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# Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures 2015

Diocese of Liverpool



## **Foreword by the Bishop**

The Church of England has had a nationally agreed policy for safeguarding people since 1995 and our diocese has, before that date and since, sought to develop its own policy, seeking to ensure that it demonstrates good practice and offers effective help and support for parishes.

We now commend this handbook as the latest resource offered to the parishes and we encourage all those concerned to take time to read it. You will see that the handbook starts by dealing with issues of recruitment, which is where our child safeguarding should also begin.

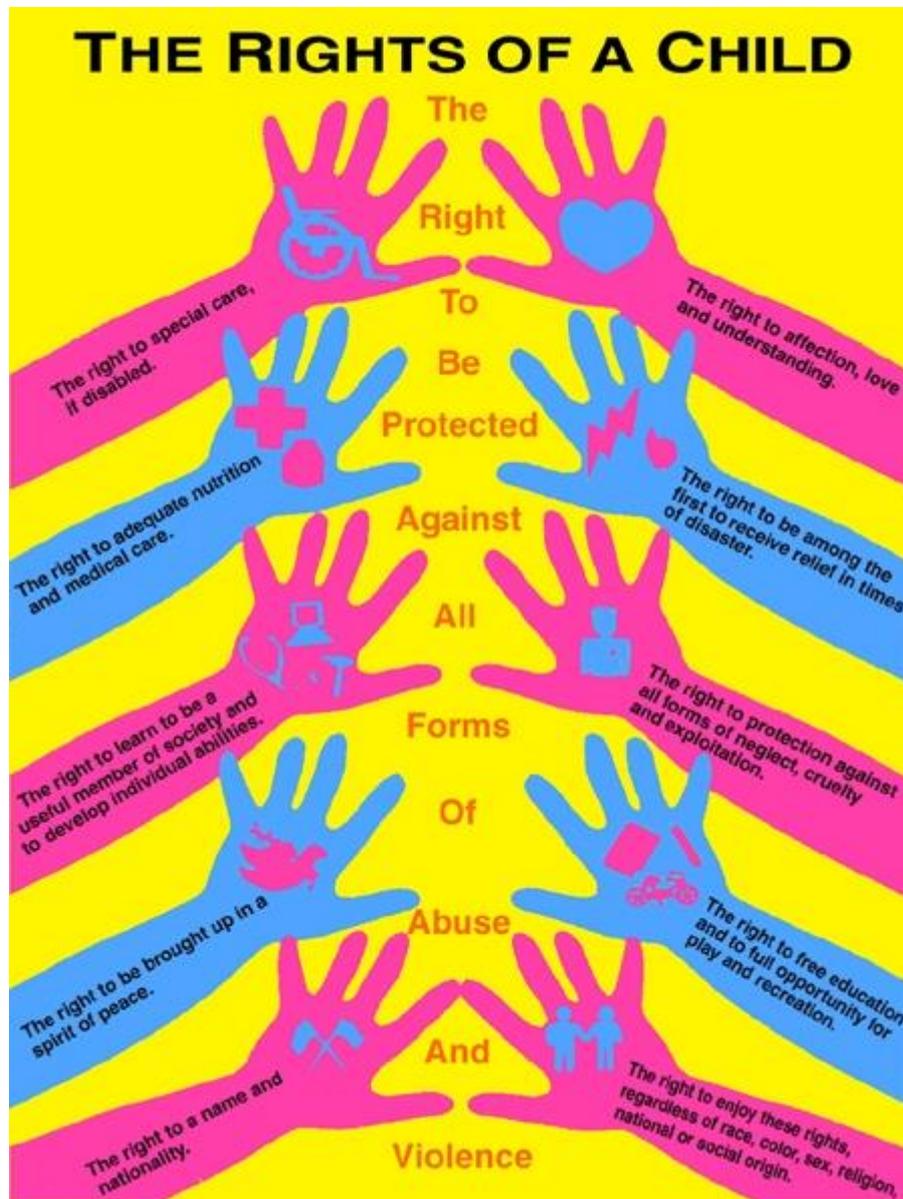
There is no doubt that the Church has much to offer to the children, young people, adults and those who care for them and it is with this in mind that we look to providing a safe environment for all to grow in the love of God.

The relationship between the Diocese and individual parishes and between individual clergy and the Bishop, in this area is finely balanced. The diocesan policy, which is based upon the House of Bishops policy, is offered with a view to its adoption by parishes, but the decision to model a parish policy upon it is for each PCC to consider and make a decision. However, I would emphasise that PCCs, and clergy, are under a canonical duty to adopt a child protection policy which at least meets the standards set down here.

We would like to thank all those who have helped in the production of this document, with its Code of Practice, which incorporates the latest developments in national policy together with best practice.

+ Paul Bayes  
Bishop of Liverpool

+ Richard Blackburn  
Bishop of Warrington



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.  
This was ratified in the UK in 1991 and in force January 15<sup>th</sup> 1992

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**Contact details**

Parish Child Protection Coordinator

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Diocesan Child Protection Adviser

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Diocesan Vulnerable Adults Adviser

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

DBS Enquiries

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Diocesan Communications Director

Name.....

Telephone Number.....

Police

Name /Local Office.....

Telephone Number.....

Local Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub - Social Care for Children/Vulnerable Adults

Name / Local Office.....

Telephone Number.....

## **The purpose of this document**

This document is designed for use by parishes in order to support their work in safeguarding children and young people.

The purpose of this document is

- To help workers to respond appropriately to concerns/allegations
- To prepare workers to encounter children who have been harmed
- To promote good practice by reducing the risk of someone harming a child in the course of their work within the church

This code of practice is based on the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy, "Protecting all God's Children" House of Bishops (2010), "Working Together to Safeguard Children" A guide to inter- agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2013) and "Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment" House of Bishops - (Consultation - 2014)

All Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) and individual workers should see very clearly the necessity for care in selection, of helpful support for, and a continued interest in, all the parish workers who have contact with children.

To emphasise the importance of that, the House of Bishops has produced a strengthened policy for the entire Church. There are some detailed changes. The new and powerful motto is "informed vigilance".

The message remains the same. Children must be as safe from harm as they possibly can be.

This message is brought home to all PCCs by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group. Divergence from, or neglect of, the Diocesan Child Protection Guidelines, could put a PCCs insurance cover at risk.

This document restates the procedures and practices of the Diocese of Liverpool with regard to working with children and contains guidelines to protect children and those who work with them.

Children and young people are vulnerable; and they need to be able to trust the adults around them if they are to grow up unharmed.

If they cannot trust the Church, they might never be able to trust God - or themselves.

Further exploration of the issues addressed in these pages may be found in the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy for the Church of England "Protecting all God's children" (2010), which is downloadable from the diocesan website along with the diocesan policy.

## **Principles of the House of Bishops' Policy for Safeguarding Children**

Every person has a value and dignity which comes directly from the creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness. Christians see this potential as fulfilled by God's re-creation of us in Christ. Among other things this implies a duty to value all people as bearing the image of God and therefore to protect them from harm.

### **Principles**

We are committed to:

- The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with all children and all adults
- The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults
- The establishing of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where victims can report or disclose abuse, where they can find support and best practice that contributes to the prevention 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 Disclosure and Barring Service and registration with the relevant vetting and barring schemes.

We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that a child or young person may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and Children's Services in any investigation.

We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with him or her, 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 or young person.

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

## **Recruitment and Selection – Appointment of Volunteers and Paid Workers**

We will use the House of Bishops policy on Safer Recruitment (2014) to guide our process. This policy applies to all workers whether in the children or adult workforce.

It is important that we make every effort to recruit safe people into post within our churches and discourage those who may not have the best interests of our children from applying; this can only be achieved by rigorous and safe recruitment.

### **Therefore the Parochial Church Council (PCC) should:**

- Decide on the candidates' suitability.  
This is based on their personal qualities in relation to general experience, aptitudes, skills, motivation and willingness to be trained.
- Check with the Disclosure and Barring Service against the specific post.  
As an employer you are legally required to establish the suitability of the applicant in terms of those barred from working with children prior to them entering the workforce. You are liable to prosecution if you fail to do so – this applies to both paid and voluntary posts.
- Be prepared to say "No" if the candidate is unsuitable.  
Encourage any such volunteer to another form of Christian service.
- Give the volunteer an agreement to ensure mutual understanding of the role.
- Confirm the successful applicant in post after a probationary period.
- Ensure safe storage of information: that includes all registration forms, references and confidential declaration forms. They should be stored in a safe and secure place within the parish in perpetuity. Be aware of your responsibility in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Further guidance is available on the diocesan web site.

## **Recruitment of Ex – Offenders**

### **The Diocesan Policy on the Recruitment of ex - offenders**

1. The Diocese is committed to the fair treatment of its parish staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical disability or offending background.
2. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
3. A Disclosure is only requested after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
4. Where a Disclosure is to form a part of the recruitment process, we encourage applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate confidential cover, to a designated person, and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
5. Unless the nature of the position allows the Diocese to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
6. We ensure that all those in the Diocese who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
7. This policy should be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
8. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might relate to the position. Failure to disclose information that is directly relevant to the position sought may lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
9. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

**Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working for us**

## **What is Child Abuse?**

Abuse and neglect are defined in “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2013 as:

### **Physical abuse**

This 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 the parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child

### **Emotional abuse**

Is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 include not giving the child the opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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 maltreatment 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 not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child’s aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **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. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home and abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of adequate care givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

### **Spiritual Harm**

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.

**Domestic Abuse**

It must be recognized that children and young people may be harmed in homes where there is domestic abuse. The Archbishops Council has produced guidelines for those with pastoral responsibility "Responding to domestic abuse" Archbishops' Council (2006).

## **Action for Dealing with Reports of Abuse**

The following procedures are designed to support you in dealing with disclosures of abuse that may arise in the course of your work with children and young people. For the purposes of this work a child is a person under the age of 18 years.

### **DO**

- Make it clear that you cannot be asked to keep a secret
- Listen to the child or young person, let them express their views and feelings without interruption, accept what they are saying
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling someone
- Explain that you must pass this information on
- Make notes of what was said using the child or young person's words whenever possible
- Speak to the Parish Priest or line manager
- Refer to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser
- If the subject of the allegation is the Parish Priest contact the Archdeacon or Diocesan Child Protection Adviser (The Bishop cannot be involved as per Clergy Discipline Measure)
- Be prepared to refer to the Local Safeguarding Children Services (Local Authority)

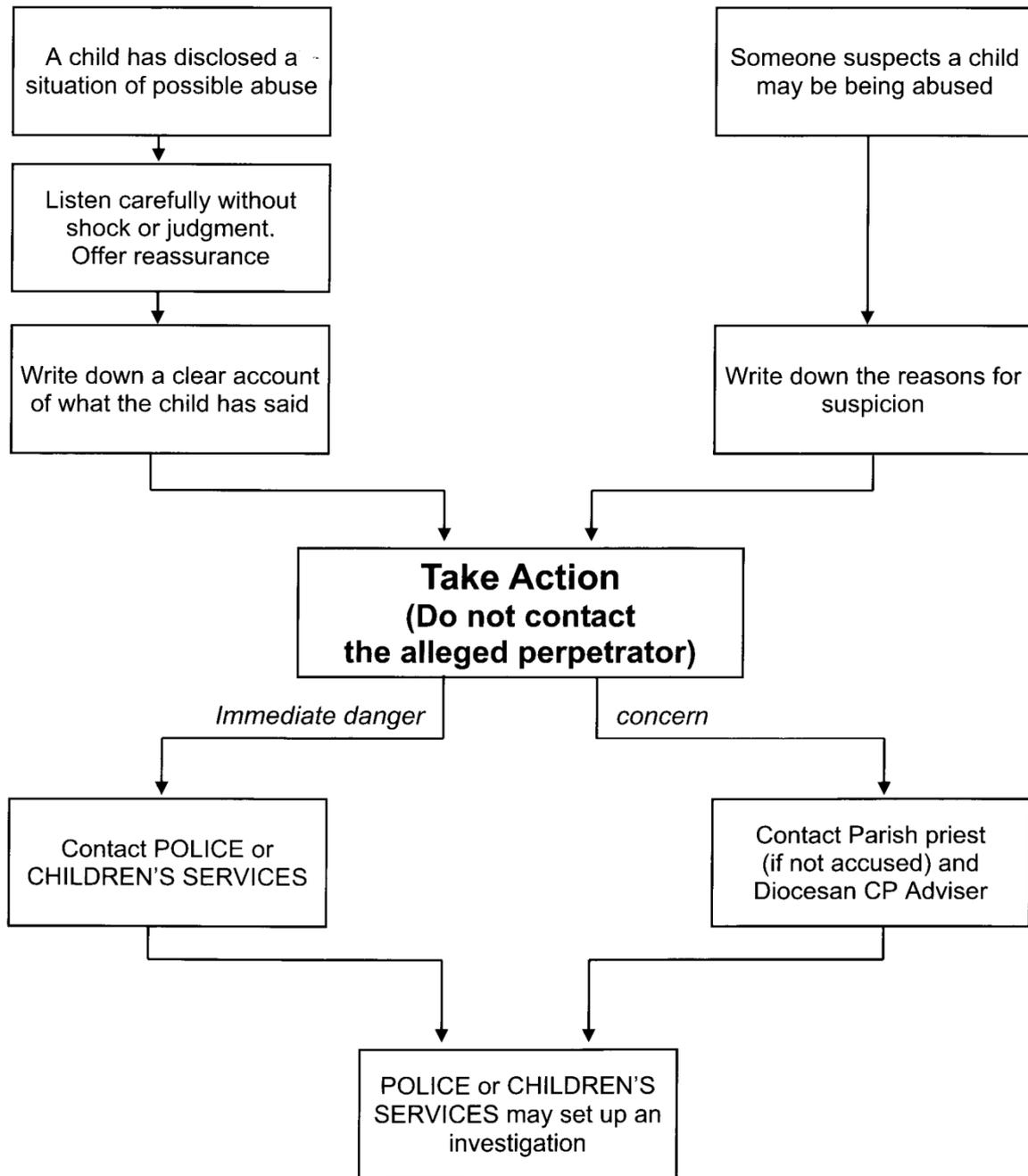
### **DO NOT INVESTIGATE ANY ALLEGATION**

### **DO NOT**

- Show shock or disbelief
- Agree to keep the disclosure a secret
- Make a promise or suggestion that you can stop the abuse
- Ask questions seeking further detail – you risk contaminating evidence
- Investigate any allegation - specially trained professionals undertake this role
- Contact the alleged perpetrator
- Make any statement or comment to the press

### **REMEMBER, YOU DO NOT INVESTIGATE**

## **Child Abuse Referral flow chart**



### **Contact Details**

Diocesan Child Protection Adviser – Su Foster  
Tel 0151 705 2153/07887 510946  
e-mail: [su.foster@liverpool.anglican.org](mailto:su.foster@liverpool.anglican.org)

## **Referral Procedure for those with Responsibility for Children**

Any child who is or has been exposed to danger of abuse must be protected without delay.

Think clearly about the cause for concern and make brief notes recording the facts as you understand them. You have a duty to refer your concern.

Unless it would cause a delay, you must discuss your concerns with your Parish Priest, providing that he/she is not the cause of the concern. You should also speak with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser; she/he is also available if the priest is unsure of what action to take. **However, if the child is in immediate danger you should contact the police straight away.**

In the case of a clear allegation or a strong suspicion, the case must be referred to the Police or Local Safeguarding Children and Young People's Services. Clarify who is making the referral. (Further detail regarding the making of referrals can be found in the Local Authority's Safeguarding website).

The decision as to how the parents should be informed will be made in conjunction with the Local Authority or Police Representative.

If one of the clergy is the subject of the allegation, the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser and/or the Archdeacon must be consulted for advice.

You are advised that, in consultation with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, any serious incident should be reported to your insurers. This enables them to be prepared should any claim arise.

All communications must be handled in a sensitive manner and should be steered by the Diocesan Communications Department.

Should a journalist or broadcaster make an enquiry, you must refer them to the Diocesan Communications Department at St James' House.

**The possible consequences of making a referral can be difficult**

**However the consequences of not making a referral can be far more dangerous!**

## **The Role of the Parish Priest and Parochial Church Council**

- Each Parochial Church Council (PCC), with the Parish Priest, shares the responsibility for the duty of care to the children and young people in their church setting.
- Each PCC should be fully aware of the contents of the Diocesan Policy on Child Protection, discuss the contents, and then produce a Parish Policy consistent with this document and adapted to the local situation. Account must also be taken of the Local Authority policy on safeguarding. When produced and adopted, the policy should be reviewed annually to ensure that it is still appropriate to the work currently undertaken.
- The PCC must appoint a Child Protection Coordinator and support them in the implementation of this role. It is the responsibility of the Church Council to supply the name and contact details of the appointee to the diocese and to inform the diocese of any changes in personnel. The Parochial Church Council will support the coordinator in the implementation and monitoring of the Parish Policy. (This post could be shared with another parish.)
- Each PCC must ensure that people who are authorized to work with the children and young people within the parish or who hold a position of responsibility are properly appointed, trained and supported.
- The PCC must be aware that there is a responsibility to ensure that people who pose a threat to children and young people are effectively managed and monitored in the church context.
- If the PCC fails to comply with the Diocesan Guidelines, it will leave itself open to the charge of negligence if any child or young person in its care (or in the charge of its officers or organisation) comes to any harm.

## **The role of the Parish Child Protection Coordinator**

The Parish Child Protection Coordinator is appointed by the PCC annually, this person will have up to date knowledge and have completed the diocesan e learning package for safeguarding children prior to taking on the role and then will be responsible for the following tasks:

- To ensure that the Parish Policy is reviewed, updated and adopted by the PCC on an annual basis together with a brief report on the current implementation within the parish.
- To ensure that the policy document is widely available and given to all existing and new workers in the various groups within the parish.
- To ensure that the Parish Policy is shared with all organisations using the facilities of the church.
- To ensure that all volunteers go through the appropriate recruitment process in conjunction with the PCC and Parish Priest.
- To ensure that each volunteer has a role description and a volunteer agreement in respect of their work with children and young people.
- To ensure that each volunteer has an opportunity for an annual review of their work and that this review is recorded and detail's kept on file.
- To monitor the implementation of Parish Policy and report to the PCC any difficulties in doing so.
- To ensure that there is a poster identifying sources of help for children and young people displayed wherever they meet i.e. Childline, NSPCC.

On leaving the post, the coordinator must pass on all records, documents and resources in good order to their successor or the parish priest.

## **Images**

When using photographic images of people in diocesan publication and websites the following is a good practice protocol advised by the National Safeguarding and Youth Officers. The legal position relating to this area is currently under review by the Court of Appeal, who has taken the view that in one case it was at least arguable that a child photographed in a public place has a reasonable expectation of privacy. The guidance below goes beyond the current definitive legal position, which allows for images of anyone in a public place to be published as long as the photography is not intrusive.

1. As Christian publishers we wish to demonstrate love for our neighbour to respect his or her privacy and not to cause any embarrassment.
2. We want to promote and encourage the Church's work with people of all ages, through the appropriate use of images and video reflecting the diversity of church activities in our publications.
3. When we take someone's photograph or film them for publication/distribution they should always be aware that we are doing it. Awareness can be assumed if:
  - People are attending a photo call
  - The intention of taking photographs or filming is included in the invitation to the event and people are given the choice to opt out.
4. In all other circumstances permission should be sought at the time the photograph is taken and a chance to opt out must be given.
5. Even given the 'assumed awareness' of the circumstances listed in (3) specific permission should be sought for images of individuals (a person may be happy for a large group photo, but not an individual one). Specific permission should also be sought where it is the intention to name any person shown in the photograph in an accompanying caption or article.
6. Photographs submitted for publication where young people are recognisable and there is insufficient evidence that their consent has been obtained, should not be published. Permission should not be assumed, even if images have been submitted (e.g. by parishes) for publication.
7. Many schools approach parents to ascertain whether they have objections to photographs of their child being used in various media to represent the activities of the school. Teachers are often, therefore, in a position to grant general permission to publish images of children in school-related activities (e.g. cathedral education events), in *loco parentis*. However, this should not be assumed, and written permission from an appropriate representative of the school should be sought to publish such images.
8. Outside of this school activity context, in other cases involving minors (under-16s), their consent and the written consent of a person with parental responsibility for the child should be obtained, which must specify for what purposes the photo or film will be used and how they will be stored if not destroyed. In particular, if the intention is to use the picture or film on the internet, this must be clearly stated at the time the permission is sought.
9. Further written consent will be required from young people and their parents/carers if photographs or film are to be used in other ways.
10. Clearance forms should be stored with photographs or film for future reference.

## **ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Safety**

### **Background**

In recent years the huge increase in the use of, and accessibility to, different types of information and communication technology (ICT<sup>1</sup>) has created more effective and speedier methods of connecting with each other and introduced new ways in which to transmit information. However, along with the positive implications of these new communication technologies, we also find ourselves aware of how they can be misused, particularly in working with children and young people.

Today 43% of children aged 8-11 have a mobile phone and regularly use the internet, 26% of 12 - 15 and 18% of 8 - 11 year olds have their own tablet or computer<sup>2</sup>. These proportions have increased over the years and it has become the norm for our children and young people to own mobiles, be extremely computer literate and to own their own part of cyberspace, whether that is through a social networking site or having their own webpage.

It is unsurprising that they would want to use these new and very accessible methods of ICT in order to contact their peers, family and those who work with them through church activities so, as the Church, we have a responsibility to communicate professionally, accountably and effectively with the children and young people we serve through these methods.

In light of the recent tragic events involving cyber bullying and grooming through Facebook in the news, this document is intended to increase awareness and understanding of information and communication technology and thereby creating a greater sense of accountability in our use of it. As in all our ministries amongst the parishes and communities of this diocese, we seek to place the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults at the very highest level.

### **General protocols for ICT communication**

- Consent should be obtained by leaders<sup>3</sup> from the parents or guardians of any young people or children they wish to communicate with through ICT.
- Clear and unambiguous language should be used. Many abbreviations are currently used which are open to misinterpretation, for example 'lol' could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'. Nuance and tone in communication can sometimes be hard to read, so ensure that language is clear and not open to misunderstanding.

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<sup>1</sup> ICT are electronic devices such as personal computers (PC), mobile phones, smartphones, Personal Digital Assistants (PDA), games consoles and digital cameras that allow communication via websites, email, instant messenger, voice and texts.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics from OFCOM 2013

<sup>3</sup> **Leaders** include children's and youth leaders, clergy, Parish Child Protection Officers and other people with a responsibility for work with children and young people

## **Use of emails and Instant Messenger (IM)**

- When using emails and IM, such as MSN to communicate with children and young people, you should ensure that the general protocols for ICT communication should be taken into account.
- Another leader should always be copied into all emails which are sent to children and young people to ensure accountability. If no other appropriate adult within the parish is available to be accountable, then a suitable substitute should be found such as the parish priest or churchwarden.
- When communicating with a group of children or young people, use a group email and not individual ones. This saves time, and ensures there is no favouritism as everyone will receive the same message.
- A specific email account should be used to communicate with children and young people. The address should be known by the young person or child, their parent or guardian, and other leaders. This should not be your personal email account.
- There should be an agreed length of time for a conversation with a child or young person through instant messaging, and an agreed curfew when no communication should take place, for example between 10pm and 7am.
- Log all conversations in a text/Word file and ensure that it is saved in a specific area on your computer. At the beginning of each IM conversation, you should inform the child or young person you are communicating with that the content of your conversation will be saved.

## **Mobile Phones**

- When using mobile phones in communicating with children and young people, you should ensure that the general protocols for ICT communication should be taken into account.
- If a child or young person owns a phone, it is possible that parents may not wish leaders to know the number, so it is important to obtain consent to contact their child on that particular number or on any other mobile number given.
- Where *at all possible* use group rather than individual texting.
- As with emailing and use of IM, ensure that your language is not open to misinterpretation and avoid using emoticons or abbreviations that could be misunderstood.
- Any text messages that are received which cause concern should be saved and passed to your Parish CPO.
- Most mobile phones now come with built in digital cameras. As with all cameras used by leaders you should ensure you have parental consent to take and use photographs taken of children and young people.

## **Social Networking Sites (SNS)**

- Sites such as Facebook, Bebo, MySpace and others create further issues which are not covered in previous sections. Again, guidance around consent, accountability, curfew and language should be followed in using social networking sites.
- It is recommended that on SNS, leaders should either have two profiles; one for personal use and the other for work use. Leaders should only accept 'friend requests' from young people they know on their work profile. When using your work profile on any SNS, you should ensure that use of any IM/chat facility is restricted to emergency use only.
- Communication should be in the public domain wherever possible by using group mailing and public wall posts.
- Where groups are set up on SNS, they should be in a closed status and not open to the general public. Administrative rights to the group should be retained by the leader/s who should undertake regular moderation and evaluation of the group.
- Any content in conversations, wall posts or messages that causes concern should be saved, printed and passed onto your Parish CPO.

## **Recommended good practice**

This could be photocopied and handed to all leaders, or parishes may wish to formulate and distribute their own good practice leaflet, based on the recommendations below.

### **Adult / Child Ratios**

Guidance recommends the following ratio of leaders to children according to their age:

For 0 to 2 years - 1 leader to every 3 children (1:3)

For 2 to 3 years - 1 leader to every 4 children (1:4)

For 3 to 8 years - 1 leader to every 8 children (1:8)

For over 8s - 1 leader for the first 8 children followed by 1:12

(i.e. 32 children would require 3 leaders)

**Toilets** - The ideal is 1 toilet and 1 hand basin per 10 children

**Warm and Clean** - Group areas should be warm, adequately lit and ventilated. Maintain high standards of cleanliness.

**Special Needs** - Be able and willing to accommodate children with special needs. Be aware of access to your building and toilet facilities.

**Entrances and Exits** - Should be well lit and easily accessible.

**Registration** - Children's Social Care need to register premises where activities take place for more than 2 hours in any one day or if a holiday club runs for more than 6 days a year.

**More than one leader** - There should always be more than one leader for any group. (If possible have at least one male and one female leader if the group is mixed).

**Time alone** - Minimise time alone with any child or young person. If it is vital to be isolated with an individual ensure that another leader is informed of where you will be and why. If possible remain in the view of another leader. Try never to be behind a closed door but if necessary tell someone that you are there.

**Administration** - Keep an up-to-date register and record of children, their parents and contact phone numbers, attendance and other specific information (such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, allergies etc.).

**Insurance** - Most existing parish insurance covers indoor activities for children and youth. PCCs need a record of any other activities that may take place and it must be checked that insurance cover is adequate.

**Touch** - Touch is an important part of human relationships: for example, it can be necessary to stop a young child from hurting herself or himself; it can also be a natural way of responding to someone in distress. However, everyone working with children should be sensitive to what is appropriate and inappropriate physical contact, both in general terms, and in relation to a specific individual.

Leaders need to be conscious of situations in which their actions, however well intentioned, could be misconstrued by others or be harmful.

**Good Practice with Colleagues** - If you see another member of staff acting in ways which might be misconstrued be prepared to speak to them or to your supervisor about your concerns. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

### **Health and Safety**

- All leaders should know the location of the nearest telephone.
- Adults must be aware of the safety / fire procedure. A fire drill should be carried out regularly. Fire extinguishers should be available and regularly checked.
- Children with infectious illnesses must not attend.
- No smoking should be permitted near the areas children will be in.
- Children should submit a health form before an activity. Take health forms when going off-site.
- Accidents should be recorded with a note of any action taken and signed by the leader involved.
- A first aid kit should always be available and its location must be well known.
- No medication should be administered without written parental consent. One leader should be a first-aider.
- A responsible adult should make sure that the premises are open in good time.

**Transport** - If at all possible do not give lifts to children and young people on their own other than for short journeys. If they are alone ask them to sit in the back seat. Check that insurance covers the vehicle and passengers. Seat belts must be worn.

**Finance** - If money is collected, an account of this should be given to the PCC.

**Volunteers** - Volunteers, particularly those under the age of 18, should never work unsupervised and should be given clear guidance and support.

**Casual Visitors** - Casual visitors i.e. those who have not been authorised by the Church as leaders or helpers, should not have access to children without the presence of an adult who is deemed to be responsible for the group.

**Communication** - Clergy, the PCC and parents should be clearly informed of all the activities in which children and young people may take part on church premises or through the church in any way. The PCC must approve all church activities with children and young people.

**Good Practice of Workers** - Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age; watch language, tone of voice and where you put your body.

- Do not engage in any of the following:
  - invading the privacy of children when they are showering or toileting
  - rough, physical or sexually provocative games
  - making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in fun
  - inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form
  - any scapegoating, ridiculing, or rejecting a child or young person
- Learn to control and discipline children without using physical punishment.
- Do not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

- Do not invite a child or young person to your home
- Do not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people if you take a group away.
- Avoid having couples who are related, married or in a relationship leading groups together

**Please remember that all children deserve to be treated with respect – it is important that equality and diversity are celebrated.**

## **Answers to frequently Asked Questions**

### **Do I have to register holiday clubs with OFSTED?**

You may need to register your club with OFSTED. For further details of the registration criteria please contact your regional OFSTED office. Ring 0845 640 404 for details of your regional office.

### **Can someone attend a children's work session while waiting for a DBS?**

Someone waiting for a DBS clearance must not go on the rota of children's work leaders. However they may attend a taster session under supervision, for the purpose of finding out if they enjoyed and are suited to the work.

### **Is the Church responsible when hiring out Church premises for private parties?**

In these circumstances it is the parents' responsibility to assure themselves of the safety of their children, not the churches. The church may, however, decline to hire their premises to anyone that they believe may be unsuitable and unlikely to run a safe party.

### **What is the position on child protection for groups that regularly hire out Church premises?**

It is advisable to have a section in the church hire agreement which states that the church has a policy on child protection and all people hiring the hall should either sign to say that they have read and understood the policy and that they are prepared to accept it OR provide the Church Council with a copy of their own child protection policy to go on file.

### **Do hirers' need their own insurance cover?**

The PCC should obtain written confirmation from any hirers that they have public liability cover for their activities whilst the church premises are being hired. Individuals hiring the premises for a private function should check with their household insurers to ensure the public liability would extend to organising such an event.

### **Do uniformed organisations have to carry out their own DBS checks?**

Uniformed organisations should undertake their own DBS checks and take up references for their leaders. The parish Child Protection Coordinator simply has to establish that the organisation is doing this.

### **How often should DBS checks be renewed?**

The House of Bishops has stated that a 5 year cycle of renewals is acceptable.

### **Where can I find help with Health and Safety?**

Ecclesiastical Insurance has a model Health and Safety Policy and Guidance notes on their website – [www.ecclesiastical.co.uk](http://www.ecclesiastical.co.uk) or telephone: 0845 777 3322.

The HSE produce a booklet on 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment' a copy of which can be ordered free from 01787 881165 or via the website [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk)

### **Are there special considerations regarding car safety?**

Safe practice would be for any person carrying children and young people in their car to have a second adult in the car with them and to consult [www.dft.gov.uk/think/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/think/)

### **What do I do if I have concerns regarding young people and Self-Harm / Substance abuse?**

If you have concerns regarding a young person who you believe to be engaging in self harm or substance abuse you must refer to the statutory agencies – this is a serious matter and it requires specialist help. Parents can contact a voluntary agency such as

Young Minds for help and support. Visit [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) or telephone: 020 7336 8445

**Can a parish provide counselling services to children and young people?**

If your parish wishes to provide counselling services to children and young people you must identify suitably qualified staffs that are registered with an accredited body. The individuals will require professional indemnity insurance. You need to ensure links are made with both the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Team and the local authority with reference to referral protocols and check with your parish insurance company that they will support this activity.

## **Resources**

Local Safeguarding Children Board  
Policy and Procedures – these can be found online  
(They are specific to each area)

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapists  
1 Regent Place  
Rugby  
CV21 2PJ  
01788 550899

Childline  
Freepost 1111  
London  
N1 0BR  
0800 1111

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service  
Helpline 0845 1204550

Lucy Faithfull Foundation  
Bordesley Hall  
The Holloway  
Alvechurch  
B48 7QA  
01527 591924

NSPCC  
0808 800 5000

Samaritans  
0845 7909090

## **Publications**

Protecting All God's Children (2010)  
House of Bishops, Church House Publishing

Working Together To Safeguard Children (2010)  
Department of Health, TSO

Safeguarding Guidelines relating to Safer Recruitment (2013)  
House of Bishops, Church House Publishing