

Safeguarding Children Policy 2020/21

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1. Statement of Aims

This document applies to the work of this parish with children and young people. It applies to Sunday groups and those that meet throughout the week. This policy applies to any work undertaken outside of the church buildings carried out under the auspices of the PCC.

At St. John's, or aims in relation to children and young persons are:

- to help them in their Christian discipleship through a programme of learning and thereby to deepen their Christian faith
- to enable them to experience the love of God
- to encourage a strong Christian fellowship
- to help them realise their full potential physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually
- to encourage them to take a full part in the Church's life and worship
- to provide a safe meeting place for them
- to encourage them to become responsible adults
- to provide suitable indoor and outdoor leisure activities for them
- to promote equality of opportunity for all

The groups St. John's currently runs are:

- Crèche (0-2.5 years, Sunday 10–11.30am)
- Sunday school (2.5 -16 years, Sunday 10 –11.30am)
- 2by2 (0 – 4 years, Monday 10 – 11.30am)
- Mum & Baby Group (Tuesday 9.30am – 11.30am)
- Toddler Group (0 – 4 years, Thursday 9.30 – 11.00am)
- Youth Football league (Friday 6.30pm onwards)
- Momentum Youth group (11+, Sundays 7-9pm)
- Youth Encounter groups (11 – 18yrs, date/time varies)
- Winn Gardens Community Church (Once a week, Sunday 3 - 5pm – currently suspended)
- Other occasional activities: Worship/Music Workshops, holiday clubs and residential, Youth Alpha Courses, Soul Survivor camp, trips, outdoor pursuits etc.

This is not an exhaustive list.

2. Staffing Ratios

There should be a minimum of two adult leaders for each group. Those under the age of 18 cannot be classed as a leader. Individuals who are 16 or over may count towards any further numbers of supervisors/helpers needed, but must also be included in the group ratios. With groups of mixed gender, where possible, there should be both male and female workers. It is recommended that wherever possible one of the leaders should be female.

The Children’s Act requires the following standard ratios for the supervision of children for indoor activities:

Age Group	Number of Staff	Number of Children
0-2	1 for every	3
2-3	1 for every	4
3-5	1 for every	8
5-8	1 for every	8
Over 8 years	1 for the first 8 children and then 1 for each additional 12	

However, on no account should an adult be by themselves with any age group. Staffing ratios with all age groups should always take account of the need and nature of the group.

3. Safeguarding Officers

The Lead Safeguarding Officer appointed by the PCC is Katie Kerr. The Deputy Safeguarding Officer is Rosemary Bletcher and Assistant Safeguarding Officer is Ken Smith. St. John’s will inform the relevant diocesan administrator of the Safeguarding Officer details.

4. Application of the Policy

All new workers, whether paid or voluntary, working for St. John’s will be informed of this policy by the Vicar, the Safeguarding Officer or other relevant group/ministry leader as detailed on the role description. They will be expected to accept the policy and guidelines and work according to the stated requirements.

All new members of Owlerton PCC will be required to accept the policy and guidelines. The PCC, or subgroup of, will oversee the policy in conjunction with the Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officer will review the implementation of the policy on a six monthly basis with a minimum of one representative appointed by the PCC. Following the review, the safeguarding officer will provide feedback to the PCC with any updates to the policy on an annual basis.

Where an individual is unsure of any part of the policy they should contact the Safeguarding Officer.

5. Church Premises

Any organisation booking the use of church premises will be informed of this policy and where it is located, at the premises, for their reference. Individuals and groups booking church premises will have the policy drawn to their attention and requested to accept their responsibility for protecting children attending.

6. Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

The PCC will follow the recruitment process included in appendix 1. References, the confidential declaration and a DBS, via the Diocesan system, will be obtained. Appointment to any post, paid or voluntary, will not be made until these processes are complete. All appointments will be made on a conditional basis until the completion of a satisfactory probationary period. All those working with children and young people will follow the good practice guidelines outlined in this document.

THIS SECTION IS UNDER REVIEW BUT THE DIOCESE AND PARISHES MUST FOLLOW THE NATIONAL GUIDANCE: THIS IS ACCESSIBLE AT:

<http://www.sheffield.anglican.org/national-picture2>

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT SAFE RECRUITMENT, PLEASE CONTACT LINDA LANGTHORNE, DSA (01709 309149). IF YOUR QUERY RELATES TO DBS ELIGIBILITY, PLEASE CONTACT SUE LAMPRELL, SAFEGUARDING ADMINISTRATOR (01709 309151)

7 Registration and Parental Consent

All St. Johns' groups are required to keep a register of those attending each session. This information must be held in a hard back bound book.

Parental consent forms, including emergency contact details, must be completed for all participants, and must be accessible to group leaders whenever the group meets. This applies to all groups, whether meeting on church premises or elsewhere.

Standard St. John's Consent forms are available from the Church Office.

Additional information is available in appendix 2 relating to outdoor adventure activities.

8 Insurance

The PCC will ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for all activities for children and young people. It is the responsibility of the group leaders/coordinators to formally notify the PCC of any extraordinary activities, specifically if there is an intention to meet away from St. John's premises for example residential outings/night hike. It is a requirement that such activities are recorded within the PCC minutes.

Additional information relating to insurance is available in appendix 3.

9 Health and Safety

Fire Regulations and Security

All group leaders must ensure that they are aware of fire regulations and the positions of fire extinguishers. They must also be vigilant as to the presence of anyone on the premises during the meetings of the groups. They should know who to contact in an emergency relating to the building.

Food and Hygiene

If any group is involved in the preparation or selling of food, at least one leader should have completed the food hygiene and food safety course to ensure good practice is followed.

First Aid and Accidents

Each group must have at least one adult present who has attended a basic course in first aid wherever possible. There should be a properly stocked first aid kit accessible for each group. In the event of any accident, an incident and accident report form should be completed. This should be kept securely in a marked file. Parents should also be informed of any accident.

Additional guidance on health and safety is available in appendix 4.

10 Training

Ministry leaders and group leaders directly engaging with children and young people, where parents are not present must attend safeguarding training, ideally provided by the Diocese or by the Local Authority. This training must be current and within the last two years. Helpers of groups will be encouraged to attend training. The Safeguarding officer/s will consider St. John's training needs in conjunction with St. John's staff at the time the Safeguarding Policy is reviewed. If specific needs are identified, the Safeguarding Officer/s will consult with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

St. John's will also aim to organise alternative training to support people who are unable to attend/access the diocesan courses.

11 Transport

Workers should not take children alone on car journeys. At times there will be a need to transport children and young people in cars. Where this is the case, where a worker is taking a group of children in their car they should be accompanied if possible by another adult, or with their own child present. This should only be done with parental consent. The child/young person should sit in the back seat and seat belts must be worn. The group leader will ensure that sight of the current insurance certificate has been had. Where appropriate a copy of the car insurance cover may be requested and held on file to evidence further usage.

Additional guidance relating to use of transport is available in appendix 5.

12 Making and Publishing Images of Children

Leaders must consider the making and publishing of images when holding frequent groups, or a one off event. Please see the guidance in appendix 6 which should be followed.

13 Social Media Usage

A common sense approach is required when dealing with social media platforms and the dangers they hold. St. John's will adhere to the Diocesan policy regarding usage which can be accessed in appendix 7.

All leaders should be aware of the following:

For those undertaking children and youth work using social media as part of the way they communicate, care should be taken as to the content of the web profile that is being used. For example, when using Facebook, no worker should use a personal profile that is used as part of their own family/friendship network. The same principle for using Facebook pages should also be applied to any other social media platforms you use, such as websites, blogs, Twitter, Flickr, Google+ mobile phones, etc. Rather than using a personal site or account, it is expected workers use the church website to publish events and general communications or create a public one for the church or group with more than one person being given administration access and permission. This way, everyone is accountable to someone else who can see what activity is being posted or responded to. When using media within a teaching session care should be taken to ensure access is restricted and appropriate blocks are in place. The use of such materials should be closely supervised.

14 Providing an Independent Person

Children and young people should have the opportunity to raise any concerns about any health and safety or protection matters. Posters, stating the name of the St. John's Safeguarding Officer and Childline telephone number along with any other relevant contacts will be made visible in all church premises and venues where St. John's children/young people regularly meet.

15 Allegations

Adult

If an allegation is received concerning the behaviour of an adult, the Diocesan Allegations Policy will be followed as in appendix 8.

Children and Young People

Where there is concern about a child or a concern is reported by a child, St. John's will follow the Diocesan Guidelines, as set out in appendix 8 and report the concern to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, or to the appropriate Archdeacon.

16. Review

All children and young people's workers will meet to review their work, with the ministry leader, on an annual basis (this can be a group meeting). This should include a review of child protection issues and health and safety issues relating to each group. Notification of this meeting, including date and attendees, along with any concerns, should be reported to the safeguarding officer to report to the PCC.

The Safeguarding Officer will review the policy annually and report to the PCC, who will record this review in their minutes. The PCC will inform the Archdeacon via the visitation that this has been done. A copy of the current Safeguarding Policy should be sent to the Archdeacon for inclusion in the parish file. A further copy should be sent if there are substantial amendments. This is to be done by the PCC secretary.

17 Useful Information

General useful information is available in appendix 9 and details 'What is child abuse?' and other useful questions.

Useful Contact numbers:

- Childline 0800 11 11 (Free Phone)
- NSPCC 0808 800 500 (Free phone)
- Diocesan Safeguarding Officer 01709 309149 (direct line)
- Diocesan Safeguarding Officer 07871 796682 (Out of hours service)
- Diocese of Sheffield Reception 01709 309100

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS POLICY IS WAITING FOR GUIDANCE FROM THE NATIONAL CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY.

A NEW (COMBINED CHILDREN & ADULT) POLICY WILL BE PRODUCED DURING 2020

IN THE MEANTIME THIS POLICY IS OPERATIONAL UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE: PLEASE NOTE THE SECTION ON SAFER RECRUITMENT & THE LINK TO THE NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Please note that further practice guidance is available in 'The House of Bishops Hand Book'. This hand book along with the diocesan safeguarding policy will be used in conjunction with our parish safeguarding policy until the above policy is made available.

POLICY ACCEPTANCE FORM

Parish of St John the Baptist, Owlerton, Sheffield

Name and address of St. John's Owlerton Safeguarding named person:

Katie Kerr, 1 Queenswood Close, Sheffield, S6 1RG tel: 0114 2334817

The Church House administrator will be notified of Katie's details.

Date of PCC approval: 14th September 2020

Signed on behalf of the PCC:

[Katie Kerr](#) (PCC Safeguarding Lead)

Date [14/09/2020](#)

Name of Vicar: Rev'd J E French

Signed [Joy French](#)

Date [14/09/2020](#)

Name(s) of church warden(s)

Signed [Michael Taylor](#)

Date [14/09/2020](#)

Signed [Catherine Jenkins](#)

Date [14/09/2020](#)

(Electronically signed due to Covid-19 pandemic – all PCC meetings held online.)

Process for Administration of DBS Forms & References for New Volunteers

In order for the process to run smoothly, all those with responsibility for heading up a ministry area within St. John's must understand their responsibility to communicate the interest of a new volunteer to the Admin & Operations Co-ordinator.

1. New volunteer identified. Ministry Leader provides the volunteer with a role description of the job for which they are volunteering (and copy of the child protection policy if volunteering for a children's group). The ministry leader should explain at this stage that references and DBS forms need to be sought prior to their commencement.
2. Ministry Leader emails Admin & Operations Co-ordinator to inform of the new volunteer. The email should have attached the completed relevant role description and details of two referees who can be contacted, provided by the volunteer.
3. Admin & Operations Co-ordinator will provide the new volunteer with a Volunteer Application form and confidential declaration to complete and any relevant policies to read (where necessary). The two referees will also be contacted requesting them to provide a reference as soon as possible.
4. Confidential declaration to be processed by Safeguarding Officer, who will inform the Admin & Operations Co-ordinator if the volunteer is suitable to move to the next stage of the DBS process.
5. Admin & Operations Co-ordinator will provide the Assistant Safeguarding Officers with the volunteer's email address and they will email instructions on how to complete the online DBS application.
6. Volunteer completes the online DBS application and then contacts a signatory to show them ID.
7. Signatory checks the ID and completes the online DBS. The Assistant Safeguarding officer contacts the Admin & Operations Co-ordinator to inform them of the date application was completed in order that it can be recorded on the master spreadsheet.
8. Volunteer receives the official document and contacts a member of the Safeguarding team, or Admin & Operations Co-ordinator, to show them the DBS disclosure certificate. Signatory confirms to the Admin & Operations Co-ordinator that the form has been viewed, identifying any disclosures, and stating the date of issue and certificate number for recording purposes.

Where there are disclosures of any kind, the Safeguarding Officer and incumbent must have a conversation relating to any potential risk assessment.

9. After clearance and references have been received, the Admin & Operations Co-ordinator informs the Ministry Leader who will be able to confirm the volunteer's ability to start volunteering.
10. Where the volunteer has not shown the form to a signatory after 1 month of the form being sent off, the Admin & Operations Co-ordinator will chase the individual to reiterate the importance of viewing the form.

This DBS process is applicable to all persons undertaking a regular voluntary role within the St John's ministries. There may be occasions where additional assistance is needed to run a one-off event eg a Holiday Club, a community Fun Day. Individuals who come forward to offer assistance will not be subject to a full DBS check, however, they must complete a Confidential Declaration form to be passed on to the Safeguarding Officer for approval. The Ministry Leader in charge of the event must ensure that those individuals are supervised and are not working in situations where they may be left alone with a child. Equally, they are not permitted to help children with any personal care needs, this must be carried out by DBS checked members of the team.

Outdoor Adventure Activity

1. If you are providing any outdoor adventure activities as part of a group activity, you should check that the centre or hostel being used has adequate insurance, qualified instructors and is licensed by the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority. This can be checked by contacting:
The AALA, Tourism Quality Services Ltd.
17, Lambourne Crescent
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF4 5GG
2. Parents must be given full details of the event, including:
 - Aims and objectives of the activity
 - Date and duration of the activity
 - Details of the venue including arrangements for accommodation and supervision
 - Travel arrangements
 - Name of group leaders and contact numbers
 - Information about financial, medical and insurance arrangements
3. A risk assessment of the activities will be done prior to any event takes place.
4. For overnight stays, special activities or hazardous activities it is essential that parents or guardians complete the consent form. No child should be allowed to participate in such activities if a consent form has not been completed and returned to the group leader.
5. Ensure your group has adequate and appropriate insurance cover.
6. Always have separate sleeping arrangements for leaders and young people.

INSURANCE STATEMENT

St. John's holds insurance with Ecclesiastical Insurance Group PLC. They have provided the following statement, incorporated in their Child Protection Booklet.

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group supports the House of Bishops Policy Document and its measures for the safeguarding of children. Ecclesiastical believes that preventative measures to remove the likelihood of abuse are the cornerstones for both the protection of a potential victim and an accused child carer.

Common law, and in some areas statutory legislation, require a very wide range of people to take reasonable care to prevent injury to others. Indeed, the law recognises that a higher standard of care exists in matters concerning children. The use of 'best practice' procedures in the management of child protection and care is essential, just as a similar obligation rests upon those responsible for health and safety in commerce and industry. The observance of 'reasonable care' is a standard insurance condition.

Subject to the policy terms, Public Liability (Third Party) Insurance will protect the interests of Policyholders where they are found to be legally liable for accidental death of or bodily injury to a third party. Cover is provided to Policyholders if they are held legally liable for an event caused by their negligence leading to accidental bodily injury or illness as a result of abuse. There is, however, no such cover for the actual perpetrator of abuse.

The Policy terms require that all reasonable steps be taken to prevent injury loss or damage occurring and failure to take such precautions may prejudice the insurance cover. A duty therefore exists upon Policyholders to adopt 'best practice' based upon current and ongoing guidelines.

Youth Group Insurance Scheme

The starting point for insuring your group(s) is with the PCC and their existing parish insurance (usually the Parishguard policy). This covers youth work organised under the auspices and control of the PCC anywhere in the British Isles. However, for a group to be working “under the auspices and control” of the PCC the following should apply:

- The PCC must specifically accept responsibility for the activities of the group and minute such in its records, in detail (e.g. that the PCC has agreed to this disco, with these staff, date and between these hours, for this financial purpose rather than to the concept of discos in general).
- The PCC must have full details of any proposed new activities so as to decide whether to accept responsibility for these activities and this must also be minuted.
- The PCC delegates responsibility for the selection of leaders to the ministry leader and incumbent, who will maintain records of the appointments.

The nature of the cover provided is for public liability for the PCC as the insured.

It is clear that, whereas such cover will normally be sufficient for regular church activities with a standard format (e.g. choir, confirmation classes, servers, bell-ringers, bible studies etc.), it will **not** provide cover for much of the youth work that is undertaken within the parish. **This is where the Youth Group Insurance Scheme complements the Parishguard policy.**

The Youth and Children’s Group Insurance gives greater flexibility for children’s work in parishes, whilst ensuring that good practice procedures are still followed. The Diocese does not gain monetarily in any way from the provision of this insurance, and the price is discounted to parishes. In order to simplify and minimise the costs of administration there is one renewal date (1st January). Reminders are sent out in October to those who already have this insurance.

If a parish does not have this additional insurance, children’s activities off-site may still be covered under their Parishguard policy but all such activities must be agreed and minuted through the PCC Cover will be limited to that one event and for those children and leaders involved in that one event. If you wish to apply for the Youth and Children’s Group Insurance a summary of cover will be sent out with the initial application form. Please contact Trish Stafford on 01709 309147 or trish.stafford@sheffield.anglican.org

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The following guidelines should be used to ensure general health and safety.

1. Children and young people should meet in a safe and welcoming location.
2. Care should be taken where there are heating appliances, low level sockets, windows and doors. If young children have access to kitchens where there may be hot water or food this must be supervised.
3. If there is any stacked furniture this must be placed safely and securely in any room where children meet.
4. A first aid kit must be available in all premises where children meet, and on trips out. It is advised that a qualified first aider is available, but all group leaders should be familiar with the contents and use of the first aid box. Ensure the contents are replaced when necessary.
5. All leaders should know the location of the nearest telephone.
6. Accidents will happen: they should be recorded in an official accident book and parents/carers notified as soon as possible.
7. Fire drills should be regular features of each group.
8. Children should not leave the premises unsupervised or without permission.
9. There should be at least one accessible toilet. Only group leaders, not casual visitors, should accompany small children to the toilet and another worker should be informed. For very young children, toilet breaks should be organised.
10. No medication should be given to a child under 18 without the written permission of a parent/carer.
11. All cleaning fluids must be kept in a locked cupboard or in a high place where children do not have access.

Use of Transport

1. Voluntary workers must ensure that they have adequate insurance before offering to transport anyone on a voluntary basis. Their insurance certificate and driving license should be checked by the person responsible for the group.
2. All paid workers will need to ensure that their insurance covers them for transporting children and young people as part of their employment. The PCC delegates the responsibility to check the insurance policy and driving license of the individual to the group leader.
3. All those who drive children on church-organized activities should be over 25 and have held a full driving license for two years. PCC delegates responsibility to group leaders to ensure that those driving on St. John's behalf are fit to drive and of an appropriate ability.
4. All cars that carry children should be roadworthy and children should wear seat belts or age-appropriate seats. At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number.
5. Any driver who has an "unspent" conviction (committed within the previous 10 years) for a drink driving offence, for dangerous driving or for racing on a public highway, should not transport children.
6. Many groups rely on the use of a mini-bus for transporting children and young people. Drivers must ensure that they are licensed to do so. The European Directive requires new drivers to take a test before they can drive a mini-bus with more than eight passengers, other than one used purely for social or voluntary purposes. You are advised to check the status of the proposed mini-bus driver, the purpose of the trip, and the relevant insurance policy.
7. Adequate insurance cover must be arranged for the driver, passengers and the vehicle. The above guidance for transport also applies.
8. You must be satisfied that the vehicle documentation is up to date and the vehicle is safe to drive. The mini-bus must have forward facing seats and three-point diagonal seat belts throughout.
9. The leader should have a list of the names and addresses of those you are transporting both on their person and a copy left behind with another responsible person. These details must include the parental consent forms.
10. The mini-bus needs to be appropriate for its user group e.g. with wheelchair adaptation if necessary. Any luggage should be secured and that driving times are reasonable. Ensure there is a qualified co-driver if the journey is more than six hours in total. You should be accompanied by another adult in any event.
11. The vehicle should be covered by breakdown cover and access to a mobile phone is highly desirable.

Making and Publishing Images of Children

The making and publishing of images of children is something which is enjoyed by children, parents and carers and those involved in children's work, and can bring positive publicity to church activities. However, there are issues to be borne in mind when such activity is planned. The issues are the same, whether the images are still photographs, digital images or films, and regardless of the particular technologies involved.

Images count as personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998 and therefore the principles of that Act apply. For parish purposes, it is important that the consent of children and their parents/carers is obtained for the making and use of images of children.

Those taking photographs need to bear in mind that there may be good reason for withholding consent, such as:

- Some children may have been involved in legal disputes, local authority proceedings or adoption and their whereabouts should not be too widely known
- If individual children are identified by name it would be possible for potential abusers to use them to target potential victims
- Images made using digital cameras can be manipulated to produce indecent or abusive images.

Good practice is therefore:

- Obtain consent from parents and children before making images. Consent need not be in writing if it is not proposed to publish the pictures in any way, but if they are to be displayed, used in publicity via newspapers including the Diocesan newsletter, or put on a web-site, then specific written consent should be obtained.
- If the event is a church event that is to be filmed, then an oral notice can be given out at the beginning of the service/activity asking any parent objecting to images being made of their child to remove them from the view of the camera, or to ask the group leader afterwards to ensure that any image they object to is not used.
- Where possible, each child should be part of a group.
- If the image is to be published, avoid naming the child. If a name has to be used, use only first names.
- If a child is named in full, avoid using their image.
- Avoid images of scantily clad children, such as at swimming parties.
- Be clear if the image is to be retained for further use.
- Store the image securely, and destroy it if there is no further use for it.

Guidelines for the Use of the Internet

These Guidelines are designed to address the potential Child protection issues resulting from the use of the Internet in connection with church activities. There are potential risks if:

1. Your computer can be accessed by children
 2. You run your own web-site
 3. You use e-mail, chat rooms or text messaging to communicate with children
1. If the parish computer is accessible to children:
 - Fit a locking device or use passwords to prevent unauthorised access to the Internet.
 - Use filtering software to govern which sites can be accessed.
 - Encourage potential users and their parents to sign an agreement as to appropriate use.
 - Ensure potential users complete an Internet consent form, including parental permission.
 - Young people must be supervised when using the Internet.
 - Keep a log of use by children and young people.
 2. If you run your own web-site:
 - Follow the above guidance on images of children.
 3. If you use e-mail, chat rooms or text messaging to contact children:
 - Remind users about safety issues before using these methods of communication.
 - E- mail:
 - Ensure any communication is public, not private.
 - Ensure that church leaders and parents know that you are communicating in this way and that the parents are happy with this.
 - Send group e-mails rather than individual ones if possible.
 - Text-messaging:
 - Take great care when using this medium.
 - Ensure you save text messages as text files so that a record exists.
 - Chat rooms:
 - Keep everything public.
 - Check that the chat room is moderated and that there is appropriate access and password verification.

Further information is available from the Diocesan Youth Work Adviser and from Youth Org UK: <http://www.youth.org.uk> .

Allegations Procedure

Key Principles

- All staff and volunteers working with children in the Diocese must know who to contact to report concerns or allegations.
- The Local Safeguarding Board procedures (formerly Area Child Protection Committee) of the local authority should be followed as closely as possible.
- No action should be taken that could undermine or jeopardise a subsequent statutory investigation. Examples of this are: checking an individual's story, visiting the parents of the child concerned.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) should be informed as soon as an allegation is made. Liaison with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will then take place, informed by the Safeguarding Officer, and the relevant statutory bodies will investigate.
- The emotional cost to someone of making a complaint can be very high. It is important that the church takes complaints very seriously. Complaints should be dealt with promptly and transparently. Careful records should be kept.

Dealing with Allegations of abuse of children made against clergy, staff or volunteers working with children

- Any complaint or dispute should be dealt with at the lowest level necessary for resolution. When the allegation concerns behaviour towards a child, the following process should be followed.
- Allegations against clergy and lay ministers holding the Bishop's licence should be referred to the Bishop, either directly or indirectly through the Archdeacon or Warden of Readers as appropriate. The DSA will also be informed.
- Allegations against volunteer staff should be referred to the clergy responsible for the parish, who will then inform the DSA.

If the allegation concerns the possible commission of a criminal offence the Police will be informed, either by the recipient of the allegation or the DSA if considered appropriate.

The LADO will be informed by the DSA of the allegation. The DSA will discuss with the LADO whether any further details are needed and whether there is information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded.

The LADO and the DSA will consider the following factors:

- Does the allegation indicate that the person has?:
 - Behaved in a way which has harmed or may have caused harm?
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence?
 - Behaved in a way that indicates s/he may be unsuitable to continue in post?
- Which may lead to?
 - A police investigation
 - A social care enquiry and assessment
 - Consideration of disciplinary action by the employer

If these criteria do not apply, and depending on the evidence and individual circumstances, it may be the case that no further action is taken.

Employment Issues

Since 1st October 2004 employers have been required by law to comply with minimum dismissal and disciplinary procedures, which in most cases will involve the appropriate disciplinary grievance and/or dismissal procedures using the ACAS code of practice. A simplified dispute resolution system will operate from 6th April 2009. For further details, see the ACAS website.

It is essential that these procedures be followed, as failure to do so will automatically render any dismissal unfair if a claim is brought in an employment tribunal. Legal advice should be sought as appropriate.

Volunteers

When an allegation is made against a volunteer it may be possible to resolve the concern informally, if it is not of a serious nature. For complaints of more substance, it would be good practice to follow a process similar to the statutory procedure for employees set out above. However, if a complaint is referred to the local authority or the police, consideration should be given to whether the volunteer is suspended from duty until the outcome of those investigations is known. If the investigations are inconclusive or if concerns remain, the incumbent, P.C.C. or other body responsible for appointing the volunteer will need to consider carefully whether the suspension should be lifted, and, if so, on what conditions. Professional advice (e.g. from the Diocesan Registrar or DCPA or diocesan risk assessment panel) should be sought as appropriate.

Advice for Any Person Receiving an Allegation or Having a Concern

Only a proportion of abused children talk about their experience while it is happening. It is therefore of vital importance that all disclosures are:

- Listened to carefully, avoiding the use of leading questions.
- Taken seriously.
- Acted upon.
- Carefully recorded as soon as possible and kept in a secure place.

Confidentiality should not be promised as others will need to be involved if the abuse is to stop.

If a child or young person speaks about being harmed physically, emotionally or sexually by another person, whether an adult or another child, or if signs of abuse are observed:

DO:

- Treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind.
- Inform the person in the parish who is responsible for safeguarding, the responsible clergy, the Archdeacon, and/or the DSA immediately.

- Make a written record of the allegation or concern as soon as possible after receiving information or observing behaviour that causes concern. Include the date, time, persons involved and what was said/observed. Sign and date this and keep in a safe place until required by senior staff or the investigating authorities.
- Make a referral to Children's Services (social services) department, and seek advice about who else should be told, for example, the parents.
- Make a written record of what actions you have taken and keep it in a secure place.
- Continue to support the child and seek support for yourself.

DO NOT:

- Attempt to investigate or deal with the situation yourself.
- Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the alleged incident/s.
- Speak directly to the person against whom allegations have been made.
- Discuss the allegation or concern with anyone other than those to whom you have reported the allegation.
- Keep the information to yourself or promise confidentiality, as others will need to be involved if abuse is to stop.

If a child needs immediate medical help this should be the first consideration and the hospital staff informed of the child protection concerns. If it would be dangerous or the child is unwilling to return home the emergency duty Social Services should be contacted through the Police.

If you are not certain that abuse has occurred you must still discuss the concern with the appropriate person. It is always possible to discuss concerns with the DSA or Children's Services (social services) without disclosing the names of the people involved. If in doubt it is always better to make a referral to Children's Services (social services) rather than do nothing.

Any issue of possible child abuse concerning the church community must be reported to the DSA as soon as it becomes known.

A child may make allegations about an adult who is not part of the church community, for example a member of the family, a teacher, a scout leader. These matters must be referred to Children's Services following the procedures above. The DSA and appropriate Archdeacon should be informed so that advice and support can be offered.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child Abuse

The term “child abuse” encapsulates all the ways in which a child’s health (physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual), and their social development, can be harmed by other people. It consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do, or fail to do, which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood. ‘Children’ means everyone under the age of 18.

From “Protecting All God’s Children”:

“It is vitally important to recognise that abuse of children is much broader than sexual abuse and that all abuse is a betrayal of trust and a misuse of authority and power. Church communities must be particularly vigilant to identify the inappropriate use of any religious belief or practice which may harm somebody spiritually, emotionally or physically.”

From “Working Together to Safeguard Children”: Dept. of Health:

“Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.” Working Together recognizes four areas of potential abuse for children: abuse can be described under any one of these categories identified below, or a combination of categories.

Physical Abuse

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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment 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 insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

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 or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic needs.

In addition to these categories, we must also include:

Domestic Violence / Abuse

A further category of abuse, relating to children who live in situations where there is domestic violence is now being incorporated into current definitions. This is an issue that churches frequently encounter and the welfare of the children in such situations is paramount.

Racial Abuse

Some communities in British society suffer systematic disadvantage in many areas of their lives. Racism can be defined in various different ways: however, for the purposes of these procedures it can be defined in general terms as consisting of "conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. In its more subtle form it is as damaging as in its overt forms" (Macpherson Report 1999)*. The effects of racism differ for different communities and individuals, and should not be assumed to be uniform.

Institutional Racism

This has been defined as "the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture and ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people" (Macpherson Report 1999).

The impact of institutional racism on black families and communities can result in families not accessing direct services either because no appropriate support exists, or because they are unwilling to expose themselves/their communities to perceived censure.

Racial Harassment

This can be defined as a continual/ongoing series of incidents of varying degrees of severity ranging from insults, through assault to grievous injury (possibly fatal) which are perceived to be racially motivated by the victim and/or any other person. This may mean, for example, that an isolated parent cannot go out; or that a child cannot play in his/her own garden.

Racial harassment could therefore have an impact on a child's emotional and social development. The stress it causes could become a contributory factor towards physical or mental ill-health of children or parents.

Racial harassment can occur in dual heritage families, where one side of the family may subject the child to name-calling and other rejecting treatment.

Organised Abuse

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related children or young people. The abusers may be acting in networks to abuse children or in isolation. They may use an institutional framework or position of authority or trust to recruit children for abuse. They may use children themselves to recruit other children.

Significant Harm

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of the child. The local authority is under a duty to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, where it has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, and the extent of premeditation, degree of threat and coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements in child sexual abuse. Sometimes a single event may constitute significant harm, but more often significant harm is a series of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. In every case it is necessary to consider any ill-treatment alongside the family's strengths and weaknesses.

Children in Need: Common Assessment Framework

All local authorities have a duty to consider the needs of those children who are referred by means of a Common Assessment Framework. Some children, for instance, by reason of a level of disability, will automatically be considered to be children in need. Others will be assessed using the framework. To be assessed as a child in need does not imply there are any issues of abuse: it is often a useful assessment because it can trigger the provision of additional help or services to the family.

Abuse within a Church Context

Physical abuse may involve punishment, over-emphasis on physical activities that are beyond the scope of the child, failure to recognize special needs, failure to deal with bullying from whatever source,

Emotional abuse may involve being rude or ignoring a child, failing to recognise special needs, failing to recognize that a child is in need, the creation of situations where children can only fail, the instilling of guilt in a young child, name-calling, teasing, failing to deal with bullying, the deliberate abuse of a situation of power and control, etc.

Sexual abuse may involve unwanted and inappropriate touching, making suggestions and comments, inviting children to share sexual feelings/experiences, involving them in looking at pornography or accessing the internet inappropriately, along with all illegal sexual activity.

Neglect in a church context may be a failure to respond to a child in need, a failure to listen to a child or to take them seriously, a failure to provide a safe environment and age-appropriate and safe (as possible) activities for children.

Children and Young People Who Abuse

Bullying

Bullying maybe defined as deliberately harmful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft from the individual), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling), and emotional (isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development, or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

Children and Young People Who Sexually Harm Others

Children and young people who sexually harm others should be held responsible for their abusive behaviour, while being identified and responded to in a way that meets their needs as well as protecting others. Such children are likely to have considerable needs. Evidence suggests that they may have suffered considerable disruption in their lives, been exposed to violence within the family, may have witnessed or been subject to physical or sexual abuse, have problems in their educational development, and may have committed other offences.

Specialist professional services are usually involved in working with such children, and their advice should be sought if a child who has offended in this way is involved in a church group.

WHO ABUSES CHILDREN?

Child abuse is not new: it has however been increasingly recognized, named and condemned during the course of the twentieth and into this century. Its manifestations vary in time and place, and currently we are witnessing a new manifestation in the abuse of the new electronically- based technologies. Child abuse occurs in all cultures, religions and classes. It affects girls and boys, babies and young people of all ages up to the age of eighteen, children with learning difficulties, with physical disabilities and children from any kind of family background.

Most child abuse is committed by those closest to the child: its parents, brothers or sisters, step parent or other carer, babysitter or family friend, or other trusted adult. It is known to be perpetrated by children against other children: child perpetrators will have greater power than their victims, perhaps due to age, gender, physique or ability.

Within a church setting, a worker may encounter child abuse when a child discloses, fully or partially, or when the worker picks up clues that things are not right at home. Children may be suffering from neglect or physical abuse and the symptoms may be spotted by church workers.

There is, however, a category of offenders, the majority of whom are male, who will use access to children within the church setting to gain the confidence of children and 'groom' children for sexual abuse. It is common for them to groom the adults around them to ensure that they are unchallenged in their activities. It is very difficult even for professionals to be able to detect such individuals. The existence of rigorous safeguarding procedures offers some protection to children, because the deterrent factor is significant and if the procedures are followed a child will not be in a position to be abuse. The procedures also provide some protection for workers against any false allegations of abuse.

Sexual abuse of children does not simply just happen. It is a process that is planned, manipulated and repetitive. You cannot tell by looking at someone that they are an abuser and abusers come from all classes and groups within society. People in positions of trust and authority can be involved in abusing children: they may be youth workers, teachers, social workers, or church workers or leaders.

Vigilance is a key weapon in the battle against child abuse. Sadly, this means being vigilant within our own groups and activities. Workers with children need to be aware that some adults are unable to provide consistent care, and also that some may manipulate themselves into positions of trust where they can exploit children physically, emotionally, or sexually. The reasons why people sexually abuse children are usually very different from the reasons why children are neglected or physically abused but all potential situations where children can come to harm must be monitored.

Sexual abusers may involve or "groom" children by befriending them, by spending time with them and paying them a lot of attention, by giving them money or gifts. The children are usually told to keep the gifts a secret and thus a process of encouraging secrecy begins. Such offenders often target vulnerable children and their families, who may be isolated or who have been victims of emotional deprivation, neglect or earlier abuse. The abuser then grooms the child to accept increasing levels of physical contact, from apparently accidental touching to cuddles and kisses that a parent may feel is quite

innocent. Physical contact becomes more sexual and the child is warned to keep the contact secret, either for reward or by the threat of something bad happening to them or their family. The process of ensuring secrecy through fear or encouraging the child to believe no-one will believe them, or through making them believe that they are responsible for the abuse, often results in the child not being able to disclose, or to disclose only partially and then to retract the disclosure. Most children do not disclose their abuse: it is likely that most never disclose, even when they are adult.

Sexual Abuse may also occur in ways that do not involve physical contact: such as taking photographs or videos, or by being shown adult pornographic material or images of child abuse on the internet.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE

This summary gives a brief outline of some of the signs and symptoms which can be causes of concern. They should NOT be regarded as definitive and require professional investigation before attribution as child abuse.

Physical signs

Bruises:

- In or around the mouth
- Fingertip bruising on arms, chest or face indicating tight gripping or shaking
- Bruises of different colours indicating injuries of different ages
- Two simultaneous black eyes without bruising to the forehead
- Bruising showing the marks of a belt or implement or a hand print
- Bruising or tears around the earlobes
- Bruising to the head or soft tissue areas of the body

Bites:

- Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped and can leave a clear impression of teeth

Burns and scalds:

- Burns with a clear outline are suspicious
- Circular burns from cigarettes
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electric elements
- Burns of a uniform depth over a large area
- Friction burns from being pulled across a floor
- Scalds producing a water line from immersion or pouring of hot liquid
- Splash marks around the main burn area are caused by liquid being thrown
- Old scars indicating previous burns

Fractures:

- Any fracture in a child under one year is suspicious
- Any skull fracture in the first three years is suspicious

Female circumcision (or female genital mutilation):

- This is illegal except for very rare health reasons

Neglect

Often difficult to identify, neglect leads to the physical and emotional harm of a child. The signs and symptoms include:

- Failure of a parent to provide adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, medical care or supervision.
- Failure of a child to grow within the normally expected pattern; they may show pallor, weight loss and signs of poor nutrition.
- Failure of a parent to provide adequate love and affection in a stimulating environment, a child may look listless, apathetic or unresponsive with no apparent medical cause.
- A child may be observed thriving when away from the home environment.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can also be difficult to identify. It is the result of ill treatment in the form of coldness, hostility and rejection; constant denigration or seriously distorted emotional demands; extreme inconsistency of parenting. Some of the signs and symptoms are:

- Low self-esteem
- Apathy
- Being fearful and withdrawn or displaying “frozen watchfulness”
- Unduly aggressive behaviour
- Excessive clinging or attention seeking behaviour
- Constantly seeking to please
- Over-readiness to relate to anyone, even strangers

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse can be suspected based on physical signs, the child’s behaviour or following a direct statement by the child. It is often investigated because of a combination of these signs.

Physical signs:

- Recurrent abdominal pain
- Unexplained pregnancy
- Difficulty walking and sitting
- Faecal soiling or retention
- Recurrent urinary tract infection

Behavioural signs:

- Knowledge unusual for the age of the child
- Sexually provocative relationships with adults
- Sexualised play with other children
- Hints of sexual activity through play, drawing or conversation
- Requests for contraceptive advice
- Lack of trust or marked fear of familiar adults
- Sudden onset of soiling or wetting
- Severe sleep disturbance
- Change of eating habits
- Social isolation and withdrawal
- Role reversal in the home e.g. a daughter taking over the mothering role
- Inappropriate displays of physical contact between adult and child
- Learning difficulties, poor concentration
- Inability to make friends
- Using school or church as a haven, arriving early and reluctant to leave
- Reluctance to take part in physical activity
- Truancy, running away from home
- Self-harm, mutilation or suicide attempts

- Dependence on drugs or alcohol
- Anti-social behaviour including promiscuity and prostitution

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

If you are concerned that a child or young person has been abused or is at risk of being abused, then you must report it. Above all, what you must NOT do is NOTHING.

A worker may become concerned about abuse for a number of reasons:

- A child may tell you something which indicates they are being abused
- Someone else involved with the child may tell you that they are concerned, or that the child has told them something
- A child's behaviour may make you concerned that he/she is being abused
- You may feel uncomfortable about the way a worker is behaving with a child, or with a child's reaction to a worker
- A child may have an injury for which there is no satisfactory explanation.

NB. Distress in a child may be caused by many factors, one of which may be child abuse.

It is therefore important to refer on so that the situation can be investigated by professionals.

If a child discloses to you:

- Listen, and keep on listening.
- Don't ask questions.
- Accept what you hear without passing judgement.
- Do not promise to keep secrets, and tell the child what you are going to do
- Write down what has been said as soon as possible and keep a copy. This may be needed during a future investigation. Pass the original to the investigating officer or the DSA.
- Refer to the incumbent and/or the parish safeguarding representative, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. If they are unavailable, or in an urgent situation, refer immediately to the local authority Children's Services (formerly Social Services) or the Police Public/Child Protection Unit.
- Do not contact the person against whom the allegation is made.
- Do not talk to others (except the above) about the allegation.

No individual person should attempt to deal with the problem alone. In the first instance the incumbent, or in the case of the incumbent's involvement the churchwarden, should be contacted. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser should also be contacted. Anyone has the right to contact Children's Services or the Police and if they feel such action is immediately necessary then they should do so, and inform the incumbent and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser that they have done so.

Disclosures of Historical Abuse

In the course of their work, many ministers and those offering pastoral support in the Church, will find themselves hearing disclosures from adults concerning abuse that happened to them when they were children.

There is no single, correct procedure for dealing with a disclosure of historical abuse by an adult. The wishes of the person disclosing abuse will be very important. For some adults, just being able to talk to a trusted person about their experiences can be a powerful healing event. The pastoral care of the person who has been abused should be a priority. A referral to the police will not always be necessary unless the individual wishes to report the offence; however, they should be encouraged and supported to do so. Adults do need to be made aware, however, that if the alleged abuser is still working with or caring for children a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer at the local authority Safeguarding Board will be made by the person hearing the complaint or the diocesan safeguarding adviser, who must in any case be informed. People who have committed sexual abuse against someone years ago could well be abusing children today.

Survivors of Abuse

The church will be involved with survivors of abuse in many ways:

- Abused children may come to the church for help
- Adult abuse survivors may turn to the Church for help
- Some clergy were sexually abused as children, and may need the support of colleagues and congregations
- Children may be abused by Christian family members
- Children may be abused by clergy or church workers