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# Safeguarding Children Policy

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All Saints' Childwall

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September 2017

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## Safeguarding children policy

### All Saints' Childwall

All Saints' Childwall places the utmost importance on all people it serves throughout the church and the community. Safeguarding & welfare of our children and young people is of particular importance and we will not tolerate any practice which puts them in danger or causes them harm.

This policy specifically puts forward our views, responsibilities and procedures on working with children and young people.

#### 1. Our statement on the value we place on children and young people.

It is our belief that every child is a creation of God and have been created by Him (Psalm 139) with purpose and with meaning. We believe that each child is unique, gifted and talented and are to be cared for, nurtured and loved in a safe and encouraging way.

We aim to create an atmosphere of love, warmth, productivity and acceptance for our children and young people where their worth is acknowledged and all who pass through our doors are safe from harm.

The trust and dependency of children and young people must be held strongly by those who work within the Church.

We are also grateful to our workers who give up their time for our children and young people.

These guidelines aim to produce a safe structure for all to work in.

## 2. Our responsibility.

We recognise our responsibility as a church to protect our children and young people keeping them safe from harm and as such we are fully committed to ensuring that everyone working with children and young people:

- Holds a Disclosure and Barring Service DBS check less than five years old (three years in relation to the Playgroup, Ofsted recommendation)
- Is adequately trained and supervised
- Understands our children's safeguarding procedures and systems and follows them accordingly

As we are fully committed to safeguarding our children we will endeavour to:

- Develop good practice throughout the whole of our church and consistently implement our procedures throughout the activities within each group that children and young people may be involved in.
- Appoint a Child Protection Officer who understands their responsibilities in regards to this role, including the contacting of Social services or Police where deemed necessary.
- Ensure that the Child Protection Officer is known to all workers in the Church and centre and that the system of passing on information of concern is known to all for the protection of our children and young people.
- Ensure that all volunteers and workers understand their role and responsibilities and put the procedures in place to safeguard children and young people in the Church and centre activities.
- Review our policy annually to check it is up to date with any national and Church of England developments with regard to children and young people. Diocese policy is attached.
- Make sure that our policy is not just paper based but is something that is carried out through the life of the church.

### **Note**

Please note that Church and centre activities can mean anything taking place on site or offsite. Any activity that bears All Saint's name must set a good example and work under these responsibilities and procedures for the safety of our children and young people. All people hiring church premise must sign a declaration they understand our policy and they have the relevant DBS certificates required.

### 3. Our procedures for all workers with children and young people to carry out our responsibility.

Keeping children and young people safe from harm is our utmost priority and setting good examples as leaders is importance to us. Children and young people are influenced and shaped not only by the words we use but also by the way we behave. Leaders and workers should at all times set a good example in word and in deed. These procedures are set out to help keep mutual protection for both our workers and our children and young people.

#### Staffing Ratios

The recommended minimum ratios are as follows:

0-2 years	1 adult : 3 children
2-3 years	1 adult : 4 children
3-8 years	1 adult : 8 children
8+ years	1 adult : 10 children

Where possible mixed gender groups should be led by leaders of mixed genders. Husband and wife teams should not work alone but with another leader.

Particular activities, vigorous sports, journeys or work with young people with special or behavioural needs may require a higher ratio.

The key issues to take into consideration are adequate control and supervision and the ability to cope with an emergency in the event of illness or injury.

#### Groups and Group Leaders

- Group leaders have the overall responsibility of the children and young people in their care throughout the duration of the activity and volunteers and workers should follow their guidance.
- Each group should have as a minimum two or more adults present at any time, particularly when it is the only activity taking place on the Church or other premises. Except in circumstances where permission has been sought and parents have agreed with other set arrangements.
- Group leaders should always let parents know what is going on or any changes to plans in times, activities or locations ahead of events.
- We operate an 'open door' policy which means that any parent or leader can see what is going on at any time during our groups and we are open and transparent about our relationships with our young people and children.
- If parents/guardians would like to stay for a session for the safety of their child they may do so but can only have responsibility for their own children and must operate under our chaperone policy (stay within the view of a leader at all times.)

## **Good Practice**

### **Volunteer & staff training**

- All volunteers, workers and paid staff at All Saints, Childwall must agree to attend training for safeguarding practice where possible, or complete the diocese on line training package.

### **Working procedures**

- Avoid being on your own with any child or young person. This may mean groups working in one large room or adjoining rooms with open doors except where parents have been informed of and are happy with other arrangements.
- Be wise in your physical contact with children, keep it to a minimum.
- Be wise in your relationship with the children – do not have favourites or be over friendly with some at the expense of others.

### **Digital technology**

- No photographs or digitally stored material of children or young people should be taken without written permission of their parents. See Registration forms.
- This also applies to the presentation of any photographs or images of children or young people. Parents/guardians permission should be sought first.
- The use of personal equipment to take photographs or digitally stored material of our children or young people is not advised i.e. your camera or mobile phone. Instead consider the use of a group or organisational camera.
- No photograph or digitally stored image of the children or young people should be stored on home computers or in personal files.

### **Outings**

- Children should not be taken on trips or away from the premises without written permission from parents and church leaders.
- The Group Leader is responsible for the safety of the group for the duration of the trip.

### **Transport**

- Never take a child home on your own, always have another recognised and DBS checked leader with you and make sure parents know who is responsible for returning their child/children.
- Always give parents/guardians an estimated time of your arrival and phone ahead if there are going to be any major differences or unforeseen difficulties.

## Physical and toileting boundaries

- At All Saints we would try to avoid the need to assist a child or young person with toileting and personal care needs. This is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. If a child needs help or assistance the parent/guardian should be notified.
- Nappies will not ever be changed by volunteers or workers. (Possible exception is All Saints Playgroup see separate Policy)
- Wherever possible, groups should endeavour to have toilet times before or just after activities to save disrupting the activity or losing a leader.
- Workers should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- Workers should respect the identity, privacy and physical space of children, avoiding questionable activity (e.g. rough/sexually provocative games or comments, teasing or intimidating behaviour)

## Contact

- Wherever possible, children and young people should not be contacted without parents knowledge or understanding. It is preferable that children and young people under the age of 16 are contacted through their parents and not directly as this protects both the worker and the child/young person.
- At All Saints Church we do not encourage the contact of children or young people through the media of Facebook or social networking sites. This is because messages are open to misinterpretation, can be accessed by viruses and are often unmonitored by parents.
- It is also deemed unwise to contact a child or young person between the hours of 10pm and 7am. If you really need to get in touch with a child or young person it can wait until the next day when you can contact their parents.

Safer recruitment will be dealt with within the Safer Recruitment Policy of the Diocese.

First Aid and Fire Evacuation safety will be dealt within our Health & Safety Policy.

Confidentiality - We have a pastoral duty to all involved, including the child, their family and the accused. This confidentiality is a continuing requirement at all times and is required when workers are 'off duty' or no longer involved in the work.

If you would like to speak to someone regarding any aspect of Child Protection and Safeguarding issues please contact:

### Contact information

Child Protection Officer Aidan Holmes 0151 722 3960

## Appendix 1

### Types of abuse and a summary of signs and indicators

#### **What is a child?**

For the purposes of our Church and Centre work a child is any person under the age of 18.

#### **What is abuse?**

Abuse is defined as any action that intentionally harms or injures another person. This can also include hurting a child by failing to do something essential for them or use actions which force them to do something against their will or do not understand.

#### **Who abuses children?**

Very rarely a stranger.

Often someone close to a child;

e.g. parent, carer, babysitter, sibling, relative or friend of the family.

Sometimes, paedophiles and others who set out to join organisations (including Churches) to obtain access to children.

#### **Six main types of abuse:(“working together to safeguard children 2013”)**

There are six main recognised forms of abuse within the aspect of safeguarding children however we should be aware that abuse comes in many shapes and sizes and we should be protective and vigilant at all times.

##### ***Physical abuse*** –

Includes hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, administering poisonous substances, suffocating/drowning, use of excessive force.

##### ***Neglect*** –

A failure to meet basic essential needs of a child, or if a child is left unsupervised at a young age.

##### ***Emotional abuse*** –

Children harmed by constant lack of love and affection, or threats, verbal attacks, taunting or shouting. This could also be emotional blackmail where love is used as a tool to get the child to do something that might not necessarily be in their best interest e.g. the withholding of love until something is done or gained for the adult.

##### ***Sexual abuse*** –

involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents, in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, or to which they are unable to give informed consent, or which violate the social taboos of family roles.

### **Spiritual abuse-**

Church communities must be particularly vigilant to identify the inappropriate use of any religious belief or practice which may harm somebody spiritually, emotionally or physically.

### **Domestic abuse-**

It must be recognised that children and young people may be harmed in homes where there is domestic abuse. The archbishops Council has produced guidelines for those with pastoral responsibility. See separate Diocese policy

## **Recognising abuse**

### **How might we recognise abuse – warning signs?**

These are only a guide, they are not necessarily proof of, but may be an indication of abuse:-

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Nervousness/watchfulness.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Changed or inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

### **Other areas where leaders should be vigilant are:-**

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them, or where differing explanations have been received.
- Injuries, which occur to the body in places, which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries and illnesses, which have not received medical attention.
- Any signs of neglect, under nourishment or inadequate care.
- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters, and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbance with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotation.

One or more or none of these signs may be evident to indicate abuse.

Many symptoms of distress in a child can point to abuse, but there are other explanations too. This, together with conflicting medical opinion, has sometimes been the reason for falsely accusing parents of sexual abuse. It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicating that abuse has taken place, but that the possibility should be considered.

**They should make us stop and think – not jump to conclusions.**



## Appendix 2

What to do if you have a concern about a child, receive a disclosure of abuse or if there is an allegation of abuse.

In all cases, wherever possible go straight to the designated Child Protection Officer:

Aidan Holmes 07563736150

They will advise you of the appropriate procedures to follow or will seek advice from the Diocesan Advisor or the Police if deemed necessary.

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### 1. If you suspect or have concerns of abuse for a child:

Wherever possible go straight to the designated Child Protection Officer.

Write down your concerns as they may help you when trying to decide if there is a problem or not. Your Child Protection Officer will know which action to take or whether or not to seek further advice.

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### 2. If a child makes a disclosure of abuse:

If a child or young person makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse, treat the matter seriously and do not minimise or dispute their account.

Reassure the child and try to stay with them, or ensure that a familiar adult remains with them. Do not question the child about the allegation that they have made. Do not ask leading questions. Do not promise confidentiality.

A criminal offence may have been committed and other children may also be at risk.

Write down all that has happened and has been said as soon as possible after the disclosure has been given. Recommended good practice is that it is done within one hour of the incident or disclosure. Sign and date your written account. Remember that you are not expected to be a specialist child protection worker and can only be expected to act reasonably and sensitively if a situation of abuse or suspected abuse arises.

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## What to do if there is an allegation of abuse?

If there is an allegation of abuse, again do not minimise it, and if coming from a child follow the guidelines set out under the 'If a child makes a disclosure of abuse' heading.

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The allegation might concern a person within or outside the Church community. In either instance, **the allegation should not, at this stage, be shared with the adult against whom the child has made the allegation.**

If the allegation is made about someone **within the Church community**, child safeguarding officer or vicar should be contacted who will make a decision on the next course of actions, specifically whether statutory authorities and the Police are notified. The Diocesan Advisor should also be notified.

If the allegation is made **against a group leader or worker** contact the Child Protection Officer or vicar immediately and seek them for advice and guidance. A decision will be made by them on the next course of actions, for instance, whether to contact parents, Police, social services and the Diocesan advisor.

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If the allegation is made **against the Child Protection Officer or the Vicar** go to the Diocesan advisor to seek guidance on whether the Police or statutory body needs to be informed.

If the allegation is made about someone **outside the Church community** the Child Protection Officer or the Vicar should be informed, the Group leader should contact them immediately. A decision will also need to be made as to whether the child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, i.e. returning home at the end of an activity.

You also have the right as a member of the public to go straight to the Police or Statutory body if you have any concerns that you do not feel are being dealt with appropriately. These numbers should be clearly shown around the building.

## Appendix 3

### Guidelines on how to help children with a disclosure

How should we react if a child tells us they have been abused?

Children's and young people's workers are in a unique and privileged position and your relationship with children cannot be underestimated. Your work or group may provide a safe haven, and perhaps be the only place where a child feels comfortable and able to talk to adults. It is therefore possible that a child may approach you to talk about abuse.

#### **The following guidance may be of help:**

Accept what the child says.

Keep calm, try not appear to be shocked.

Look at the child directly and continue to speak to them to reaffirm their value.

Reassure the child that they have done the right thing.

Even when a child has broken a rule they are not to blame for the abuse.

Never push for information or question the child.

Never ask leading questions.

Be honest.

Let the child know that you will need to tell someone else – don't promise confidentiality.

Do not make false promises or promise that everything will be alright.

As soon as the disclosure has been given and you have passed on your information or concern make notes and write down. Recommended practice is for this to be done within one hour of receiving the disclosure.

#### **Helpful things to say:-**

I believe you.

I am glad you have told me.

It's not your fault.

I will try to help you.

Again, do not promise confidentiality. Tell the child you will have to pass the information on to someone else.

#### **Avoid saying:-**

Why didn't you tell anyone before?

I can't believe it.

Are you sure this is true?

Why? When? How? Where? – Never ask leading questions.

Never make false promises.

Never make quick statements such as "I'm shocked, don't tell anyone else."

**In conclusion:-**

Again reassure the child of their worth and that they have done the right thing to tell you. Let them know that you believe them.

Let the child know what you are going to do next, for example, to speak to the group leader or child protection officer for guidance, and that you will let them know what happens.

Immediately speak to your group leader or the child protection officer and take guidance from them.

Even if abuse is no longer happening it is still important to report the matter, as there may be repercussions for the child or the adult may be abusing other children.

It may be that the child will need guidance and help in overcoming past abuse, or the police may wish to prosecute the abuser.

At all times our main concern and our duty of care is primarily to the child and we should seek to keep them safe from harm.

#### 4. Our protection of you:

Our practice and procedures are designed to protect you.

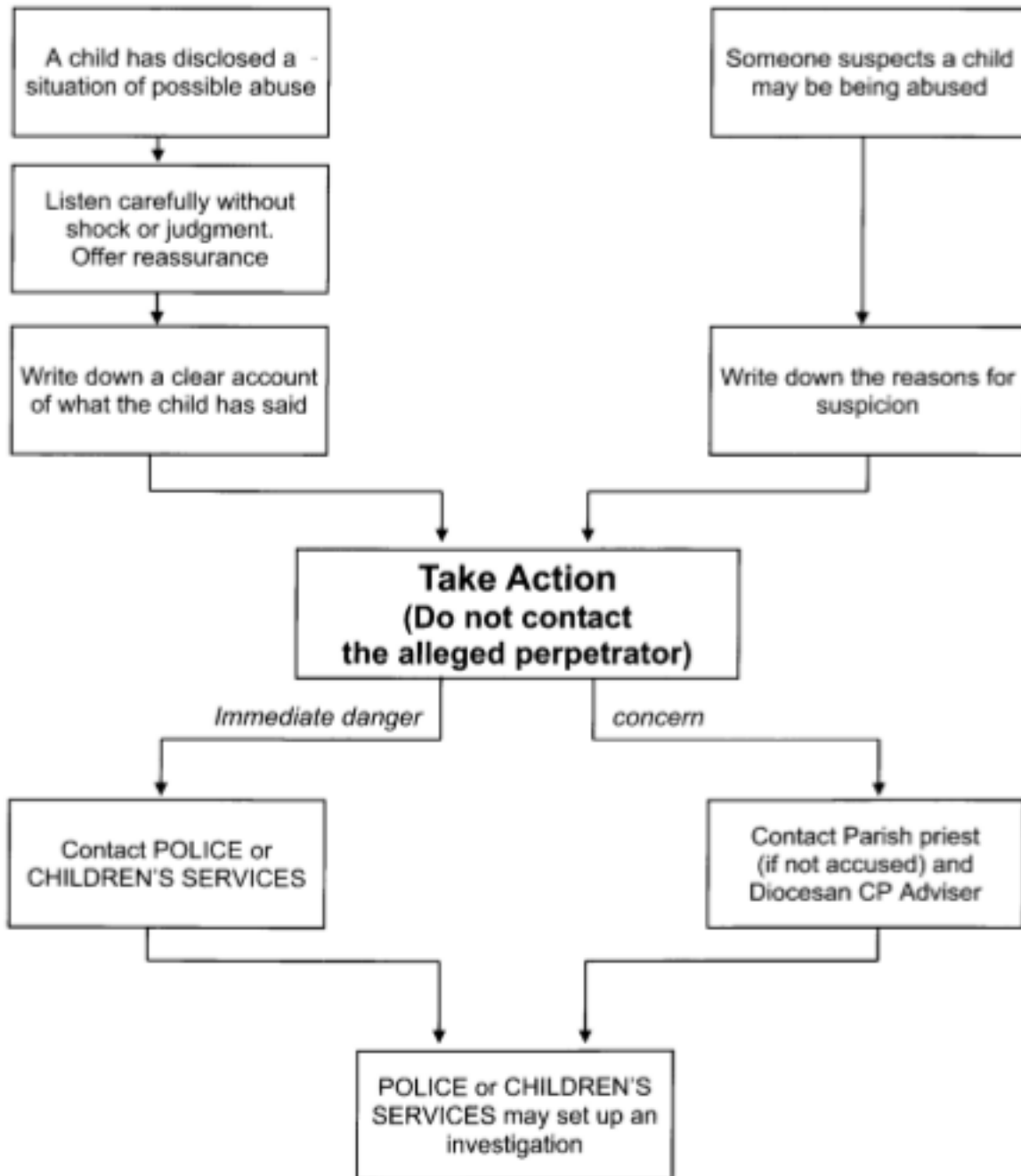
If at any point you have any concerns about your own role or responsibilities or that of someone else's please contact one of your Child Protection Officers for advice and guidance.

#### Training

You are encouraged and expected to attend training sessions that are put on to help you and your fellow workers or complete the Diocese online training package with regards to safeguarding practice within our church.

Thank you for your help and the input that you have in the lives of our children and young people. It is greatly appreciated and we hope that you get much out of it too.

## Child Abuse Referral flow chart



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