

St Mary's
Wythall
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
ISSUE 9

Reviewed and adopted by the Parochial Church Council on 19th November 2017

Mission statement

We recognize the need to safeguard those children and young people in our care, as well as those who take part in teaching them. We aim to create a safe environment for the nurture and development of our children and young people, in order that they may feel valued. Children and young people are a precious gift from God and we have a clear responsibility to do whatever we can to ensure their safety and well-being. It is therefore our intention to create policies and procedures that uphold methods of safe practice and which safeguards all those involved in this area of ministry. We also recognize the need to treat all children and young people with respect, to take their views seriously and to take appropriate action. Our aim at all times is to use praise and encouragement to foster the development of confidence and self worth.

Definitions

Child(ren)

Someone aged of 11 years or under

Young person(s)

Someone aged 12 years to 17 years

Volunteer(s)

Someone who is involved in unpaid church work e.g. Sunday school teacher

Paid worker(s)

Someone who is employed by the church or the diocese

Leader(s)

Anyone over the age of 18 years with responsibility for a group of children /young people

Young leader(s)

Anyone under the age of 18 years working with a group of children / young people

Child Protection Advisor

The person appointed by the Bishop to give advice on child protection issues

Parish Safeguarding Coordinator (J. Clark)

The person appointed by the PCC to ensure the implementation of this document

Health and Safety Officer (Children's Safety and safeguarding) (P. Emery)

A person appointed by the PCC to advise and administer the church's Health and Safety Policy and associated Risk Assessments in all aspects relating to children and young people

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Verifier (S Taylor)

A person appointed by the PCC to ensure all paid and volunteer workers are processed in accordance with current DBS Guidelines

POLICY

1. We commit to appointing a Child Protection Coordinator and a DBS Verifying Officer to implement these child protection policies and procedures
2. We recognize the need to create a safe environment in which children and young people feel safe and confident to ask for help or support and in which our paid workers and volunteers also feel protected and supported.
3. We commit to taking care in the selection and recruitment of all our paid and volunteer workers and where relevant this will require conducting a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check on applicants:
 - a. Prior to their appointment
 - b. Every five years ,subsequently unless there are reasons to renew earlier e.g. where there are concerns about an individual or where an individual changes their role or takes up a new post
4. We recognize our responsibility to report abuse in whatever context inside or outside the church environment.
5. We will ensure that all paid workers and volunteers understand the Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
6. We accept responsibility for initiating and providing initial and ongoing training for all our paid workers and volunteers.
7. We commit to paying particular attention to children / young people with special needs or from all ethnic groups to ensure their full integration and protection within the church family.
8. We are committed as a church fellowship to respond to any reported cases of abuse, complaints or concerns and when necessary report and seek advice from the Diocese or any other statutory agency concerning any child or young person in our care.
9. We will ensure appropriate supervision of anyone attending activities organised by St Mary's church who is known to have offended against a child or young person
10. We commit to the support of adult survivors and abused children.
11. We commit to providing appropriate support and guidance to any individual within our church community who is accused of causing harm to any child /young person in our care.
12. We commit to informing the whole church fellowship about the child protection policies and procedures
13. We agree to review annually our Child Protection Policies and Procedures and in this process to consult where appropriate with those directly involved in their application.
14. When appropriate the Child Protection Coordinator will request to see the child protection policies and procedures of organisations that use the church premises for work with children or Young persons.

Signed **Date** 19th November 2017
Chair of Parochial Church Council

PROCEDURES

1. Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)

A Child Protection Coordinator will be appointed to implement, on behalf of the PCC, the St Mary's Church Wythall Child Protection Policies and Procedures. In this respect, the person selected will be a church member having the appropriate skills and experience for such a responsibility.

2. Creating a safe environment

The gender and ratio of adults to children should be in accordance with the guidelines given in Guideline D.

We will designate responsible persons to ensure, that as far as possible, the rooms to be used by children and young people are as safe as we can make them.

2.1. The Church building and Coppice School Premises

A regular check of the rooms used, main hall, toilets, crèche room, entrances and exits will be undertaken by relevant people. Any problems will be reported back to the CPC. We will ensure, as far as is possible, that the rooms entrances and exits used by children and young people are as safe as we can make them.

2.2. Access to the Premises

Safety regarding access to the premises is the responsibility of each group using the facilities to ensure that relevant doors are kept locked to protect the safety of the School during school hours whilst still ensuring safe entrance and exit for users of the premises.

2.3. Use of diocesan and church owned homes (Vicarage and the homes of the Curate and the Children and Youth Worker)

The diocese and the church ensures that all premises are suitable for work with children and young people. At least one of the leaders involved in the children and young people's activity taking place in these residences must be a non resident.

2.4. Private homes

We will ensure that the premises used are suitable for work with children and young people and that at least one of the leaders involved in the children and young people's activity taking place in these residences must be a non resident.

2.5. Residential and non residential trips

We will ensure that the environment into which we take children and young people meets our standards of a safe environment. We will familiarize ourselves with the safety regulations of the premises and conduct a risk assessment. We will advise children and young people under our care of any special safety precautions to be observed whilst on the premises.

Parents will be required to complete a parental consent form for all residential and non residential trips.

The church has an insurance policy with Ecclesiastical Insurance covering public liability

3. The selection and recruitment of paid workers and volunteers

3.1. The incumbent / the Youth, Children and Families Minister or the DBS Verifier will interview each person who applies to work as a paid worker or volunteer with our children or young people. During an interregnum interviews will be carried out in consultation with the Area Dean and the Child Protection Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that this is carried out.

3.2. The applicant will be required to complete and sign the relevant application form which also incorporates a confidential declaration form laid down by the House of Bishops. Applicants will be required to provide two references and to complete an on line ID checking process in liaison with the DBS Verifier

3.3. A Disclosure and Barring Service check will be carried out on each applicant (dependent upon role) Applicants will be offered an information pack regarding completion of the relevant forms and the documents required for the clearance process.

3.4. The Bishop and the Diocesan Child Protection Advisor will be informed in the event that a completed declaration form reveals any possible cause for concern

3.5. All declaration information will be kept securely on computer. The information will be held in perpetuity and will be kept strictly confidential. The forms will be passed on to the Area Dean in the event of an interregnum and returned subsequently to the newly appointed vicar

3.6. All paid workers and volunteers will have a clear job description

3.7. All paid workers and volunteers are subject to a three month probationary period. The interviewers will carry out the review at the end of this period.

3.8. All applicants under the age of 18 years are required to have their application form signed by their parent /guardian and we will ensure that no worker under 18 years has sole responsibility for any group of children or young people.

3.9. All paid workers and volunteers will have their DBS check renewed every 5 years. A register of DBS checks, DBS individual reference numbers and renewal dates will be kept by the DBS Verifier and the Church Administrator

4. Disclosure of Abuse

There may be occasions when the vicar receives a confession from someone who has abused a child. While the seal of the confession remains absolute, the vicar will always consider whether children or young people are at risk, so that he /she should urge the person making the confession to report the abuse themselves to the social services and /or the police, and whether absolution should be withheld until the person has agreed to do so.

Disclosure may take place in a pastoral setting outside of formal confession, and whilst a person's right to confidentiality is of the highest importance it is not absolute and there are occasions when confidentiality should not be maintained. If children or young people may possibly be at risk from the person making the disclosure a report must be made to social services or the police. It is important for the vicar to make clear to the person concerned whether what is taking place is formal or sacramental confession on the one hand or spiritual or other counsel on the other. In the latter case the rules on confidentiality outside of formal confession should be explained at the outset together with an assurance that no matter what is disclosed the person will be helped within the constraints imposed by the law and subject to the paramount need to safeguard the welfare of children and young people. The vicar should consult the Bishop's representative in order to obtain expert professional advice about how the person concerned can best be helped.

Note 1 Please refer to "Guidance on Abuse" (See Guideline B)

Note 2 Please refer to "The Bishop's Procedure on Reporting Abuse" (See Guideline C)

5 Ensuring understanding of the child protection policies and procedures

The church will initiate initial and ongoing training of all paid workers and volunteers and will make available copies of all relevant documentation on working with children and young people. We will also ensure that all paid workers and volunteers are supplied with a copy of St Mary's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and given the opportunity to discuss areas of concern in order that they fully understand the issues involved.

6. Initial and ongoing training

We will set up an appropriate training programme for new and existing paid workers and volunteers. Ideally, training will be near to the time of appointment and every three years thereafter. We will seek the advice of the Child Protection Advisor and other available specialists in the planning and organisation of our child protection training programme.

7. Children with special needs and ethnic minority groups

The church will assist in teaching those children or young adults with disabilities personal safety skills and will ensure every effort is made to ensure their personal safety whilst in our care. Likewise the church will endeavor, through the language used and the actions taken, to ensure those children or young people

with disabilities and from all ethnic backgrounds are not marginalized but are fully integrated into the church and are helped to increase in confidence and build self esteem.

8. Responding to reported cases of Abuse

Please see 4 above

9. Supervision of known offenders

Please see separate policy entitled "St Mary's Church Policy on The Supervision of Known Child Abusers in the church" (Appendix 1)

10. Supporting adult survivors and abused children

We will ensure that adult survivors and alleged and known victims are put in touch with the relevant organisations /agencies via the Church leadership team who are equipped to deal with situations as they arise.

11. Supporting alleged offenders

In the case of an individual within our church community who is alleged to have committed an offence to a child or young person in our care will be supported by members of the leadership team and put in touch with the relevant organisations /agencies for advice and support. Individuals involved in the same case will be supported by different members of the leadership team. The safety of the children and young people will remain paramount and the individual in question will not have access to children and young people whilst under investigation.

12 Informing the church fellowship regarding child protection policies and procedures

The church will make available a full copy of St Mary's child protection policies and procedures to church members. To this end a copy of the child protection policy and procedures will be placed in a folder and stored in the folder rack in the foyer. The policy will also be made available on the church website. A copy of the policy is also available by request from the Child Protection Coordinator, the vicar and the church office.

13. Annual review of policies and procedures

In November of each year the Child Protection Coordinator will carry out a review of all policies and procedures regarding working with children and young people. In the course of the review the CPC will meet with the appropriate leaders in the church and will also liaise with the Diocesan Child Protection Advisor as appropriate to keep abreast of any centralized policy changes or any revisions to the law on child protection.

14. Organisations using church premises

The church in liaison with Coppice School will ensure that all voluntary organizations using joint church and school premises have clear policies in child protection and adopt recommended practices and procedures to ensure the safe guarding of children and young people.

Notes

1. This document reflects the principles, policies, procedures and practices that are appropriate to St Mary's Church Wythall
2. The St Mary's Church Wythall Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Good Practice follow the recommendations of the following documents, copies of which can be obtained from the church office, the Child Protection Coordinator and the Youth, Children and Families Minister :
 - Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese*. The Diocese of Birmingham.
 - House of Bishops (2009) *Protecting all God's Children. The Child Protection Policy for the Church of England*. Church House Publishing.
3. All matters concerning the policy should be raised with the Vicar, Youth, Children and Families Minister or the Child Protection Coordinator.
4. The Child Protection Coordinator for St Mary's Church is currently Jenny Clark whose contact telephone number is 01564 824371 Mobile 07793405721



CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES FOR GOOD PRACTICE

GUIDELINE A

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PAID WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS IN THEIR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Safety issues

1. Be aware of St Mary's Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for Good Practice N.B. All the agreed child protection policy, procedures and guidelines for good practice apply to all paid workers and volunteers.
2. Plan the work of the organization /group so as to minimize situations where abuse of children / young people may occur and where health and safety issues are given high priority
3. Make sure an adult is never left alone with a child / young person and always remains in sight of another responsible adult
4. Where possible two adults should be with each group.
5. Be in view at all times
6. No meetings should take place off the normal premises without a carer or parent's knowledge
7. Do not invite children into your own home. In the case of a distressed child /young person arriving on your doorstep you need to make sure that there are two adults present (one nonresident) and that at least one is of the same sex as the child/young person. An extra adult to call on should be one of the following:
 - Ria Taylor (contact details available from the church office)
 - Judith Emery
 - Pam Carter
 - Peter Emery
 - Jenny Clark
 - Pam Miller
8. Every child / young person needs to be aware of who the Child Protection Coordinator is so the child /young person can speak to them independently. N.B Notices giving the relevant information are clearly displayed in the church foyer

Support and training of paid and voluntary workers

9. All paid workers and volunteers should have a clear role and job description
10. All paid workers and volunteers should undertake child protection training prior to appointment and thereafter every three years

11. All paid workers and volunteers will have an annual review either individually or in a group

Record keeping

12. Keep accurate records of those working in the area of children and young people
Keep a register of all those working in your group
13. Keep open and current accident /incident records
14. Use parental consent forms for residential and non residential trips.

Dealing with children /young people

15. There will be no physical punishment of any child / young person. Only the method of punishment agreed by the paid workers and volunteers will be used
(See Guideline E)
16. No sexually suggestive comments about a child or young person should be made not even in fun
17. No excessively rough or sexually provocative games should be played with children or young people
18. Do not invade the privacy of children or young people when on residential or non residential trips especially when showering or washing. Where assistance is required either the carer or parent takes responsibility; or if that is not possible two workers who are of the same sex as the child /young person should be with them.
19. No photographs or videos should be taken of children or young people without the consent of their parents which is obtained on the child's registration form. Parents need to be aware of: when the photo will be taken, what it will be used for and how it will be stored. N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 4.9 for more detail.

Communicating with children /young people

20. Written communication in the form of handouts or leaflets and given out at group meetings is the best way of communicating important information to children /young people and their parents as this is an open and public medium.
21. When communicating with children /young people outside of the group environment care should be taken when using mobile phones, texting and Emails. You should ensure that any communication between yourself and children/young people is always public not private. When using Email insure parents know and are happy that you use this means of communication with their child and that content is public by using group emails and /or sending a copy of the Email to a colleague. Always save Emails to ensure an accurate record is kept and all emails should be started with a new email thread. Text messages are private by nature so take great care with their use. Save messages as text files to ensure an open record exists and keep this method of communication to a minimum. Chat rooms have tremendous potential for misuse therefore these should NOT be used to communicate with children or young people. In counseling situations another adult must know the interview is taking place and with

whom. One to one communication with children /young people should always be done in view of other colleagues. N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 4.5 and 4.6 for more detail

22. When praying with children and young people ensure that both the child/young person and the parents give their consent to this and that they are aware of what to expect. Ensure that you are in an open space and where possible 2 adults should be involved in praying for each child /young person. Ask the child /young person what they would like prayer for, check your understanding of what they have said but do not attempt to advise or interpret it. Do not invade their personal space and try to be the same height as the child or young person by sitting or kneeling. If you feel that the laying on of hands is appropriate then you should explain exactly what you are going to do and gain the child /young person's consent to this. Agree with the child /young person where and how you will touch. Placing a hand on the shoulder is usually the most acceptable. N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 4.11 for more detail.

23. Within the Church, social networking might be considered a useful form of outreach, but users should be aware of the dangers and protect themselves from allegations or misinterpretation. Clergy, youth workers, children's workers and those working as professionals on behalf of the church in positions of trust and authority, may wish to set up their own social networking web pages either as a form of outreach or simply for personal communication. In these cases the following good practice is recommended:

- Consider the aim and purpose of the site before you do anything
- If you are going to have a site, it is best to make it specific to a group or project (when the page is about the group, young people being on the site as 'friends' is less of an issue)
- The profile/group site needs to have an administrator who takes responsibility for the 'friends' who are allowed membership of the site
- The Administrator needs to continually monitor the content of the site, particularly a 'Face book wall' and should ensure that all posts are approved by the administrator prior to posting
- Think carefully about the boundaries between your church 'role' and your 'personal life'
- Spend time looking at the Privacy and Security options contained in whichever site you use
- Inform your PCC about your site and obtain their permission
- Ensure that your Church PCC, church leaders, and where possible parents, give their consent for you to have under 18s as 'friends' on the site.
- Work with your young people to explore both the opportunities and risks associated with social networking
- Do not accept or add anything on the site which could bring the name of the church into disrepute

For More information and guidelines on best practice please see Diocese of Birmingham, (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 4.8:8. (Page 14)

Transporting children /young people

24. The transporting of children and young people should always be done by designated individuals. It should never be the case that one adult is alone in a car with a child or young person. Accompanying them should either be a leader of the group or a member of their family who is part of the group. When transporting children / young people, the back seat of the vehicle should be used to its appropriate capacity before using the front seat. Lone children should always sit in the back of the vehicle. N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 8.9 for more detail

25. Designated drivers when driving children in their own car must ensure that they hold a valid driving licence and that the car is taxed. They must also hold valid certificates of insurance and MOT (if relevant). N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 8.9 for more detail. All drivers transporting children whilst in the care of the church must have held a full driving license for a minimum of 3 years.

GUIDELINE B

GUIDANCE ON ABUSE

Abuse may fall into five categories:

1. **Physical** – Actual or likely injury to a child /young person or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child /young person.
2. **Sexual** – Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child /young person.
3. **Neglect** – The persistent or severe neglect of a child /young person or the failure to protect a child /young person from exposure to any kind of danger resulting in the significant impairment of the child's /young person's health or development.
4. **Emotional** – Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child /young person caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some degree of emotional harm, this category is used when it is the main or sole form of abuse.
5. **Organisational** – sexual abuse where there is more than a single abuser and the adults concerned appear to act together to abuse a child /young person and / or where an adult uses an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit a child /young person for sexual abuse.

Guidelines in the event of concerns that a child is being abused

- Record your concerns. It is important to record your observations of the child / young person, their behaviour, or what they or others have said which gives rise to your concerns
- Do not question the child / young person in depth but indicate to them that you have noticed that they have for example, a sore leg. Make some remark that indicates to the child /young person that you are concerned about them as an individual. You could possibly say that, if they need anything, to let you know.
- It is difficult to act on "suspicions" unless there are frequent matters of real concern or injuries, which have unsatisfactory explanations.
- Share your concerns with the person in charge of your group and discuss with the Child Protection Coordinator whether the situation should be referred further. Pass on your notes, dated and signed, to the Child Protection Coordinator.

Guidelines in the event of a child /young person reporting that they are being abused by a person within the church or outside

- Thank them for sharing this with you
- Reassure them that you will get help
- Inform them that you cannot ensure confidentiality
- Listen to the child /young person

- Do not question them
- Do not make any suggestions to them or ask leading questions e.g. "X did it didn't he?" or "It was Y wasn't it?"
- Keep the child / young person safe if they are in immediate danger.
- Tell the child / young person that you must pass this information on to people who can help the child /young person
- Make notes as soon as possible giving details of:
 1. What the child /young person said.
 2. How the child /young person looked.
 3. How the child /young person was feeling.
 4. What the child /young person wants.
 5. What the child /young person fears.
 6. What action you took.
 7. Any visible injuries (position, size, colour and shape)
- Contact the Child Protection Coordinator for advice as soon as possible. Provide him / her with your notes (signed and dated) and the child /young person's name, address, date of birth and any other details known. They will refer the matter to the Social Services or the police. In the case of the Child Protection Coordinator being away contact the Vicar directly. In the case of the vicar being away contact one of the church Wardens.
- All documentation will be held by the vicar in a lockable separate case. During an interregnum, the documentation will be held by the Area Dean and subsequently returned to the newly appointed vicar.
- Support will be offered to the child /young person involved and if appropriate their family.

Important points to remember

- Do not delay
- Do not act alone
- Do not try to investigate
- Tell the Child Protection Coordinator or if not available the Vicar and in the case of the interregnum a church warden
- Under no circumstances must the allegation be reported to the alleged abuser
- If the child /young person is about to return home advice must be taken from the Child Protection Coordinator or the vicar as to whether or not anything should be said to the parents.

The church undertakes to support any worker with whom the child /young person shares the fact that they are being abused.

N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 2: 1-11 and Section 3: 1-6 for more detail

GUIDELINE C

THE BISHOP'S PROCEDURE ON REPORTING ABUSE

The following procedure **MUST** be followed when reporting abuse. In the case of any of the people mentioned below being accused of abuse, whether paid worker (including the Vicar) or volunteer, they must step down from their role with children and young people. In the case of any paid worker (including the Vicar) being accused, the Bishop will determine with his representative the best course of action for the individual to take. This will involve the accused person stepping down from unsupervised work with children, but may also mean a leave of absence and in some cases temporary employment and temporary accommodation being sought elsewhere.

- The leader will report directly to the Child Protection Coordinator
- The Child Protection Coordinator will contact the police or social services and then report to the vicar, therefore respecting confidentiality. Or in the case of the vicar's absence or interregnum, the report should go to the Church Warden.
- The Vicar or Church Warden will report the matter to the Bishop's Child Protection Advisor.
- The matter is then reported to the Bishop

In the case of someone in the chain being accused of abuse, it is vital they are not informed of the case until the proper time and therefore the chain is bypassed at their level.

N.B. House of Bishops (2009) *Protecting all God's Children. The Child Protection Policy for the Church of England*. Church House Publishing. Procedure 1 pgs 33 – 38 for more detail

GUIDELINE D

RECOMMENDED GENDER AND RATIOS OF ADULTS (OVER 18YRS) TO CHILDREN

As a church we are committed to working towards the following ratios;

There should be a minimum of two adults with each group one of each gender:

0-2 years 1:3

2-3 years 1:4

3-8 years indoor 1:8 outdoor 1:6

8 years and over Indoors – up to 20 children two leaders with one additional leader for every additional block of ten children /young people or part thereof.

N.B. Where there is only sufficient resource for 1 leader only in the 8yr + age groups priority will be given to ensuring a safe location that is visible or within hearing distance of another leader.

8-13 years Outdoors – up to 15 children /young people to two leaders with one additional leader for every additional block of 8 children /young people or part thereof

Over 13 years Outdoors - up to 20 young people to two adults with an additional leader for every block of 10 young people or part thereof.

N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 2: 1-11 and Section 3: 1-6 for more detail

GUIDELINE E MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE

General guidelines

- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding and pray for and with the child /young person.
- Work on the child /young person's positives do not compare them with each other but encourage and build them up, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with the children /young people and be a good role model setting a good example you cannot expect children /young people to observe ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children /young people attention and don't allow the more demanding few to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team leaders know what you have said as this avoids manipulation.
- Look honestly at your programme as children /young people often misbehave when they are bored. Is the programme at fault?
- NEVER smack, hit or handle a child roughly.
- Do NOT shout but change your voice tone if necessary.
- Discipline out of love NEVER anger. Call on support from other leaders if you feel angry or you may deal with a situation unwisely.
- Lay down clear ground rules and make sure that the children /young people understand what will happen if these are broken
- Always pray before each session with co leaders and debrief afterwards.

Dealing with a disruptive child(ren) /young person(s)

- Remember that each child /young person is unique and special and therefore need differing methods of being dealt with. Ask why the child /young person is behaving in this demanding manner?
- Separate children / young people who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are actually being disruptive.
- Sit the child or young person in front of you or have a helper sit next to them.

- Be proactive and encourage helpers to be proactive and not to wait to be told how to deal with the situation.
- Take the child /young person to one side and talk to them, challenge them to change, whilst encouraging their strengths.
- It may be necessary to inform the parent of the child / young person's behaviour, and to discuss how this could be remedied

N.B. See Diocese of Birmingham (2011) *God's Children our Diocese* Section 4: 1-11 for more detail

Appendix 1



Policy for the Supervision of Known (or Alleged) Child Abusers Attending St Mary's Church Wythall.

Statement

We recognize 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 recognize that these people will need support and boundaries.

Points of note regarding abusers:

(N.B. There is a range of terminology used currently in the literature however for the purpose of this document the term abuser will be used).

- Abusers attending church may have been convicted or cautioned
- Abusers attending church may already be known to the criminal justice system
- Abusers attending church may be known to others but no action has taken place
- Abusers may not be known to anyone
- Abusers may or may not be still abusing
- Abusers may be involved in any of the five types of abuse i.e. Physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, organizational abuse and neglect.
- Abusers are often practiced in the art of deception and may be attending church in order to gain access to children / young people by building a relationship with them.

Notification of the abuser

The church may be notified of the abuser from the following sources:

- The police, probation service, social services or a rehabilitation clinic.
- The prison service or courts
- The Archdeacon or Bishop
- The incumbent of a previous church
- A member of the congregation
- A member of the public
- The abuser themselves

Policy

1. Maintenance confidentiality

Confidentiality of this sensitive information is of prime importance for everyone involved. The boundaries need to be set with the Bishop's Advisor on Child Protection and these will be different in every situation. Outside of formal sacramental confession confidential boundaries may need to be broken if the incumbent thinks children or young people are at risk. It is imperative that the children and young people are kept safe. Consideration also has to be given to the safety of the abuser. Due to the changing nature of church officers and congregations the issue of "who knows" needs to be constantly reviewed, It is important to recognize that such information is a burden for those who hold it and they will

need support. It is also important to recognize that all persons involved in the process of supervising the known abuser seeks advice and guidance from the relevant sources.

2. Initial action following notification of the abuser:

- Determine from the person giving notification of the abuser what contact they have with the abuser and what safeguards are in place.
- Ensure that the abuser is not doing any work in the church that brings them into contact with children and young people and if they are stop this immediately.
- Consider whether children and young people outside of the church context are at immediate risk and if so contact social services.
- Contact the Bishop's Advisor on Child Protection (through the Bishop's Chaplain who will inform the Bishop) who will advise on the action to be taken
- Do NOT deal with the situation on our own ALWAYS seek help and support.
- In the event of the abuser confessing to still be abusing then the Child Protection Procedure must be followed.

3. Subsequent action: N.B. Every situation may be different

- Follow the advice of the Bishop's Advisor on Child Protection who will provide guidance on dealing with the situation appropriately and safely
- An assessment of risks should be conducted
- A written contract with the abuser is likely to be drawn up which will provide boundaries that the abuser must adhere to
- Should an allegation of abuse be made against the abuser then the child protection procedure must be followed.

4. Action to be taken when the abuser leaves the church

The incumbent should inform the following agencies /persons regarding the movement of the abuser:

- Any statutory or voluntary agency that has been involved with the abuser
- Any referring agency
- The incumbent/ minister of any new church the abuser may be attending
- The Bishop
- The Bishop's Advisor on Child Protection.

N.B. The above policy applies to all abuse whether current or historical.

Appendix 2

Files referred to in this policy kept electronically in the church office include:

Registration/ parental consent forms: Consent form for JAM 2017-18, Sunday School Registration Form, youth consent 2017 general, Sample Trip consent form: Christmas trip 2017

Risk Assessment – blank (to fill out for activities)

Role Descriptions: Children's Group Volunteer 2-1, Creche worker 2-1, JAM Club Junior role description, JAM Club role description, Minibus Driver (Youth Club) 2-1, Noahs Ark Volunteer