees and volunteers are checked.
- All volunteers and employees avoid situations which could be seen as compromising.
- There is an 'awareness' culture within our church fellowship, understanding of the risks to children and what is acceptable behaviour by adults.
- Safe relationships which are Christ centred flourish within our fellowship.
- We follow legislation guidance and recognised good practice
- Pastoral care is provided for those who have been involved in allegations or abuse

Recruitment

Frequent, intensive and unsupervised contact with children or young people **are** defined as **follows**:

- **frequent contact** is defined as once a month or more
- **intensive contact** is defined as 3 days or more in any 30 day period or overnight (2am and 6am)
- **Unsupervised activities** is defined as teaching, training, instructing, caring or supervising children or providing advice/guidance on well being or driving a vehicle only for children (ie being a driver for an organised trip).
- **A child** is defined as a person under 18 years of age.

All employees and volunteers having unsupervised, frequent or intensive contact with children will follow the recruitment procedure:

1. Undertake informal induction process which checks suitability and previous experience.
2. Complete a Volunteer Registration Form and hand it to the supervisor or leader of that ministry.
3. Referee will be contacted by the line manager, safeguarding rep or church leader to obtain a reference.
4. Complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS – previously called CRB) form with a church safeguarding officer. The applicant will complete an on-line form and will have their identity checked. The checker will confirm the applicant's identity on the on-line form and will submit it to their archdeaconry contact who will then sign it off and submit it to CCPAS.
5. Read, understood and signed to comply with the current church safeguarding policy
6. Receive appropriate training (if required).
7. Have a clearly defined job description which is subject to review.

Group activities

It is important to ensure that -

- There is safe access to venues, with main doors shut or entrance supervised and well lit.
- At least two adult leaders are present at all times (ideally one leader of each sex).
- Enough leaders are present to ensure safety and good organisation in all age groups. Extra care should be taken to ensure there is adequate supervision if a youngster with additional needs is part of the group.
- A register should be kept of all children/young people attending clubs. This should also record the helpers present at each session.
- Accidents are reported to parents/carers (using appropriate forms). Head injuries should be reported to parents immediately on a form specifically for this purpose.

Should this happen on an activity weekend, the child should be monitored for any signs of concussion.

- Accidents are recorded either in the accident book (kept in the church office) or accident forms (back of registers at clubs/activities) which must be transferred to the accident book in the church office.
- Physical contact between adults and children can be healthy and acceptable in public places but should be avoided if adult and child are alone. It should never be initiated by an adult.
- Adults should not be in a room alone with a young person with the door closed.
- Counselling and first aid should be done by same sex leaders and another adult must be around when this is taking place.
- Where confidentiality is important eg counselling or mentoring, ensure that other adults know that the interview is taking place and that another adult is in the building with doors left open.
- All children are treated with dignity and respect and there is no favouritism.
- Bullying is never acceptable and should always be taken seriously and dealt with. The victim of bullying should always be spoken with about any incidents separately from the child who is bullying. If possible, one to one monitoring of the perpetrator should be put in place and counselling offered before a child who persistently offends is requested not to attend. The victim is likely to be experiencing emotional damage and needs protection.

Health and safety

Church employees and volunteers must be vigilant in the safety of children in the following areas:

- A risk assessment will be carried out by the leaders for each activity to ensure it is safe, age appropriate and resourced properly. Forms are available from Safeguarding Rep, Youth Worker or Church Health and Safety officer.
- Fire safety
- Equipment safety.
- Transport (ensure seat belt laws obeyed/children under 12years old to sit in the back with booster seats used as necessary).
- Hygiene (including food and drink preparation as well as toilet facilities)
- Insurance

Advice should be obtained from the Church Health and Safety Officer.

First Aid

- Key personnel to have training in first aid and hold current certificate
- First Aid kit and accident report forms must be available at all clubs and outings
- Record any incidents and report to parents using appropriate forms
- Any medications to be given to leader for safekeeping in container labelled with name and dosage. Medicines must not be stored in first aid kit.
- If first aid or prescribed medications need to be given to a young person two adults must be present (one to administer and one to observe)
- In exceptional circumstances paracetamol (sachets or tablets) may be administered under the direction of person who has had first aid or medical training. Sticking plasters may be used if necessary and after checking for possible allergies. All medications can only be given when signed, written consent from a parent or carer has been obtained.

Correct conduct for youth workers

- Dress appropriately for youth activities.
- Provide a Christian role model.
- Avoid being alone with a young person behind closed doors.
- Report any behaviour by young people or adults which cause concern to the Child Protection Representative and make a written record as soon as possible.
- Do not invite a child/young person into your house alone, only as part of a group and with another adult present.
- Only visit a child/young person in their own home if a parent/carer is present.
- Do not give lifts to young people alone. If this is unavoidable then the child should sit in the back of the car.
- It is helpful to keep a written record of any accidents or unusual events which cause you concern, each leader recording what they witness.
- If under exceptional circumstances it is not possible to follow this policy it must be reported in writing to a line manager, Junior Church Leader or the Child Protection Representative.

Child abuse

Definitions

- **NEGLECT** – the basic needs (eg food, clothes etc) of a child are not met.
- **PHYSICAL ABUSE** – injuries such as inflicted by hitting, shaking, burning (these do not always result in visible injuries).
- **SEXUAL ABUSE** – this is when adults or older children seek sexual gratification by using children. This includes exposing children to sexually explicit behaviour or pornographic material.

- EMOTIONAL ABUSE – lack of love/affection or threats/shouting.
- SPIRITUAL ABUSE – inappropriate use of religious belief or practice (eg misuse of the authority of leadership, oppressive teaching)
- ORGANISED/ INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE – involving one or more abuser and a group of children
- ABUSE LINKED TO FAITH OR BELIEF – is based on a belief in “possession” and “witchcraft”.

Facts

- Occurs in all social classes, professions, religions, cultures and ethnic groups.
- In most reported incidents children are abused by adults they know and trust.
- Children seldom make false accusations.
- Abuse has serious long term harmful effects.
- There are rarely any obvious signs that a child has been sexually abused. It can be hard to diagnose even for professionals.
- The majority of calls to help lines by children relate to bullying.
- Bullying can be profoundly damaging and at worst lead to suicide.

Recognising abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy and it is not your responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. However any concerns should be reported immediately to the Child Safeguarding Representative (see last page for contact details). If suspicions involve the Child Safeguarding Representative then reports should be made to the Vicar. In serious cases direct referral to Child Protection Agencies or the Police may be appropriate.

- Signs of neglect – constantly hungry, dirty, smelly, tired. Mentioning that they are left alone or unsupervised.
- Signs of physical abuse – unexplained bruises, marks or injuries which are not in the usual locations such as knees, elbows and shins.
- Signs of sexual abuse – discomfort when walking or sitting down, pain or itching in genital/anal areas, sexual knowledge beyond their age.
- Signs of emotional abuse – sudden speech disorders, neurotic behaviour and self harming.
- Digital technology such as the internet and mobile phones are being increasingly used as a medium for abuse. Amongst their peers children may experience ‘sexting’, ‘cyber-bullying’ or be enticed to have taken or send explicit photographs of themselves. With adults it may also take the form of the production and distribution of photos or video displaying abusive images of children. Children can also be entrapped and blackmailed by these practices.

Why Don't Children and Young People Tell?

It is commonly believed that a child or young person would resist abuse at all costs or immediately tell a trusted adult. In fact children often need to overcome a number of barriers which may be emotional or intellectual but are very real for them. Children and young people often don't tell because they:

- are scared - because they have been threatened by the perpetrator
- believe they will be taken away from home and put in care
- believe they are to blame
- think it is what happens to all children
- feel shame, embarrassment or guilt
- don't want the abuser to get into trouble
- have communication or learning difficulties
- may not have the vocabulary to explain what happened
- are afraid they won't be believed

All of us have a natural revulsion upon hearing someone has maltreated a child and must resist our inclination to dismiss its possible truth in favour of a more comfortable rationale. In putting the needs and interests of children first in our thoughts and actions, we must be prepared to take what we see and hear at face value and act accordingly. Adults are usually more capable of recovering from misinterpretations and false allegations than a child is capable of recovering from the long-term effects of abuse that have gone without appropriate intervention by those that could have acted but didn't.

The Procedure for Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse is everyone's responsibility:

- In the first instance, if there are safeguarding concerns, contact should be made within 24 hours with the relevant Parish Safeguarding Representative.
- A written record must be made, signed and dated detailing the concern, allegation or disclosure. This must be passed to the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (or Assistant) to assist in the decision-making process.
- The Parish Safeguarding Representative will consult with the Parish Priest/Vicar and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor to determine what action may need to be taken.
- It should be noted that if making contact with any of the above becomes problematic and risks delay causing the potential for greater or further harm, the concern should be escalated to the next step to achieve a timely response to safeguarding matters.

- If the safeguarding concern relates to a member of the clergy (or other person in a position of trust and responsibility), contact should be made within 24 hours directly with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor 01392 294912 (or Assistant 01392 294929). A written record must be made in the same manner. The Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor will then consult with necessary parties to facilitate a prompt and effective response.

Email addresses should not be used as the initial point of contact for any safeguarding concerns where there is the need for swift advice, unless there is no other means of making contact with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team. In the case of an emergency, contact should always be made with the Police by dialing **999**.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

Disclosure of abuse is often a process, not a one-off event. Any concerns should be noted over time as they may contribute 'jig-saw-like' to a larger picture. It is important to be aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred (that is for the professional child protection agencies).

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully to what is said
- Explain that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace
- Ask questions for clarification only, and otherwise avoid asking questions
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record in writing exactly what was said using the child's own words
- Report immediately to a Safeguarding Representative – Brenda Soldan or Morag Kingsbury (or Rev Kate Woolven)
- Allegations should then be kept confidential

If an allegation is made against a worker or volunteer, they will be suspended from working with children during the investigations. The Child Protection Representative will notify the Vicar who will immediately ensure that this person is given pastoral support.

Recording allegations or incidents

In all situations where an employee or volunteer is concerned about a disclosure made in confidence, the behaviour of a child or the behaviour of an adult, it is vitally important to record details immediately. An accurate written record should be made of:

- Date and time of the incident or disclosure
- Parties involved
- What was said or done by whom – it is helpful to note actual words used
- Any action taken to refer the matter for investigation
- Any further action, e.g. suspension of a worker
- Where relevant, reasons why there is no referral to a statutory agency
- Names of person reporting and to whom reported

The record should be clear and factual. It may be needed by child protection agencies investigating the incident and may, in the future, be used as evidence in court. The record should be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

Electronic and mobile phone communication.

This includes text messaging, e-mail, social networking sites and use of mobile phones etc. All electronic communication made between an authorised church worker (either paid or volunteer, over 18 years old) and a young person is deemed communication in a professional capacity. Therefore, the following applies:

- Children under 13 years of age must not be communicated with using these methods.
- Parents of teenagers should be made aware that notification of meeting times etc may be carried out by text message, by e-mail or on Facebook. Parent's requests for their children not to be communicated with in these ways must be respected. Do not discriminate against a child who does not have a mobile phone or PC or where parents do not consent to electronic communication. Ensure that there are other means of communication available as necessary.
- Profiles used in youth work must be 'work' (i.e. not personal). As profiles are typically connected with email addresses, such profiles must use a work email address (i.e. an email address set up with specifically for church work).
- All authorised church worker profiles and associated logins and passwords, although not in the public domain, must be centrally held and accessible to line-managers and the church child protection representative and advisors.

- All messages should be available to be viewed as necessary (it may be sensible for young people to realise this). Therefore, church workers must set up electronic communications such that all emails, private messages and other methods of communication are stored, either remotely or locally by the church worker. These 'conversations' must be accessible by the line manager, child-protection representative and advisors.
- Authorised church workers should not have access to the personal details of young people. Therefore, church workers must set up profiles such that the privacy of profiles of young people in the network is respected. Sub groups (for example, sub-forums, fan pages, walls, member networks, etc.) set up specifically for use within the church youth work (for example, an Uplyme Youth Facebook page) must respect the privacy of the member individuals and be administered by more than one authorised church worker and subject to monitoring by church child protection officers.
- Avoid the use of private electronic "live chat" (instant messaging)
- Whenever possible, group texts/e-mails should be used rather than communications with individuals.
- Do not respond to inappropriate messages from young people. Any inappropriate or questionable behaviour should immediately be reported to line manager and /or child protection representative.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Do not use electronic communication methods or mobile phones between 10pm and 7am to correspond with young people (for this reason it may be necessary for those heavily involved in youth work to have separate personal and youth work mobiles).
- Use clear, unambiguous language. Avoid terms such as 'luv' or 'lol' or kisses (eg xxx).
- Webcams and picture messaging must not be used.
- Parental consent must be given before any photographs of children are taken. Additional consent should be gained if photos are to be used in publicity material. These photos must never be linked to personal information such as surnames or addresses. Group photos are preferable to pictures of individuals.
- All e-mails should carry the standard text below –

Please note – the content of this communication is not confidential and may be disclosed to other trusted people in exceptional circumstances.

Useful contacts

Vicar (Uplyme and Axmouth) Rev Kate Woolven 01297 444581

Youth Worker (position vacant).

Safeguarding Rep (Children) Brenda Soldan 01297 553269 soldans2@gmail.com.

Safeguarding Rep (Vulnerable adults) Morag Kingsbury 01297 443947
morag.kingsbury@btinternet.com

Child Protection Advisors (Uplyme)

Anne Hardman 01297 444799
Morag Kingsbury 01297 443947
Jo Clarke 01297 443050

Church Health and Safety Officer (position vacant)

Social Services

Exeter 01392 384528
Dorchester 01305 251414
Out of hours 0845 6000388

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors

Christine Hindle

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor
Tel: 01392 345909
Email: safeguarding@exeter.anglican.org

Sarah Miller
Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor
Tel: 01392 345910
Email: sarah.miller@exeter.anglican.org

Diocesan DBS Coordinator

Claire Sherlock
Claire.sherlock@exeter.anglican.org

NSPCC Help Line 0800 800500

Child line 0800 1111

CCPAS Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (www.ccpas.co.uk) 0845 1204551

MASH (Multi-agency safeguarding hub) – 03451 551071