



SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Originally prepared by Claudia Gordon, the Parish Child Protection Officer, Yvonne Gordon and Revd Henriette Howarth with the advice of Jo Musson, the Bishop's Adviser for Children's Work, May 2007.

This policy should be read in conjunction with *God's Children: Our Diocese*, a policy for the Diocese of Birmingham to protect and promote the interests of children and young people (published by the Diocese of Birmingham, November 2005, updated fourth revision 2011) and the Church of England's *Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment* published July 2016. These documents are available online or in the Church Office.

This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if the policy is subject to legislative change.

Updated : July 2017

The House of Bishop's Policy Statement

We are committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all children, young people and all 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 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.

We will carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that an adult, child or young person may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.

We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.

We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

In all these principles we will follow statute, guidance and recognised good practice.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

St Christopher's Springfield Parish Church Council recognises the need to safeguard the children, young people and adults in our care and guard against the possibility of any form of abuse of children, young people and adults by persons who may be acting in the name of our parish. We aim to create a safe environment for the nurture and development of children, young people and adults, in order for them to feel valued and confident to ask for support and help.

We will create a culture that maintains the protection and safeguarding of the children, young people and adults entrusted to our care and sees this as our highest priority. A **Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator** will be appointed to ensure the implementation of this policy.

- We recognize that everyone has different levels of vulnerability and that each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives and we commit ourselves to the safeguarding and respectful pastoral care of all people in our church.
- The parish commits itself to promoting the inclusion and empowerment of people who may be vulnerable.
- We commit to informing the whole church community about our safeguarding policy and procedures and recognise that it is the responsibility of each of us to prevent and report abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We will ensure the children, young people and adults in our care know who they can talk to if they have any concerns
- We recognise our responsibility to always respond to and report abuse in whatever context, inside or outside the church environment and will always listen to and take seriously any child, young person or adult who reports that they have been abused.
- We will always report allegations of abuse and concerns about a child, young person or an adult who is experiencing or at risk of abuse due to their illness or disability in accordance with our procedures.
- We will always report all allegations of abuse against Church Officers to the appropriate statutory agency and to the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser and co-operate with any investigation.
- We will keep all records in relation to safeguarding concerns, allegations and the recruitment of volunteers and paid workers securely.
- We commit to providing a safe physical environment for work with children, young people and adults.

- We commit ourselves to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust.
- We commit to the safe recruitment of all new and current Church Officers who have contact with children, young people and adults experiencing or at risk of abuse due to their illness or disability.
- We will assess all new and current Church Officer roles and, in every case where the role is deemed to be eligible, apply for an appropriate level criminal record check every five years.
- We commit to providing every Church Officer with clear instructions and information in respect of their role, adequate resources and support and regular opportunities for review.
- We will ensure that all Church Officers working with children, young people and adults experiencing or at risk of abuse due to their age, illness, disability or are in a trusted role attend Church of England safeguarding training every three years.
- We will inform the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser, and ensure appropriate supervision, of anyone who is known to have offended against a child, young person or an adult at risk of abuse due to their age, illness or disability who attends activities organised by the St Christopher's PCC and will follow all recommendations of the Bishop's Safeguarding Adviser in this regard.
- We require all hirers of our premises to have their own safeguarding policy and procedures, to provide us with an assurance that these are implemented and to provide us with a copy.
- The parish will adopt the policy and guidance of The Church of England and The Church of England Birmingham and we will review this safeguarding policy annually to monitor progress and ensure we meet current legislation and guidance.
- Each person who works with vulnerable people will agree to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this church.

This church appoints CLAUDIA GORDON to represent the concerns and views of vulnerable people at our meetings and to outside bodies as the **Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator**.

This church appoints RACHEL PATTINSON (Parish Administrator) as a **Parish Identity Verifier** to process online Disclosure and Barring Service applications.

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED IN POLICIES:

A '**Church Officer**' is anyone appointed by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid.

Significant Harm - The Children Act 1989 and 2004 introduced the concept of significant harm as a threshold justifying compulsory intervention into family life in the best interest of the child. The local authority has a duty to make enquiries or cause them to be made where it is felt that there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

RECOGNITION OF HARM (CHILD ABUSE)

Child abuse is not new, although it was increasingly recognized, named and condemned during the course of the 20th and into the 21st century. It affects girls and boys, babies and all young people up to the age of 18, children with learning difficulties, children with physical disabilities, and children from any kind of family background.

Child abuse is a comprehensive term which encapsulates all the ways in which a child's physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and social development and health are damaged by other people. It is an abuse of relationships; a misuse of power and a betrayal of trust. A child may be abused or neglected directly, as a result of someone causing them harm, indirectly, through seeing abuse or by the failure of someone acting to prevent harm.

TYPES OF ABUSE

(Detailed handout available from annual Safeguarding & CP Training / or Church Safeguarding Officer)

Physical

Physical injury may involve hitting, smacking, shaking, throwing, burning/scalding, drowning, or suffocating.

Neglect

Neglect is a persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the individual's health and/or development.

Emotional

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or vulnerable person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the individual's emotional development. Such behaviour may involve conveying to the person

that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate on the basis of their race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, etc.

Sexual

Sexual abuse occurs where a child or vulnerable person has been forced or enticed into taking part in sexual activities whether they are aware this is happening or not.

Spiritual

Spiritual abuse occurs where there is an 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 or deliverance ministries.

Institutional

Institutional abuse is where a child or vulnerable person is mistreated systemically by an institution or organization which should be caring for them.

Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery

Human trafficking involves transporting, recruiting or harbouring any person against their will for the purpose of exploitation, using violence, threats or coercion. This exploitation can take the form of forced prostitution, labour, marriage and organ removal.

Domestic Violence

Where a child has been witness to an incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (of any kind) between adults who are or have been family members.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard all children attending St. Christopher's church groups and activities

1. INTRODUCTION

Statement of Values

St. Christopher's Church Springfield adheres to the principles laid out in the House of Bishop's Policy Statement and seeks to demonstrate that in all its activities which include children and young people:

1. The welfare of children and young people will be given first priority.
2. The spiritual welfare of children and young people will be seen as particularly important.
3. Well-informed, professional standards of care will be demonstrated.
4. The procedures to protect children and young people will be open and made clear to all.
5. The welfare of children and young people will have priority over the interests of the establishment.

Statement of Beliefs

The church has a responsibility to promote God's love to all, however it cannot condone acts which cause children and young people harm. The church also has a responsibility to protect children and young people in those circumstances. As Christians we are called to recognise the unique status and immense worth of each child and it is the responsibility of everyone in the church community to take appropriate action if they have concerns about a child. A responsible and informed attitude must be exercised in order not to compromise the church's commitment to creating a safe environment for all.

This policy has been written and updated specifically for St. Christopher's Church and its related activities. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Adhere to the requirements of Church of England Birmingham Child Protection Policies and Procedures
- Set boundaries of behaviour
- Support and inform church officers
- State procedures for action to be taken in cases of suspected abuse
- Ensure safety of children and young people during activities
- Protect the wider church family
- Encourage safer recruitment and best practice in children's ministry
- Inform other agencies and individuals of our values
- Ensure clarity of accountability and to assist open communication

2. Recognition of abuse

Child abuse is a comprehensive term used to encapsulate ways in which a child's physical, sexual, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, or social development or well-being may be damaged by other people.

Child abuse is, in the main, perpetrated by an adult either male or female, a member of the child's family or by a stranger who has no prior connection with the child.

Child abuse affects girls and boys, babies and all young people from 0 up to the age of 18 years (25 years if they have special needs) from any kind of family background.

3. Actions to be taken following disclosure of abuse

It should be recognised how difficult it will be for a child/young person to share what is happening to them and great sensitivity will be required.

In case of disclosure:

- Any disclosure should be taken seriously.
- The child/young person should be advised sensitively that the disclosure will be passed on to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and all clergy.
- Report to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator as soon as possible following disclosure. (It is the responsibility of the PSC to make any statutory referrals – Social Services / Police). If the PSC is on holiday one of the clergy or church wardens should be informed instead.
- An accurate record of the disclosure needs to be made.
- The record should be factual (using child's own words) and made as soon after the conversation as possible. Original notes should be destroyed once the disclosure is formally recorded.
- Any injuries seen should also be recorded accurately (i.e. a bruise on the upper right arm). Never ask a child to reveal their injuries.
- No discussion should be held with the alleged perpetrator
- The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator will pass the information on to the relevant agencies and the clergy.
- The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator will seek advice from the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser, who can be contacted via the Diocesan Office. During an Interregnum, the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser will advise the PSC as to who else needs to know and what actions need to be taken.
- If an allegation is made against one of the clergy, PSC or one of the churchwardens then they are bypassed in these reporting procedures.

Should there be suspicions or a concern regarding a child/young person but no disclosure has been made, a record should be made of anything that has been said and information passed on to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator whose duty it is to store such records in a confidential and secure location. The PSC should also inform the church clergy and ask advice of the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser.

4. How to Manage the Presence of Persons Posing a Risk to Children

- Any such information should be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the incumbent and to the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser.
- The Bishop's Child Protection Adviser will offer advice as to who else needs to know and his/her advice will be followed at parish level to ensure that the protection of children is the paramount consideration at all times.
- If necessary, a written agreement will be entered into clearly establishing roles, responsibilities boundaries and expectations between the 'risky' adult and designated church officials (see pro forma in *God's Children: Our Diocese* 5.12)

5. Pastoral Support, Confession and Confidentiality

It is vital that pastoral care is available to those suffering from the effects of abuse, be they children, adult survivors, or the families of those abused. In order to provide sensitive support and care, church counsellors or members of the pastoral team should receive advice and training in the pastoral care of people who have been abused.

Confidentiality is an important principle in any dealings with people in pastoral situations. However, where children's safety may be compromised, confidentiality has to take second place to protecting children.

Any information regarding an offender should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Information which indicates that a child or children may be placed at risk must be shared with the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the clergy who will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate safeguards are put in place.

When an allegation/suspicion arises in a church, a period of investigation will follow. Under no circumstances should anyone in the congregation conduct an investigation. Any situation must be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the investigation done by the proper authorities through liaison with the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser. The church should provide support to the suspected perpetrator without compromising the children or their families. This is one reason why information should be limited to those who 'need to know'.

It will be necessary for the sake of the child/young person or to satisfy the needs of any investigation for the alleged perpetrator to worship elsewhere for the period of the investigation. In such cases the church leader of the other church will need to be informed.

The Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser will hold responsibility for liaising with the authorities whilst those with designated responsibility for providing pastoral support should offer support to the victim, their family and the alleged perpetrator and their family. Pastoral support should not be offered by the same church officer to the victim and their family and the alleged perpetrator and their family.

People who have been abused may feel very angry with God, and the church needs to offer sensitive support and care towards such individuals. Counselling should be considered though this might prove to be a painful process.

6. Working with children and young people

The Children Act 2004 states that the welfare of the child is paramount and that, when considering a child's needs, issues of race, religion, language and culture must be taken into consideration.

Good working practice – all volunteers and paid staff should

- Treat all children / young people with respect
- Be sensitive to others
- Respect personal privacy
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour e.g. bullying
- Be sensitive to a child's wish to opt out of an activity
- Provide access for young people to talk to appropriate others about their problems
- Follow accepted guidelines relating to contact with children and young people
- Plan activities appropriately
- Do not rely on your good name to protect you
- Provide an example for others to follow
- Do not show favouritism to any individual
- Be mindful of your actions as they may be misinterpreted by others
- Regularly review your work with others
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Seek support i.e. do not try to deal with everything on your own
- Be aware of inappropriate physical contact
- Provide a safe and secure environment

Any child or young person who seeks out an adult to confide in is showing their level of trust; this is both a privilege and a responsibility.

NB: Be aware that some young people may manipulate such a situation (but this is very uncommon).

7. Video, Photographs, Online Devices and Social Media

At St. Christopher's Church, we recognise that using the internet (& other forms of technology) is an important part of the development of the children and young people that we work with. In accordance with all good safeguarding, we recognise that we must take all possible steps to protect young people from significant harm or risk whilst using the internet or any other form of technology.

- Permission (verbal or written) must be obtained of all the people (children and adults) who will appear in a photograph, video or web cam image before the photograph is taken or footage recorded. Normally this permission is included in the annual registration form completed for each child at the start of the school year.
- It must be made clear why that person's image is being used, what you will be using it for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- Leaders and helpers should not take photographs for their personal records unless specific permission has been given and an appropriate explanation provided to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large numbers of people such as a major service or outside celebration, permission is not necessary.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.
- There is a separate procedure for weddings.
- Where children and young people are taking pictures or films of each other at events supervised by St Christopher's Church leaders then those leaders should be attentive to assure that no cyber bullying takes place using those images.
- Children and young people should be strongly encouraged not to use mobile phones whilst at Church events unless the activity requires it.
- Instant messaging through Facebook or other media should not be used. Instead communication should be done through private groups set up by the leaders of each specific ministry. We also advise that any communication with a young person under the age of 18 be done openly with parents or other adults copied-in.
- Best practice is that leaders and helpers should not be friends with people under 18 on Facebook or any other social media platform.

- Leaders should observe good data protection practice by keeping details of names, addresses, phone number, email address and social media account details safely.
- Leaders should be accountable to one another and to the PSC/clergy about all their communications with the children and young people and keep logs of any online conversations.
- Any form of cyber bullying or abuse of children by children should be referred to the PSC.

8. Staffing Ratios

For safety reasons at least two church officers should be present at each session. If two church officers are not present then the group cannot take place and children/young people must return to their parents, go into the main church service or wait in a public space until they can be collected.

It is preferred 'best practice' for groups where young people are aged 14yrs and over that there be a male and female leader present.

With the minimum of two leaders present, the following ratios are then to be observed:

Age Group	Staffing	Children
Age 0-3	1 for every	3
Age 3-5	1 for every	6
School Years 1-5	1 for every	8
School Years 6-8	1 for every	10
School Years 9-12	1 for every	15

Anyone under eighteen years of age cannot be included in staff ratios.

Where a session is led by a married couple they should ensure an additional volunteer or parent assists in the group also.

Preferred best practice when working with teenage groups

- Where more than one room is used for a session, activities in all rooms should be visible to a group lead or volunteer at all times.
- There should be a male and female leader present for each session where the groups are mixed gender
- Volunteer representation from minority communities should be aspired to, but not when to do so would be detrimental of the group or reputation of the church.

9. Group Activities

Any activity involving children and young people should have a registration procedure, the purpose of which is:

- To record the presence of people in case the building has to be evacuated upon hearing an alarm for fire, or to keep track of people on an excursion
- To have a record of the numbers of children and young people on the premises at any given time
- To have a record of people working with particular groups
- To be able to contact a parent or guardian when necessary

Outdoor Activities

The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 aim to give assurance that good safety management practice is implemented, so that young people continue to experience outdoor activities in safety, without being exposed to risks of disabling injury or death.

Who needs to be licensed?

Essentially anyone who offers the activities described below to under 18 year olds and receives payment for doing so has to go through the licensing process unless the regulations specifically exempt them.

- Caving
- Climbing
- Trekking
- Water sports

The majority of church activities fall under the heading of a 'Legitimate Voluntary Outing' which do not require licensing, but a risk assessment and signed parental consent form are mandatory.

10 Transport (private cars)

It is the responsibility of car owners to check that their vehicle is insured for the transportation of children and young people. While the transportation of passengers without reward (i.e. for petrol money only) would normally be covered under "social/domestic use", vehicle owners must check with their insurers. Paid staff would normally be expected have business insurance to cover such usage. Additional cover can very often be included for a small charge. Children/young people should not be transported by an adult on their own unless specific permission is given by parents or to leave the child without a lift would pose a significantly greater risk to their safety.

Mini Buses

Only Mini Buses with fitted seat belts (both front and rear) may be used. Appropriate insurance must be in place and the driver must be in possession of the required level of certification to drive the mini bus.

11. Health & Safety

The Parochial Church Council must acknowledge that one of its functions is to make and put into effect any provision made by Church of England Birmingham regarding health and safety and the protection of children. The church will maintain an accident book for recording any incidents, however minor, involving a child or adult involved in children's work. The Lead Church Officers responsible for different children's groups will ensure a risk assessment is undertaken of their group setting and proposed activities (annually or more often if the setting or activities change significantly).

First Aid

The Church has a properly equipped first aid kit – the contents will be regularly checked by a designated person. There are also first aid kits situated in the Springfield Centre. At least one leader in each group should hold a recognised and up to date first aid certificate or in the case of Sunday morning church services, at least one first-aider should be present in the building. This will be annually reviewed by the Parish Safeguarding Coordinator who will co-ordinate training needs.

Fire Safety

As part of the Fire Precaution Legislation, The Church Health & Safety Officer (or churchwardens if there is no Church HSO) should undertake an assessment of risks. Any risks, which are identified by the assessment, should be addressed and any necessary changes made to minimise said risks. Each group should practice their fire drills at least once a year.

12 Recruitment of staff and volunteers (DBS- Disclosure Barring Service)

All church officers who are to work with children regularly (who are present on planned rotas) should be recruited using the procedures consistent with the Practice Guidance: Safer Recruitment 2016. In summary these include:

- They will be given a simple job description for their role with details of to whom they will be accountable.
- They will be given a copy of this Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
- All staff and volunteers shall complete an application form (with 2 referees) and a confidential declaration. References should always be taken up.

- By completing the application form and confidential declaration all staff and volunteers agree to a DBS check being made on them.
- All staff and volunteers agree to the Parish Identity Verifier seeing and taking copies of the necessary documents to verify their details.
- Once the DBS check has been made and the certificate is issued, they will be given an informal interview by the incumbent or another leader.
- If the person has lived outside the UK it is the responsibility of the incumbent and Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator to find satisfactory evidence equivalent to a DBS check.
- They will be expected to attend basic training on safeguarding annually every July and to attend Church of England Birmingham training every three years.
- All records will be kept securely and confidentially.

DBS - Positive Disclosure

Only the Archdeacon is privy to positive disclosure outcomes (ie where there is a criminal record of some kind) and he will co-ordinate or carry out any risk assessment. It is hoped that the applicant (volunteer/staff) would have shared the information voluntarily before getting to this stage.

13. Public liability

The Church has Public Liability Insurance which provides protection from legal liability for accidental injury. However, it excludes the following:

- Where a false allegation is made
- Where there is no actual injury and
- Where incidents took place prior to commencement of the Churches Public Liability insurance

14 Important Telephone Numbers/Email Addresses

Incumbent: *Rev. Tom Thomas*

Tel: 0121 702 2745, Mob: 07980 650801

Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator: *Claudia Gordon*

Tel: 07890 682 715

Bishop's Safeguarding Children's Advisor (Diocese Office)

Tel: 0121 427 1163 or 0121 426 0400

Local Children's Social Care Team:

Tel: 0121 303 9515

Out of Hours Children's Social Care Team:

Tel: 0121 675 4806

Police (For non-emergency): 101 (or 999 for emergencies)

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Childline: 0800 1111

Signed..... (Incumbent)

Signed (PCC Secretary)

Date.....