



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults – Best Practice Guidelines

1. Recommended minimum staffing levels

The recommended minimum staffing levels set out in *Protecting All God's Children* will be maintained. These are as follows:

Age Number of Leaders

0 to 2 years	1 leader to every 3 children (when children are not accompanied by parent/carer)
2 to 3 years	1 leader to every 4 children
4 to 8 years	1 leader to every 6 children
9 to 12 years	1 leader for every 8 children
13 to 18 years	1 leader for every 10 children

Notwithstanding these minimum levels, each group is to have at least 2 adult workers present and a gender balance should be maintained wherever possible, particularly in mixed gender groups. It is preferable that the female leader takes any younger children to the toilet should this be required. In all such circumstances the co-leader must be alerted to the fact that the leader is taking children out of the group and be informed of where they are being taken and why. Where children are requiring nappies or assistance with intimate care (such as wiping and putting on underwear) leaders are to ask parents to perform these tasks. More help may be required if children are being taken off site, are undertaking physical activities or if necessitated by other circumstances. This will be assessed by the leaders of these activities.

Adults who assist very occasionally or as a one-off must be accountable to the main leader of the group they are assisting. The same applies to young people under the age of 18. Adults who assist more regularly will be appointed formally using the safer recruitment procedures. We ask that adults are a regular part of our church family for at least 6 months prior to volunteering with our children and vulnerable adults.

2. Safe Recruiting

When appointing/recruiting leaders and helpers for work with children and young people, those with responsibility for the groups, working under the authority of the church council, will follow the guidelines set out in Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment.

This means that group leaders will:

1. Provide the potential new volunteer with a job/role description
2. Ensure the potential volunteer provides a completed application form
3. Ensure the potential volunteer completes a volunteer agreement form

4. Conduct an interview with the potential new volunteer
5. Take up references from two referees
6. Assist the potential volunteer in obtaining a DBS (criminal record) disclosure, unless the nature of the role is such that there is no entitlement to a DBS check
9. Ensure the volunteer is aware of policies and procedures

3. Code of Behaviour

Christ Church Huntingdon commits to the following Code of Behaviour which those who work with children and young people are expected to follow:

You should:

- ▶ Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- ▶ Respect people's rights to personal privacy.
- ▶ Provide a Christian example you wish others to follow.
- ▶ Provide an example of good conduct that you wish others to follow.
- ▶ Ensure that there are at least two adults present during activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.
- ▶ Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful
- ▶ Ensure that another adult is informed if you need to take a child to the toilet.
- ▶ Be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted.
- ▶ Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around
- ▶ Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and of its nature before the activity takes place.
- ▶ Challenge unacceptable behaviour in a responsible way.
- ▶ Report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.
- ▶ Recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- ▶ Operate within the Church's principles and guidance.
- ▶ Only use social media and email in accordance with paragraph 12 below.
- ▶ Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.

All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not:

You should not:

- ▶ Ever hit a child or young person or use any form of physical punishment
- ▶ Play rough, physical or sexually provocative games or be sexually suggestive about or to an individual
- ▶ Touch inappropriately or allow a child to sit on your lap.
- ▶ Show favouritism to any one child, young person or group or allow an individual to involve them in excessive attention seeking
- ▶ Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group

- ▶ Allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group
- ▶ Invite a child or young person to your home alone unless responding to an emergency situation, in which case the relevant people should be contacted.
- ▶ Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.
- ▶ Allow unknown adults access to children. A known person should always accompany visitors.
- ▶ Take photographs on personal phones or cameras without formal consent, as this means that images are stored on personal devices. Where photos are taken, they must be with consent of the parent/guardian/carer (for under 13s) or the young person themselves (if over 13, ideally also with parental consent). It should be made clear the purpose for which the photo was taken and is to be used, how it is to be stored and for how long, consent should be gained having discussed these considerations. After the photo has been used for its intended purpose it should be deleted from the volunteer's personal device.

In addition, for children and young people, must not:

- ▶ Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity)
- ▶ Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people
- ▶ Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

Sympathetic attention, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, can be wholly appropriate. However, abusers can use touch that appears safe to 'normalise' physical contact which then becomes abusive. As a general rule, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility and those with whom they are working or volunteering should be initiated by the person themselves, and kept to the minimum. In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

- ▶ Ask permission before you touch someone
- ▶ Allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when they need medical attention)
- ▶ Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive
- ▶ Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
- ▶ Touch should be in response to a person's needs and not related to the worker's needs. Touch should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.

4. Procedure to be followed in the case of an allegation or disclosure of abuse

If there is an allegation or disclosure of abuse by a child, young person or by an adult who is disclosing or alleging historic child abuse:

- ▶ Listen. Keep listening.
- ▶ Do not question or investigate – this is the job of the authorities. In particular do not speak to the subject of the allegation.
- ▶ Do not promise confidentiality; tell them that the information they disclose needs to be shared.
- ▶ Assure them they are not to blame.
- ▶ Tell them what you are going to do. Reassure them that the matter will be reported to the investigating authorities. If the person needs reassurance that the alleged perpetrator will be punished, do not make any promises. There can be no guarantee as to what happens as that will be dependent upon the outcome of the investigation.
- ▶ As soon as possible after the conversation, make careful notes of what was said, record dates, times, events and when you were told. Sign and date your notes.
- ▶ If there is immediate danger to a child or young person, contact the Social Services or the Police.
- ▶ Report the incident to your Pastor or Child Safeguarding Coordinator immediately. Do not contact the Pastor or Coordinator if the allegation concerns them or anybody related to them. Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) directly if necessary.
- ▶ Do not discuss the incident with anybody else.
- ▶ The Pastor or Child Safeguarding Coordinator must then report the allegation or disclosure to the DSA by the end of the next working day. The DSA will advise on what needs to be done in line with Practice Guidance.
- ▶ In the absence of the DSA , the appropriate Archdeacon should be contacted.

Do not talk to the media under any circumstances. The Diocesan Communications Officer will handle any media statements.

If a child or young person makes a disclosure by email or other electronic means do not respond using electronic means, but report the disclosure to your Pastor or Child Safeguarding Coordinator.

The procedure is the same for abuse which happened in the past, possibly many years ago.

5. Procedure to be followed where there are concerns that someone may be committing abuse

If you are concerned, or it comes to your notice that someone may be committing abuse:

- ▶ Make notes of your concerns and discuss them with the Pastor or Child Safeguarding Coordinator.
- ▶ The Pastor or Child Safeguarding Coordinator must then report the concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser by the end of the next working day.
- ▶ Do not contact the Pastor or Coordinator if the allegation concerns them or anybody related to them. Contact the DSA directly if necessary.

- ▶ Dates and times should be recorded of any observations which have been made and of the referral to the DSA.
- ▶ The DSA will act in line with Practice Guidance and will decide whether to
 - ◊ Report the concerns to Social Services and/or the Police, who will then investigate while the Adviser liaises with the church; or
 - ◊ Continue to observe closely – the process will be repeated in the event of any more concerns.
- ▶ There should be close communication between the Pastor /coordinator, the Adviser and the appropriate Archdeacon until the situation is resolved.
- ▶ In the absence of the DSA, the appropriate Archdeacon should be contacted.

6. Procedure to be followed where people with convictions for offences against children or people under investigation are attending church

Where someone attending the church has been convicted of offences against children (or they have received a formal police caution) agreement will need to be drawn up to minimize any risk to the safety of children within the church. An agreement may also be necessary where a person who has not been convicted is reasonably regarded as posing a risk (e.g. he/she is subject to investigation for alleged child abuse).

- ▶ The Pastor or, in the absence of the Pastor, the Child Safeguarding Coordinator, must inform the DSA of the situation.
- ▶ The DSA will act in line with Practice Guidance and will decide whether an agreement needs to be in place. A risk assessment may be necessary.
- ▶ The DSA will be responsible for producing any risk assessment and/or agreement.
- ▶ If the person is a convicted offender, there will need to be liaison with the person's Supervising officer (police or probation) who should be consulted about the agreement and, ideally, be a signatory to it.
- ▶ The offender or person under investigation will be asked to sign the agreement, which will then be reviewed annually.

7. Allegations or concerns about senior clergy

- ▶ If an allegation involves an archdeacon or dean it should be reported to the Bishop of Ely.
- ▶ If an allegation involves a bishop, it should be reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

8. Registration, Data Protection and Retention of Records

A registration form will be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities. This does not include activities such as church services, which would take place regardless of whether or not children are present. Neither does it have to include activities which children attend with their parents/carers (e.g. toddler and parent/carer groups), although best practice is for registration forms to be completed for these groups.

The form will be updated annually and include the following:

- ▶ Name and address
- ▶ Date of birth

- ▶ Emergency contact details
- ▶ Medical information
- ▶ Any special needs including activities that the child or young person is unable to take part in
- ▶ Consent for emergency medical treatment
- ▶ Consent for photographs and videos if relevant

All personal details and registration forms will be stored securely, not used for any other purpose, and shredded or disposed of securely when out of date or no longer in use.

Separate procedures apply to youth drop-in centres. In the event that a drop-in centre is being planned, the Youth Ministry Officer will be contacted for guidance.

Guidelines will be followed as to the retention of records. In particular, registers of attendance and leaders present will be maintained centrally. Records of any concerns or allegations will be kept for the periods required by diocesan guidance.

9. Activities away from the church premises

Adequate arrangements will be made for children's and young people's activities which take place away from church premises as follows:

- ▶ No child can be taken off-site for activities without the consent of their parent/guardian/carer.
- ▶ Details of the event must be given in advance and consent forms received in advance of the event taking place.
- ▶ Details of the arrangements will be given to the Child Safeguarding Coordinator.
- ▶ A risk assessment will be undertaken and confirmation obtained that the event is covered by PCC insurance.
- ▶ A detailed programme and list of contacts should be left by the organiser of the event with the Child Safeguarding Coordinator or Pastor.
- ▶ A leader will be designated to take responsibility for First Aid.
- ▶ Where it is necessary to drive children and young people to or from a church organised activity it is essential that written permission is given by a parent/guardian/carer. Lone working it to be avoided so there must be two safely recruited adults in the car at all times. Business insurance is required by the driver.

10. Support, supervision and training

All those involved in working with children and young people will ensure that there is always more than one responsible adult available so that there is mutual supervision. Should one of the adults become ill or get called away, the other adult will call for additional help. In emergency situations where an individual cannot avoid working with children on his/her own because an unforeseen situation has arisen, he/she will inform another leader (or the Child Safeguarding Coordinator or Pastor) of the situation, if at all possible at the time it arises, and a note will be kept by the Child Safeguarding Coordinator.

Those who work with children and young people will be given the opportunity to review their work with the leader of their group or the Child Safeguarding Coordinator or Pastor. This will enable them to comment on the work they are doing, give suggestions, review and further develop their work, if they so wish, and to discuss training opportunities.

At least every 3 years the church will hold training events on Child Safeguarding. There will also be other training events organised by the Diocese of Ely which church staff, youth workers, volunteers and Child Safeguarding coordinators may attend.

Every person who works with children will be given a copy of this policy. They will also be given information about how to access on the internet the Diocese of Ely Child Safeguarding Handbook and other national Church of England documents including Protecting All God's Children. Paper copies of these documents will be provided to those workers who request them.

11. Health & Safety and First Aid

Health and Safety will be managed as part of all activities. Each building used by Christ Church Huntingdon will be inspected by the Health & Safety officer at least annually and the results will be noted and reported in writing to the relevant PCC. Health and Safety issues observed by those working with children and young people should be reported to the Child Safeguarding Coordinator or the person with responsibility for Health and Safety within the church.

A First Aid kit will be available on site and will be checked monthly (responsibility of the Health & Safety officer) and updated as necessary. An accident book is maintained at all places where activities with children and young people take place.

If there is an emergency involving injury to a child or young person:

- ▶ Stay calm.
- ▶ Provide immediate first aid when needed.
- ▶ Alert others to the need for help.
- ▶ Ensure that somebody is supervising the other children or young people.
- ▶ Call an ambulance if needed.
- ▶ Contact the parents/guardians of the child or young person.
- ▶ Provide an appropriate handover and information about the situation to the parents/guardians.
- ▶ Complete the accident book.
- ▶ Consider whether there are implications for the Health & Safety policy and/or practices and report these to the Child Safeguarding Coordinator.

12. Use of Social Media, email and texting

All those involved in working with children and young people will exercise care in the use of social media and respect the principles set out below. Communication by electronic means or by texting will not be used with children under the age of 11. All communication in these forms will be via their parents.

The rest of the principles relate to communication with children and young people aged 11 and over. The key point is that communication should be in a context of transparency and accountability.

- ▶ Electronic communication and texting should only be used for reasons relating to work and not for general socialising purposes.
- ▶ At least one other leader should be aware of the situations in which these means of communication are being used.
- ▶ Leaders, workers and volunteers should not invite children or young people from church activities to their personal social networking page but may respond to requests where appropriate, as long as the child or young person is 13 or over.
- ▶ Where possible, group pages should be used on social media for communicating.
- ▶ Care should be exercised in posting to Facebook, twitter etc as comments made on the spur of the moment may not always come out as intended and can be passed on extremely quickly around a large audience.
- ▶ Communication by electronic means or texting with children or young people should never take place during school hours and should be kept within the hours of 9am – 9pm.
- ▶ Where possible, email and messaging should take place to and within groups rather than individuals.
- ▶ Leaders, workers and volunteers should give very careful consideration as to whether it is necessary to give personal mobile phone numbers to children and young people.
- ▶ Webcams will not be used where internet chat or Skype is used for one to one conversations.
- ▶ Where video calls are used for group chats (eg Zoom/Microsoft teams/skype) the same lone working rules apply as with face to face meetings, two appropriately trained and recruited leaders should be present in the call throughout.
- ▶ Records of communications will be kept just as they would be for written communication. If a worker's mobile phone does not allow text messages to be saved then a written record should be kept.
- ▶ The principles for the use of social media will be communicated to children and young people.

13. Identity Checking for DBS (criminal record) checks

The role of identity checker is an important one because the identity checker verifies the identity of the person applying for the DBS check. The identity checker will usually be the Child Safeguarding Coordinator or Safeguarding administrator and will always be a person who has undergone a DBS check. Identity checking will be carried out in accordance with DBS and Diocese of Ely guidelines.

14. Promoting healthy church culture

All leaders are encouraged to reflect on the culture of the group they are leading/helping with within the church. There should be no place for misuse of positions of power in the form of bullying, manipulation, coercive control and spiritual abuse. Should group leaders or any member of the church have concerns regarding the developing of such harmful cultures

within the church they should raise these concerns with a church elder or the safeguarding lead.

15. Implementation of the Policy

The Child Safeguarding Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the policy to see that it is being put into practice. She will be supported by the Church Council, who have the ultimate responsibility for safeguarding.

16. Procedure for regular reporting to the Church Council

The Child Safeguarding Coordinator will report annually to the Church Council on Child Safeguarding matters or after any incident with Child Safeguarding implications (taking care to preserve confidentiality as necessary). The Church Council will be kept informed on at least an annual basis of all regular and one-off children's activities. This will then be reported to the next meeting of the Church council, as this is necessary for them to fulfil their duties as charity trustees and also for insurance purposes.

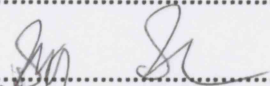
The procedures and guidelines were last reviewed and agreed by the Church Council onand were then adopted by the Church Council.

Signed:  (Incumbent)

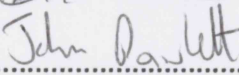
Date: 12 JAN 23

Signed:  (Church warden)

Date: 12/1/23

Signed:  (Church warden)

Date: 12/1/23

Signed:  (Church warden)

Date: 12/1/23

Date for policy review

The next review of this policy is due by December 2023. A copy should be kept for church records, a copy should be given to everybody involved in work with children and young people.