

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Abuser** - a person who has used their power and influence to do something or not do something to cause harm to a child or who has intended to do so.

**Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser** – Bishop's representative has the overall task of promoting good practice in all aspects of Safeguarding Children within the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Birmingham.

**Centre Manager** - person employed by the Centre under the job title of 'Centre Manager'.

**Centre Directors** - the Board of Directors of St. Francis Youth and Community Centre

**Children and Young People** - anyone under the age of 18.

**Church and Centre** - St. Francis' Church and St. Francis Youth and Community Centre, Sycamore Road, Bournville, Birmingham B30.

**Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy** – 'God's Children: Our Diocese'.

**Disclosure and Barring Service Check (Combining Previous Independent Safeguarding Authority and Criminal Records Bureau)** - procedure using the Disclosure Form obtained from the Diocese by the incumbent.

**External User Group** - a group which has signed a letting agreement with the Centre (cf. Appendix 3).

**Internal User Group** - a group authorised by the incumbent, and/or the PCC and/or the Centre Directors.

**Leader** - person with overall responsibility for a group either internal or external.

**Parish Children's Advocate (PCA)** – person appointed by the PCC and incumbent to represent and promote the views and needs of children in decisions made by the church in all aspects of the life and ministry of the church. The person will be a member of the PCC and should be in regular and direct communication with children, young people and those who lead groups.

**Parish Identity Verifier** – person authorised by the Diocese in each parish to co-ordinate the required DBS process for all roles involving positions of trust with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

**PCC** - Parochial Church Council of St. Francis' Church, Bournville.

**Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator** – a person designated by the incumbent to co-ordinate issues of a Safeguarding Children nature. This person is to help develop a culture of informed vigilance. This will involve passing on relevant information, maintaining records, ensuring children and youth workers receive appropriate training and ensuring the Safeguarding Children Policy is reviewed and updated regularly. It may also include taking action or being involved in recruitment.

**Survivor** - a person who has been the victim of abuse of any kind, either in a one-off situation or as part of a longer series of occasions across time.

**Training** - This may consist of either formal training courses or informal discussion with the incumbent or the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator or another qualified person. This training must include the nature of child abuse and safeguarding children and may include other issues connected with working with children and young people.

**Volunteer** - any unpaid person who has contact with children and/or young people as part of the activities run by the Church and/or Centre.

**Worker** - any person employed by the Church and/or Centre in a paid capacity who has contact with children and/or young people. This includes the incumbent and other members of the clergy.

**Worship** - any gathering of people for the purposes of a formal Service on the premises of the Church and/or Centre.

## **INTRODUCTION**

We at St. Francis' Church and Centre value the children and young people who are in our care, aiming to create a culture of informed vigilance through this policy. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and the Centre Directors take seriously their responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of those children and young people entrusted to our care, including children and young people with special needs and those from minority ethnic groups.

This policy seeks to ensure that a safe and secure environment is provided for them. It is in keeping with the Children Act 1989 and the Church of England's House of Bishop's Policy on Safeguarding Children.

The policy complies with the requirements for public liability under our insurance policy with Ecclesiastical Insurance Office plc.

This Policy on Safeguarding Children complements and makes reference to the existing Diocese of Birmingham Policy on Safeguarding Children and also the Church and Centre Drug Policy.

### **Responsibilities of PCC and incumbent**

All those working with children and young people, PCC members and others with responsibility in the church are expected to be familiar with the contents of this policy and to follow the procedures in it.

A Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator and a Children's Advocate must be appointed.

Relevant telephone numbers, including Childline and Birmingham Child Safeguarding numbers must be displayed.

Childline 0800 1111

Birmingham Child Safeguarding 0121 303 1888. Emergency out of hours 0121 675 4806.

Ensure that those authorised to work with children are trained, supported and security checked and that all have a copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy, procedures and guidelines with access to the Diocese Safeguarding Children Policy which contains detailed information about all these areas

Ensure that appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place and appropriate insurance is provided for all activities undertaken in the name of the Church or Centre.

Review the Policy at least annually.

## **POLICY STATEMENTS**

1. We are committed to provide a safe and secure environment where our children and young people will find the freedom to grow both spiritually and mentally to their full potential.
2. We recognise the importance of children and people who work with children. We therefore seek to recruit and employ workers and volunteers in accordance with the guidelines of the House of Bishops 1999 and the Children Act 1989.
3. We, as a Church and Centre, will take appropriate action in response to any allegations or suspicions of abuse made about any child or young person in our care whoever may be the alleged abuser.
4. We believe that workers and volunteers who come into regular contact with young people (up to age 18) in and through our Church and Centre, need to understand our policies and procedures for safeguarding their welfare.
5. We recognise that workers, both paid and volunteer, need to understand the issues in working with children and young people.
6. We recognise the need to identify and provide training that is appropriate to the needs of children, young people and paid and volunteer workers.
7. We recognise, with regret, that there are individuals who abuse children and that they may be part of our church community. However, the safety of children and young people must always be paramount. This is not to exclude people from the love of God through the church but to recognise that these people will need support and boundaries.
8. We respect and recognise that any survivor of abuse needs sensitive and confidential support and understanding.
9. We will publicise our policy either in summary or in detail in all relevant publications and notices, including the contact details for the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator.
10. We are committed to providing a Safeguarding Policy and to reviewing the policy point by point, amending and / or reaffirming the policy annually and when there are changes to the law or to Diocesan policy.
11. All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to follow the guidelines in this policy.
12. We will expect other users to provide a happy and safe environment for children and young people. Under the Children Act 1989, all user groups of the Church and Centre share a responsibility to ensure the protection of children in their care. We expect user groups of the Church and Centre to have their own safeguarding children policies, a copy of which should be lodged with the Centre Manager.

**PROCEDURES (THESE PROCEDURES EXPAND UPON THE MATCHING POLICY STATEMENTS ABOVE)**

**1.0 Environment**

- 1.1 Parents/Guardians are responsible for making arrangements to bring and collect their children to/from activities at the Church or Centre. Leaders must be informed if alternative arrangements are made for someone else to collect them.
- 1.2 During Worship, activities or transport, no single child is to be left alone with one unrelated adult.
- 1.3 At all Church and Centre activities, apart from Worship, at least two adults need to be with each group of children.
- 1.4 Outside Centre doors must be closed during Worship and activities.
- 1.5 Group leaders should be familiar with the Church and Centre's Health and Safety Policy and the guidelines contained in Section 8 of the Diocesan Policy.

**2.0 Recruitment**

- 2.1 All clergy, Readers, Churchwardens, Children/Youth leaders and teachers, and any others working with children, including volunteers, must attend an interview with the Vicar at which the Vicar will explain the policy.  
During an interregnum, responsibility for the recruitment process will rest with the Area Dean, the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator and the Churchwardens.
- 2.2 A confidential declaration must be completed and signed by the applicant.
- 2.3 Two references will be required, one of which should be from a person who has experience of the applicant's work with children, whether paid or voluntary.
- 2.4 A Disclosure and Barring Service check will be required.
- 2.5 If the outcome from 2.1 to 2.4 is not satisfactory, the applicant will not be allowed to undertake work with children.
- 2.6 A record of the disclosure number and date of the DBS certificate will be kept by the incumbent securely and indefinitely.
- 2.7 The records will be kept in the Parish Office. During an interregnum, the records will be held by the Area Dean.
- 2.8 The leader of each internal user group will report to the incumbent or to the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator on the progress of any recruitment. The incumbent

or the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will report to the PCC and the Centre Directors.

**2.11** Where there is concern about inappropriate behaviour of a volunteer or paid worker, the procedures in sections 9 -11 of the Diocesan Policy must be followed.

### **3.0 Taking Action when there are concerns about the welfare of a child or when an allegation has been made**

**3.1** Workers should understand the nature of child abuse and how to recognise when a child might be at risk. (cf.Sections 2-3 of the Diocesan Policy)

**3.2 An allegation** is when someone, who may or may not be the child concerned, makes a direct statement that abuse has taken place. All allegations of child abuse, from whatever source, should be referred to Children Social Care Services or Bishops Safeguarding Children Adviser as soon as possible. They must not question the child or make any investigations.

**3.3 A suspicion** is where there are indicators that child abuse may have taken place but where there is no direct allegation or disclosure to confirm this. If any worker has suspicions about a child being at risk, either through direct observation or through hearsay, they should seek advice without delay as in 3.5. They must not question the child or make any investigations.

**3.4** Disclosure made during Confession must be reported without delay as in 3.5.

### **3.5 Responsibility to share concerns**

Concerns should be shared as soon as possible with the Incumbent and / or parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator. A record of any discussion and decisions reached should be made and kept in the parish office.

If a child is at risk of harm or an allegation of abuse has been made, referral should be made to Children's Social Care Services as soon as possible. Bishop's Safeguarding Children adviser should be informed within 24 hours.

Advice should be sought from the Bishop's Safeguarding Children adviser. A record of any discussion and decisions reached should be made.

Possible decisions

- No further action
- Continue to observe and offer opportunities for the child to confide in a responsible person
- If safe speak to parent(s) / carer(s)
- Refer to Children's Social Care Services

Review should take place within timescales agreed with Bishop's Safeguarding Children adviser

**Note** If the concern is urgent or the child is in danger contact should be made with the emergency services or Out of Hours Children's Social Care Services immediately. Contact should also be made with Incumbent and / or parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator as soon as possible. The Bishop's Safeguarding Children adviser should be informed within 24 hours of any referral made to Children's Social Care Services

**3.6** Anyone who receives an allegation of abuse must keep detailed records of their responses. They should record the content of all conversations, face to face or by telephone, all decisions taken and the reasons for them, and should retain all correspondence and other papers. The records should be dated and all papers retained indefinitely in case allegations are made by others in the future. Cases involving a lapse of many years are often vulnerable in both criminal and civil courts. The police can require records to be produced in evidence.

**3.7** Records will be the responsibility of the Vicar and/or the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator and will be held in the Parish Office.

**3.8** Any records will be kept confidential within the reporting hierarchy as detailed in 3.5.

**3.9** Any accident occurring on the premises and how it was handled, should be recorded in the appropriate Accident Book, held in the Centre office for accidents occurring in the Centre and in the Clergy Vestry for accidents occurring in the Church.

#### **4.0 Understanding of Policy**

**4.1** The leader of each user group will be given a copy of the full policy to be kept on the Church and Centre premises.

**4.2** During the initial interview, the incumbent will explain the policy in detail and give the applicant a copy of the Summary document. (cf. Appendix 1)

**4.3** It will be the responsibility of the leader of the user group to ensure that all volunteer or paid workers in that group have been given the Summary document and understand the procedures.

**4.4** A code of practice will be displayed on the notice-boards in the Church and the Centre. This will include details of the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator and other contacts. (cf. Appendix 2)

**4.5** The Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will ensure that every new Parochial Church Council member and all those in positions of responsibility will be given a copy of the policy on appointment.

#### **5.0 Understanding the issues**

**5.1** The incumbent or the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will talk through the issues in working with children and young people with each applicant, with particular emphasis on the importance of :

- recognition of abuse (cf. section 2 of Diocesan Child Protection Policy)
- listening to the child/young person
- not questioning them about the incident
- not making any promises
- not making any assumptions

**5.2** If a worker is at all concerned, they should seek advice from the Group leader or the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator.

**5.3** Pastoral care will be available if required by a worker or volunteer who becomes involved in a safeguarding children issue. If necessary, the Bishop's Adviser will be consulted.

## **6.0 Training**

**6.1** The Church will pay for training provided by the Diocese, where it is needed. Other training from an appropriate source may also be provided.

**6.2** The Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will ensure that available courses are publicised both to the user group leaders and on the notice-boards.

**6.3** Workers/volunteers should inform their group leader of any training needs they have identified.

**6.4** Group leaders should inform the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator of any training needs identified by themselves or their workers.

**6.5** There is an expectation that group leaders will make sure their knowledge is updated regularly.

## **7.0 Response to abusers**

**7.1** The safety of the children and young people is paramount.

**7.2** If a known abuser seeks to join the church or is already in the church, the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser will be contacted for advice within one working day.

**7.3** If there are suspicions and/or rumours within the parish that there is an abuser present in the congregation, the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser must be contacted for advice within one working day.

**7.4** The subject of an allegation will be banned from working with children or young people pending the outcome of an enquiry.



**7.5** Consideration may be given to the pastoral care of the accused person and also to the accused person's family. Pastoral care must not be provided by the same person to both the victim and the accused.

**7.6** The subject of an allegation or a known abuser will not be banned from Worship on condition that they have no unsupervised contact with children.

**7.7** User group leaders will be notified in confidence of the identity of known abusers within the congregation.

**7.8** The incumbent must consider whether children and young people outside the church context are at immediate risk and if so, must contact Children's Social Care Services .

**7.9** If an abuser leaves the congregation, the incumbent will consider whether to inform any agency that has been involved, inform any referring agency and/or inform the incumbent/minister of any new church that the abuser may be attending. The incumbent will inform the Bishop and seek advice from the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser within one working day.

**7.10 In an interregnum, procedures must be in place for the management of a known abuser** (cf. section 5.9 -10 in the Diocesan Child Protection Policy)

## **8.0 Support to survivors**

**8.1** Pastoral care will be provided for any survivor of abuse where it is requested. This will be treated in confidence.

## **9.0 Publicity**

**9.1** The relevant documents will be publicised as follows :

<b>Document</b>	<b>Location</b>
1. The full policy	each user group leader
2. The Summary (cf. Appendix 1)	each paid worker or volunteer
3. Code of Practice (cf. Appendix 2)	notice-boards in Church and Centre
4. God's Children	1 copy in the Parish Office 1 copy with Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator

**9.2** For contact details of the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator see Code of Practice (cf. 9.1 above).

## **10.0 Review**

**10.1** The incumbent and/or the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will ensure that the review of the policy is raised on the PCC and Centre Directors Agenda annually.

**10.2** Any change to the law or Diocesan policy will be notified to the PCC and Centre Directors by the incumbent or the Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator.

**10.3** When the policy is amended / affirmed, new copies will be circulated in accordance with 9.1.

### **11.0 External Users**

**11.1** It is the responsibility of the leader of external user groups of the Church and/or Centre to have their own Safeguarding Children Policy and to lodge a copy with the Centre Manager. This should be part of the letting agreement. Failure to do this will be a breach of the letting agreement. (cf. Appendix 3)

**11.2** The Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will liaise with the Centre Manager to ensure that the documents in 11.1 are in place and are up-to-date.

## **Physical Contact Policy**

It is important that the children in our care feel valued and wanted at all times, they vary in age, maturity and backgrounds. We must endeavour to support children in a variety of ways, many of our children either do not understand, or are still learning to understand the appropriateness of physical contact. Children look to us for approval and are testing out responses all the time.

It is often appropriate for children to be given some physical contact and comfort, but this must always be offered with the following caution:

1. Always ensure there are other adults around.
2. Never show favour to individual children.
3. Never touch a child in the area between the waist and mid-thigh or near the chest.
4. Never touch a child in a way that could be mis-interpreted as being anything other than friendly appropriate adult-child support.
5. Where a child tries to get closer than appropriate, the message should always be along the lines of, "I like you and I enjoy being with you, but I would rather you held my arm/hand like this".
6. Some very active children sometimes calm down and focus on an activity when for example: being talked to quietly and gently while having their hand held. If this is the case such a support mechanism must be written into the child's Care Plan or in the notes on their registration form.
7. Hugs should be short and side by side.
8. Never kiss a child, and do not encourage children to kiss adults other than their parents.
9. A child should not be invited or made to sit on your knee.
10. Tickling is not appropriate.

11. For children within Foundation Stage, appropriate relationships are still being established, and there is a greater need for a more nurturing environment where it may be more appropriate for closer physical contact during some activities. The above cautions still apply, longer hugs may be more acceptable until the child is established and confident in school.
12. Where children require help with changing or toileting, the dignity of the child must be maintained at all times. Great care must be taken to ensure that all physical contact is specifically and only for the purpose of the operation being carried out.

**Appropriate touches include:**

- Hand shakes
- Shoulder hugs
- Linked arms
- Holding hands during playtimes or outings

**Children's Response To Touch**

- All children interpret and react to touch in different ways. Some children are over-demonstrative and try to demand a great deal of affection and physical contact, whilst others shy away from or have a dislike of physical contact. We must never assume that a child will accept a touch that is meant as a friendly gesture.
- There may be children in our care who have backgrounds where there has been inappropriate physical contact, or even emotional, physical or sexual abuse. These children will be confused about adult-child contact and will need very sensitive support and care. Wherever there is physical contact, this must be seriously considered.
- Wherever a member of staff feels uncomfortable about the way in which a child is using or abusing physical contact, this must be immediately discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Leader, Kaboom Co-ordinator or Centre Manager and recorded as a Cause for Concern. This may need to be taken further into the Child Protection arena.
- Staff must be careful not to make a child feel rejected if they have been over-demonstrative physically. Refer to No. 5 above.

Where children make impulsive emotional approaches such as "I love you", never reject or let down, but always respond positively by such as, "That must mean that you like me a lot, and I like you as well. I am especially pleased with you when you play nicely with your friends..."

If this type of approach becomes inappropriate, or regular, seek advice from the Kaboom Co-ordinator or Centre Manager

**Emergency Procedures for Physical Intervention**

Although there is a general policy of 'No Physical Contact' there may be the occasional time when all other avenues have been explored.

Staff have a 'duty of care' to all pupils. If a pupil is becoming a danger to him/her self or

others, we cannot do nothing. Obviously our first line of approach will be verbal, using a variety of de-escalation techniques, interventions and instructions.

Where these have not worked, there may be the need to intervene physically to stop someone putting themselves or others in danger. Examples of these could be:

- A child running towards a busy road
- An angry child about to hurt someone
- A serious fight
- A child damaging Centre property

Where this might happen the intervention must be using minimal force, and only enough to stop the incident.

Regard must be made to The Education Act 1996 (Circular 10/98) (a copy of which is available on request).

The child/children must be made aware of what is going to happen if the situation does not stop.

In an escalating or dangerous situation, reasonable, calm and considered responses could be:

- Blocking a pupil's path
- Holding, pushing or pulling away from the incident
- Leading by the arm
- Guiding pupil away with hand in centre of the back

Such an incident must be reported fully in writing to the Kaboom Co-ordinator at the first opportunity, preferably the same day and never more than 24 hours after the incident.