



*Holy Trinity and St. Matthew's Church*

[www.holytrinityandstmatthewronkswood.co.uk](http://www.holytrinityandstmatthewronkswood.co.uk)

# Parish Procedures for Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

## Supporting the Parish Safeguarding Children Policy statement

in line with "Protecting All God's Children" 2010, the Child  
Protection Policy of the Church of England, and "Practice  
Guidance: Safer Recruitment" July 2016

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**Note: In this document "child" or "children" refers to anyone under the age of 18 years**

## **1. Privileges and Responsibilities of working with children and young people**

*(This section relates to parish safeguarding children policy statement 1. We are aware of and will implement the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy "Protecting All God's Children 2010" and the Diocesan procedures "Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Worcester. Copies of these can be accessed at [www.cofe-worcester.org.uk](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk))*

The care and nurture of our children in faith is a very special vocation. As parents and teachers we have the joy of being called to serve God in a uniquely privileged position. This requires from us a response of prayerful commitment in obedience to God. As a church, it is our responsibility to welcome children into our church family.

In recognition of this, we acknowledge that it is our privilege to:

- i) Pray regularly, by name, for the children and young people in our church family as they grow up
- ii) Do everything in our power to create a welcoming and loving environment for them in our church and take every opportunity to encourage others to do the same
- iii) Support and encourage their parents in any way we can as they undertake the challenging task of bringing up children in the faith in our secular society
- iv) Join with them regularly, as one family in Christ, to worship and serve God in our parish community

## **2. Keeping our children and young people safe**

*(This section relates to parish safeguarding children policy statement 2. We are committed to the safeguarding and care of the children within our church community)*

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our church family we will follow the guidance of "Protecting All God's Children 2010". This document covers most of the areas in our procedures and clearly sets out the expectations of parishes.

Section 4.6 of the document above states that each parish should have in place the features in A) below

Safer practice is supported by a Code of Safer working practice (See pages 7-14)

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**Above all it is the responsibility of the whole church family to establish a safe, caring church community which provides a loving environment where there is “informed vigilance” as to the dangers of abuse.**

**2A) Expectations of parishes as set out in section 4.6 “Protecting All God’s Children 2010” (Worcestershire position in italics)**

- Adopt and implement a safeguarding children policy and procedures (*Worcester Diocese has a recommended safeguarding policy for PCC’s. This document constitutes the complementary parish procedures*)
- Appoint a coordinator, working with the incumbent and the PCC to adopt and implement a child protection policy and procedures (*In Worcestershire this is the parish Child Protection representative*)
- Consider appointing a children’s advocate – someone with whom children can talk about problems. This may be someone other than the coordinator. (*PCC to decide – possibly children’s work leader*)
- Display the contact details of the advocate along with the Childline and Parentline Plus telephone numbers. (*These should be in church and in all places where children’s work takes place, so that they are accessible to children and young people and their families*)
- Ensure that all authorised to work with children are appropriately recruited according to safer recruitment practice and are trained and supported. (*Volunteers should be recruited safely, be authorised by PCC, receive child protection training and support from the parish*)
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children undertaken in the name of the parish. (*In addition Worcestershire would expect that any group using church premises for children’s work must be covered by insurance and adhere to the parish safeguarding policy or hold one which is equivalent*)

- Review the implementation of the safeguarding children policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually (*The parish Child Protection representative should attend PCC if not a member, to ensure that the PCC are aware of their responsibilities. The policy should be signed off by the Child Protection representative, the Chair of PCC and the Incumbent.*) Refer to parish safeguarding policy statement 8).

- If appropriate, in rural parishes or parishes held in plurality, consider joining together to implement the policy and procedures, while

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remembering that legal responsibility will remain with the individual parishes.

- If working within Local Ecumenical partnerships (LEP's), agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding policy to follow, including where to seek advice in urgent situations. This decision should be agreed between the church and group leaders and recorded.

- In the event of a specific safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are notified.

It should be noted that every PCC must have 3 lay members(not including Clergy and Readers) who have had an enhanced DBS check

## **2B Expectations of paid leaders or volunteer leaders and helpers in children's work**

Leaders and helpers must support the following principles;

- ✓ To make the welfare of the child a top priority at all times
- ✓ To treat all children with respect
- ✓ To respect a child's right to personal privacy
- ✓ To be a role model whom others wish to follow

They are committed to

✓

- ✓ Prayerful, careful and thoughtful preparation of lessons and activities
- ✓ Arriving in good time to ensure the room is ready
- ✓ Creating an atmosphere of loving acceptance, where children may flourish, by listening to their stories and sharing life with them
- ✓ Pray with children and so help them to become people of prayer as they grow in the Spirit
- ✓ Being familiar with, and acting in accordance with, the parish Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Health and Safety procedures
- ✓ Informing children of the contact numbers for Childline and the children's advocate (if there is one identified)

## **CODE OF SAFER WORKING PRACTICE to support section 2B**

### i) Guidelines for individual workers *You*

*should*

- ✓ Treat all children with respect and dignity
  - ✓ Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful
- ✓ Always aim to work within sight of another adult
  - ✓ Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Organise toilet breaks for young children
  - ✓ Ensure that children know who they can talk to if they have a personal concern
  - ✓ Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make that another adult is around sure
- ✓

If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand

✓ Administer any necessary First Aid with others around

✓

Obtain prior consent for official or displayed (NO unofficial photos/videos) photographs/videos to be taken, shown

✓

Record any concerning incidents. Sign and date the records and give the information to the group

✓

Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the parish child protection representative

*You should not*

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g for comfort) should be initiated by the child
- Invade a child's privacy while washing or toileting
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- Use any form of physical punishment
- Be sexually suggestive to or about a child, even in fun
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g initiation ceremonies, bullying or ridiculing
- Show favouritism to any one child or group
- Allow a child to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature
- Give lifts to children on their own or on your own
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children
- Drink alcohol when responsible for children
- Share sleeping accommodation with children
  - Invite a child to your home alone
  - Take unofficial photos or videos
  - Contact children via Facebook or any internet site (See E safety)
  - Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organised group occasions



- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person
- Allow strangers to give children lifts

### **Touch**

Church sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children, while avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of child and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult. Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform parents as soon as possible. All such incidents must be recorded and the information given to the parish child protection representative.

All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

### ii) Additional guidelines for group leaders

In addition to the above, the group leader should:

- ✓ Ensure that any health and safety requirements are adhered to
  - ✓ Undertake risk assessments, record them and update as required, with appropriate actions noted
- ✓ Keep register and consent forms up to date
  - ✓ Have an awareness at all times of what is taking place and who is present
- ✓ Create space for children to talk – either formally or informally
  - ✓

Liaise with the practice for safeguarding parish child protection representative over good

- ✓ Always inform the parish child protection representative of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The parish child protection representative will liaise with the Diocesan safeguarding adviser
- ✓ Liaise with the PCC/ keep PCC informed on children's work



iii) Responding to child protection concerns

**All procedures in Section 6 of the parish procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children must be followed**

iv) Special needs

All children must be welcomed to the group. Ask parents how best to meet a child's special needs and ensure this is recorded on the registration form or on an additional record if necessary. Toilets should be accessible for all. Advice should be taken on specific needs. It may not be possible to safely meet the needs of some children without extra carer help, specific aids and adaptations. This must be discussed with parents, risk assessed and safe conclusions agreed.

v) Consent

Consent must be from a parent or person with parental responsibility. It can be from a child if he/she has sufficient age and understanding in relation to the specific issue. So, for example, while parental consent is always required for a group residential holiday, a teenager would usually be able to consent to the photos from the holiday being displayed in church. You should record who has given consent for any specific activity and keep records of consent forms for the duration of the child's time with the group. (See Registration)

iv) Registration

A registration form must be completed for every child who attends groups or activities. The form should be updated annually and also when information changes. The registration form must include the following information

- Full name and address of the child
- Name(s) and address(es) of those with parental responsibility
- Date of birth
- Emergency contact details
- Medical information
  - Any special needs including activities which the child cannot take part in
  - Consent for emergency medical treatment
  - Consent for official photographs and videos, if relevant
  - Arrangements for attendance/how transported/collected, if appropriate

Separate consent should be obtained for one off events and activities, e.g swimming, and also for outings, weekends away

All personal details and consent forms must be stored securely

Any group that includes children under 6 years of age and meets (without parents present) regularly for more than 2 hours a day or for more than 14 days a year must be registered with OFSTED. Seek their advice if you are unsure.

vii) Recommended staffing levels

Recommended minimum staffing levels for children's groups are as follows: More help may be required if children are being taken out, are undertaking physical activities or if circumstances/risk assessment require it.

0-2 years	1 person for every 3 children	1:3
2-3 years	1 person for every 4 children	1:4
3-8 years	1 person for every 8 children	1:8
Over 8 years	1 person for every 8 children then 1 extra person for every extra 12	

Each group should have at least 2 adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female

If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access in between them then it is possible to have only one adult per group, depending on the nature of the activity/age of children.

Young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they do is appropriate to both their age and understanding.

Adults who assist on one or two occasions must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter, they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through safe recruitment processes.

viii) Safe environment

- Leaders must ensure that all venues used for activities have had a health and safety risk assessment and that any necessary recommendations are acted upon. Risk assessments must be up to

□

date and revised for any new change of circumstances or activity.  
They should be retained on file in the parish

- A First Aid kit should be available at all locations used for children's work. Leaders and helpers must know where it is and supplies should be replenished by the Leader /designated person as required

If the church has an identified, trained First Aider it is important to know who they are and how to contact them for advice. With their consent, a notice with their name on can be displayed.

- A First Aid kit and accident book should be available on the premises. The contents of the First Aid kit should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate a named person to check the contents at prescribed intervals.
- All staff and volunteers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge through access to training. A list of First Aiders in the parish should be compiled and kept available. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book.
- Leaders and helpers must ensure that equipment and materials are non-toxic, safe, and appropriate to the age of the group
- Registration sheets for children attending must contain details of any allergies or medical issues. Some children may need an individual risk assessment/response plan
- When it is necessary to cross roads, responsible adults will assist children
- Parental consent should include arrangements for a child or young person to attend a group or activity. Arrangements should be included on the registration form.
- In case of fire, leaders and helpers should be aware of the location and use of fire extinguishers and of all exits from the buildings
- Leaders and helpers must be aware of the inherent dangers of certain activities and take appropriate precautions e.g cooking scissors, electrical equipment

☐ Leaders of groups should try to ensure that someone has access to a mobile phone in case they need to make calls in an emergency. This is especially important when working in a separate building.

☐ Guidance on safe transport should be followed – see below

ix) Venues

☐ Meeting places should be warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter. ☐ Electric sockets should be covered

☐ Toilets and handbasins should be easily available with hygienic drying facilities

- Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activity
- If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by the Environmental Health officer and a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate acquired
- Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available
- Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary
- Adults should be aware of fire procedures. Fire extinguishers should be regularly checked. Smoke detectors should be fitted throughout the premises and regularly checked. A fire drill should be carried out regularly
- Unaccompanied children should be encouraged not to walk to and from your premises along dark or badly lit paths.

x) E safety

- Ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional. Mobile telephones should not be used during activities and the telephone numbers of children should only be used to communicate general information about activities – ie details of date and time of events. Preferred practice is to contact parent(s) when communicating general information.
- The use of electronic items should be restricted. If using e technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group
- Do not make any relationship with a child through a personal Facebook account or any other social networking or internet sites.
- Children should never be friends of leaders or volunteers on Facebook, unless the group has a church account which is separate from any personal account and membership of the group is closed i.e. only available to those who are actively part of the group. This is to protect the adult as well as the child

- Communication should be group communication i.e. information sent to the whole group
- Maintain a log of all electronic contacts with individuals or groups including messaging and texting

xi) Transporting children on behalf of church

- Prior to offsite trips, a consent form must be completed by a parent and returned to the group leader. Children without a completed form will not be permitted to accompany the group  
Any leader or helper transporting children by road must ensure that the vehicle has insurance to cover this activity. The vehicle must be driven with due care and attention by an experienced driver
- Time of collection and delivery must be agreed with the parent(s)/ persons with parental responsibility, and any delays or alteration to arrangements communicated to them
- All children must be secured to a fixed seatbelt or appropriate car seat when travelling in any vehicle. The number of children must never exceed the number of seat belts
- When leaders, helpers or volunteers are transporting children off church premises, they should try to ensure that there are 2 adults as passengers in the vehicle and that someone at base knows the route and the reason for the journey.
- Should it be necessary to transport a lone child, it is preferable for the child to occupy a back seat.
- If potentially hazardous pursuits are planned, they must be at a recognised centre with trained staff and adequate insurance cover. Swimming trips must always be to pools with qualified life guards or under the supervision of a leader with a life saving qualification .

Drivers

- All drivers for church organised activities should have held a full clean driving license for over 2 years
- Drivers who are not children's workers should be recruited through normal recruitment processes



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- Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the parish child protection representative
- Any driver who has unspent convictions for serious road traffic offence(s) should not transport children for the church
- Drivers must always be in a fit state i.e not over tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of any medicine which induces drowsiness.

#### Private car

- Children should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parent/carer. This also applies to formally arranged lifts to and from church activities
- All cars which carry children should be comprehensively insured for both private and business use.
- The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church sponsored activities.
  - All cars which carry children must be in a road worthy condition
  - All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts, additional children should not be carried
- At no time should the number of children in the car exceed the usual passenger number
- There should be a non driving escort as well as the driver. If, in an emergency, a driver has to transport one child on his/her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.

#### Minibus or coach

- Leaders and helpers should sit among the group and not together
- If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored
- Before using the minibus, ensure you know the up to date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive.

#### xii) Recording

- i) All groups must have an up to date list of members
- ii) Parent(s) should be asked to complete and return a registration form (see section vi above)

The forms will be held by the group leader. If there are individual family issues (e.g. contact orders/ supervised contact ) it is important that the details are recorded to ensure that the child is collected by an appropriate person.

- iii) At each group session a register should be kept of all those attending, including the names of visiting children. In the unlikely event of an evacuation of the building, the leader should take this register outside
- iv) All accidents must be recorded in the accident book held by leaders. Parent(s) must be informed
- v) Helpers under the age of 18 yrs provide a valued service. They should be respected and encouraged as individuals but it must be remembered that they too are minors and should not be left to supervise children alone
- vi) **If a child says that they have been treated in a way which could constitute abuse it is important to follow procedures in section 6, below and to make a full record of what they say to you and what you say to them. NB: go to Section 6 for full advice**



## **2C Confidentiality**

- a) Children's leaders and helpers must treat personal information about children as confidential within the team. Any details other than name, address, date of birth and medical information which is important for risk assessment, should be shared on a "need to know" basis only and recorded only in exceptional cases where it is information which may have an impact on the child.
- b) Personal information should be kept in a secure place and be available only to the children's leaders and helpers
- c) Particular care must be taken not to gossip *about* children or young people; or *with* them about other adults or children.
- d) Where leaders wish to communicate information to anyone outside the team, they should first seek the advice of the incumbent or the Parish Child Protection representative
- e) The **exceptions to d) above, are where the child has disclosed abuse** and there also appears to be an immediate risk of significant harm if the child returns home – **see Section 6**
- f) In situations where a child discloses abuse a worker must never agree to confidentiality.
- g) Social networking sites should never be used as a means of communicating with children (See E safety above)
- h) If a worker has any doubt about confidentiality they should consult the Parish Child Protection representative.

**2D Insurance:** *(This section relates to parish safeguarding children policy statement 9; we will review our insurance policy for those working with children ensuring we adopt the advice in the House of Bishop's Policy)*

- The church must have public liability insurance which covers activities in the church buildings and elsewhere, on outings.

- Incidents or allegations which may invoke a claim against the church for injury, loss or damage must be notified to the insurance company.
- Insurance companies expect that all reasonable precautions but be taken to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring.
- Any person transporting children in a vehicle must be covered by fully comprehensive insurance.
- If the church has premises which are hired by other children's groups this must be declared to the insurers.

## **2E Concerns about behaviour**

- i) If any leader or helper has concerns about the behaviour of another leader or helper they should raise their concern as soon as possible, being specific about what is concerning you and why. Helpers should discuss with their leader, or follow the action for Leaders if the Leader is not contactable. Leaders should take advice from the Parish priest and/or Child Protection representative, as appropriate.
- ii) It is good practice to write down the concern outlining the background and history, giving dates and names etc to support the discussion
- iii) Anyone raising concerns (sometimes called whistleblowing )will be treated with respect, listened to and their concerns will be taken seriously.
- iv) When any leader or helper has personal difficulties (eg concerning physical or mental health) which they recognise to be impacting on their competence, they should discuss the situation with the person to whom they report so that appropriate support can be offered.
- v) For concerns regarding a child's behaviour please see Section 5

## **3. Safe recruitment of leaders and helpers**

*(This section refers to parish safeguarding children policy statement 3; We will carefully select and train ordained and lay ministers, volunteers and paid workers who work with children, using the Disclosure and Barring*

*Service amongst other tools to check the background of each person, as outlined in the Diocesan procedures)*

**Both paid staff and volunteer leaders and helpers will be recruited in line with the Church of England and Methodist Church of Britain “Practice Guidance Safer Recruitment July 2016”**

### **Process of recruitment for leaders and helpers**

- a) Any applicant must have begun to demonstrate a suitability for the role. Their suitability will be confirmed through the recruitment process. A discussion with the Children’s work lead should confirm this. The applicant will then be invited to
- b) complete an application form obtained from the Children’s lead or the Parish Safeguarding Representative. Return the Application form to the Parish Safeguarding Representative.
- c) complete a Confidential declaration form supplied by and to be returned to the Parish Safeguarding Representative
- d) provide 2 references as to their suitability for the role. These will be sent out by and returned to the Parish Safeguarding Representative

Once the above process has taken place, the Parish Safeguarding Representative will pass all these papers to the incumbent

- e) the incumbent will arrange to interview the applicant

If the incumbent supports the application he/she will inform the Parish Safeguarding Representative and return the documents to him/her. An application which is not supported cannot proceed.

The Representative will arrange for the applicant to

- f) be checked via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The only exception to this is for helpers who are accompanying children on an outing or helping at an event, and who are working under the supervision of someone who is DBS checked. The supervisor will ensure that the helper is not left alone in charge of children.
  - g) have their appointment confirmed in writing following agreement of the PCC.
- Every successful applicant must

- h) have a role outline for their responsibilities and sign a role agreement
- i) be provided with induction by a children's leader. The induction will include a study of these safeguarding procedures and commitment to upholding them
- j) have a probationary period of 6 months, subject to review after 3 months
- k) be supported; helpers by a leader, leaders by the children's lead, and children's lead by the Incumbent

#### Blemished DBS checks

- l) When a DBS check reveals reasons why an individual may not be suitable for children's work, a risk assessment process will take place under the guidance of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

#### DBS updates

- m) DBS checks for volunteers will be updated by the parish Child Protection representative every 5 years, in line with Diocesan procedures

### 4. What is child abuse?

Child abuse has many forms and there are 4 identified categories described in "Working together to Safeguard Children 2010"

- **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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is 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 or touching outside of clothing. They may also include non contact activities 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** 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 to 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 or abandonment) ▪

- protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

□ **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe or persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or

ridiculing what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may also involve: seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, for example in domestic violence situations; serious bullying (including cyber bullying); causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger; exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child but it may occur as the sole or main form of abuse.

**It is important to remember that any child, of any age, in any culture, religion or class may be the subject of abuse.**

**All abuse is a misuse of power and a betrayal of trust.**

## **5. Signs which may indicate abuse**

Signs should make us stop and think, not jump to conclusions. There are many potential signs of abuse and they represent pieces of a jigsaw. You may not be aware of all the pieces of the jigsaw and the diagnosis of abuse MUST be made by a qualified professional

Some of the possible signs of abuse are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list and some of these features can have a number of possible causes.

**The key point is that if you have any concerns you should discuss them with the parish Safeguarding representative, the Incumbent or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser without delay.**

**Remember the diagnosis of abuse must be left to qualified professionals**

**An abused child is never responsible for the abuse**

A child may:



Be unable to explain injuries

➤ Give differing explanations for the same injury



- Show general signs of neglect

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Complain of tummy pains with no medical reason

- Have a don't care attitude



Display sexually explicit behaviour inappropriate for their age



Display aggressive or inappropriately sexual play



Have few friends and not join in social activities



Appear happy only away from home

- Run away from home



Inflict self harm

- ➤

Revert to younger behaviour

Have relationships with adults and children which are secretive and exclude others ➤

Have severe sleep disturbances with fears and phobias

## 6. Action to be taken if abuse is alleged or suspected

*(This section relates to Policy statement 4. We will respond without delay to every complaint made that a child for whom we are responsible may have been harmed or is in significant danger)*

Abuse can come to light in a range of ways and through different behaviours such as those mentioned above. If the child talks about their experience it may be directly to you or may be to a friend, or other trusted person who then tells you.

### a) When a child talks about abuse

**Remember that an abused child is never responsible for the abuse.**

It is very difficult to tell someone about abuse. Many children have been threatened or they may not have the words to describe their experience.

**It is important that you react in a supportive way and that you do not try to investigate it yourself**



Keep calm, do not look shocked

- ✓ Allow the child to speak in their own words and don't correct or question
- ✓ Listen carefully and accept what they say
- ✓ Never push for information or ask leading questions e.g so and so did that didn't they?
- ✓ Reassure them that they are right to tell you
- ✓ Tell them you believe them and you are glad they have told you
- ✓ Tell them they are brave to tell
- ✓ Never make promises about what may happen, nor that what they say will be confidential – tell them that you will have to tell someone who is responsible for keeping children safe

b) Immediate actions

**If a child will be in immediate danger when they leave you, telephone the Police**

**In all cases: -**

Write down what the child said to you - date, time, who was there etc – use the child's actual words. Also, write down anything which you said. If you do not have time to do this/ it is not appropriate, record what took place as soon as possible. Remember to sign and date the record. It may be needed later.

Contact the Child Protection representative or the Diocesan Safeguarding adviser, for advice. Do not speak with parents/carers about the allegations.

When you contact the coordinator/adviser make sure you have the following information -

- Name address and date of birth of the child
- Parent(s)/carer(s) name(s) and contact details
- Name of the person against whom the complaint is made

□ Names of any witnesses

**If you are unable to contact anyone for advice telephone Children's Services directly – do not delay by waiting to contact the Child Protection representative or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.**

**Children's Services telephone number is 0845 607 2000**

Children's Services will give you their advice and explain to you what will happen next, if they believe that the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm. If they are of the opinion that the child has not suffered, or is not likely to suffer significant harm, they will give you further advice, including about informing parent(s)/carer(s)

**Do not speak to anyone against whom allegations have been made.** This will be done by those responsible for making enquiries under the Children Act.

Always cooperate with investigating statutory agencies. (*Parish safeguarding children policy statement 5; We will fully cooperate with the statutory agencies during any investigation into allegations concerning a member of the church*

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*community. We will inform the statutory agency of any suspected criminal offences or concerns that we are made aware of in respect of our contact with children)*

If you are in any doubt about whether a child is suffering significant harm : -

**ALWAYS REMEMBER – IF IN DOUBT – CONSULT**

Support and reassure the child or young person at this difficult time.

c)Allegations against clergy, lay ministers, workers or volunteers

The Parish Child Protection representative must be informed immediately and he/she will advise the Incumbent (except where the Incumbent is the person causing concern) and the appropriate Group Leader (where relevant)

The Parish Child Protection representative must immediately advise the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

Diocesan procedures are in place and must be followed.

**Look after yourself.** Expect to have to handle strong feelings. Do not hesitate to ask for help from the Incumbent or Group Leader if you need it. The Diocese can provide support to clergy and lay ministers.

## **7. Pastoral care – support for children and young people**

*(Parish Safeguarding policy statement 6; we will offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse and provide them with details of local and national support agencies)*

Children who have been or are being abused will experience a range of disturbing, possibly frightening or uncomfortable experiences. They will be struggling to understand it. They may turn to a trusted adult for help. The trusted adult may not be someone you would choose. If the child or young person chooses you, please ask for help and guidance via the Parish Child Protection representative. In some situations, the child or young person may need professional help.

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## **8. Managing a known offender**

*(This section relates to parish safeguarding children policy statement 7; we will supervise and support any member of the church community known to have offended against a child)*

Any person who has been known to offend against children will not be allowed to work with children and young people nor will they be permitted to hold any official role or office in the church which gives any status or authority.

Diocesan procedures are in place to ensure that the situation is risk assessed and managed on a multi agency basis.

As part of an agreement with the known offender, support will be offered from a named person or persons and boundaries set in place for worship services, hospitality etc.

Only these few individuals will know details of the offences. The highest level of confidentiality should be maintained.

## **9. Useful contacts**

**Parish Safeguarding Representative:**

Penny Welford - 01905 351468

**Bishop's Safeguarding Officer:**

Hilary Highton The Old Palace, Deansway, Worcester

Tel 07495 060869 email: [hhighton@cofe-worcester.org.uk](mailto:hhighton@cofe-worcester.org.uk)

**Children's Services** (Family Front Door)

Tel 01905 822666 Out of hours 01905 768020

**West Mercia Police**

Tel 101 or in an emergency 999

Website [www.westmercia.police.uk](http://www.westmercia.police.uk)

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**APPENDICES**

- A) Application form for volunteers
- B) Reference request for volunteers
- C) Job roles with role agreements (Children's worker)
- D) Induction of volunteers:

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