

# Oundle Benefice

## Policy for Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

St Peter's Oundle

St Leonard's Glapthorn

St Mary the Virgin Benefield



# **Contents**

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>3</b>
Church details and descriptions and Our Commitment	
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>5</b>
Defining terms and recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse	
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>7</b>
Prevention – Safer Recruitment	
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>8</b>
Pastoral care – supporting those affected by abuse and working with offenders	
<b>Section 5</b>	
Practice guidelines	
1. Safe practice with children	<b>9</b>
2. General principles for running a group or activity	<b>10</b>
3. Unexpected attendance at an activity	<b>10</b>
4. Parents/carers staying with children’s groups	<b>11</b>
5. Suggestions or complaints from parents/carers	<b>11</b>
6. Encouraging good behaviour and dealing with challenging behaviour	<b>11</b>
7. Anti-bullying Policy and practice	<b>13</b>
8. Solvents and Illegal substances	<b>14</b>
9. Special needs and disabilities	<b>14</b>
10. Trips out	<b>14</b>
11. Transportation	<b>15</b>
12. Swimming trips	<b>15</b>
13. Sleepovers	<b>16</b>
14. Residential holidays	<b>17</b>
15. Filming and taking photographs	<b>19</b>
16. Social media and engaging with young people	<b>19</b>
<b>Section 6</b>	<b>21</b>
Working in partnership	
<b>Section 7</b>	<b>22</b>
Leadership Safeguarding Statement	
<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>24</b>
Definitions of child abuse/signs and symptoms	
<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>26</b>
Definitions of abuse against vulnerable adults/signs and symptoms	
<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>27</b>
Initial response to a concern or allegation – knowing what to do	
<b>Appendix 4</b>	<b>29</b>
Involving Children’s Social Services and the Police when there are concerns about a child	
<b>Appendix 5</b>	<b>32</b>
Involving Adult Services and the Police when there are concerns about a vulnerable adult	
<b>Appendix 6</b>	<b>35</b>
Allegations against church employees and volunteers	
<b>Appendix 7</b>	<b>36</b>
Managing those who pose a risk to children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.	
<b>Appendix 8</b>	<b>38</b>

Guidelines and boundaries for pastoral carers.

## SECTION 1

### Church Details

#### **Names of Churches:**

St Peter's, Oundle  
St Leonard's, Glapthorn  
St Mary the Virgin, Benefield

#### **Address:**

The Oundle Benefice Parish Office  
St Peter's Church,  
North Street,  
Oundle  
PE8 4AL

**Tel No:** 01832 275675

**Email address:** administrator@oundlestpeters.org.uk

**Membership of Denomination/Organisation** Peterborough Diocese, Church of England

#### **Charity Number:**

St Peter's, Oundle: 1132677

#### **Insurance Companies:**

St Peter's, Oundle: Public liability with Ecclesiastical  
St Leonard's Glapthorn: Public liability with Ecclesiastical  
St Mary the Virgin, Benefield: Public liability with Ecclesiastical

**The following is a brief description of our places of worship and the types of activities we undertake with children/vulnerable adults:**

#### St Peter's, Oundle

A wide range of services are offered throughout the week: Morning Prayer, BCP Holy Communion, Morning Worship, Common Worship Holy Communion, All-Age Services, Choral Evensong, Messy Church and Youth Worship. On Sunday mornings, Kids Church provides age-appropriate teaching and worship for children aged 2-14. Activities for children and young people during the week include Tiny Tots, a parent and toddler group, with songs, story and prayer; two youth discipleship groups (The Way for 11-14's and Rooted for 14-18's). Chattabox and Chattabox+ holiday clubs for children and young people are run in association with Oundle Baptist Church each August. West Porch Café is a weekly after school drop in youth session for secondary school aged children.

For older people, we run Tuesday Club twice a month, a social afternoon of tea, cake, chat and games, with elderly members transported from home and residential care homes. Our Pastoral Care Team provide one-to-one support to vulnerable adults, mainly elderly, through home and hospital visiting. Holiday at Home takes place annually at St Peter's.

### St Leonard's, Glapthorn

At present, there are no regular occasions or one-offs during the year where children or young people take part in groups or activities at St Leonard's. There are some 'Family Services' where children come to church with their parents. Groups from Glapthorn C.E. Primary School come and visit the church from time to time, supported by the Benefice clergy, but these visits are covered so that they comply with the school's Safeguarding Policy. Members of the church family at St Leonard's do visit elderly and infirm people in the village from time to time (and some of these individuals may be deemed to be Vulnerable Adults) but as present these visits are informally arranged 'between friends' and do not come under a formal Pastoral Care policy held by the church.

### St Mary the Virgin, Benefield

Seasonal occasional family and children's activities occur during the year where children or young people take part in groups or activities at St Mary the Virgin. There are some 'Family Services' where children come to church with their parents. Members of the church family at St Mary the Virgin do visit elderly and infirm people in the village from time to time (and some of these individuals may be deemed to be Vulnerable Adults) but as present these visits are informally arranged 'between friends' and do not come under a formal Pastoral Care policy held by the church.

## Our Commitment

The three PCCs (hereafter referred to as the Leadership) recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that children and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child." As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this Safeguarding Policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the Peterborough Diocesan Safeguarding Policy and the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (formerly CCPAS now Thirtyone:eight).

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- Ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and Deputy in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.
- The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

All parish clergy Licensed Lay Ministers and Readers, PCC members and employees whose work involves children or vulnerable adults, will attend Diocesan Safeguarding training within the first year of their ministry and thereafter every 3 years.



## SECTION 2

### Defining terms

In this document the terms child/children, young person/people and vulnerable adult are used frequently. The definitions of these terms are:

**Child/children:** By law (according to the Children's Act 1989), everyone under the age of 18 years is deemed to be a child. For the most part in this document when you see the word 'children' it refers to under 18's. However, when the phrase 'children and young people' is used, 'children' refers to 0-11's and 'young people' refers to 11-18's, with the demarcation being the point at which the individual starts secondary school.

**Young person/people:** Where this phrase is used it refers to 11-18's (those at Secondary School).

**Vulnerable adult:** A person aged 18 or over whose ability to protect him/herself from violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, old age, emotional fragility or distress, or otherwise; and for that purpose, the reference to being impaired is to being either temporarily or indefinitely impaired.

### Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

#### **Understanding abuse and neglect**

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or vulnerable adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

- 1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
- 2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

#### **Safeguarding awareness**

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis through Peterborough Diocese. The Leadership will also ensure that children and vulnerable adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

## Responding to allegations of abuse and neglect

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Following procedures as below:

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to **Ms Louise Foote (hereafter the 'Benefice Safeguarding Officer')** tel no:07843169898 / [safeguarding@oundlestpeters.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@oundlestpeters.org.uk)

- who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities

In the absence of the Benefice Safeguarding Officer or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Benefice Safeguarding Officer, then the report should be made to **Rev Annabel Copeland (hereafter the 'Clergy Lead for Safeguarding')** tel no: 01832 358079 or 07759 908321 / [associatevicar@oundlestpeters.org.uk](mailto:associatevicar@oundlestpeters.org.uk)

- If the suspicions implicate both the Benefice Safeguarding Officer and the Clergy Safeguarding Lead, then the report should be made in the first instance to the **Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Victoria Kellett** tel no: 01733 887040 ([safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)). Outside of office hours, from 5pm, advice can be sought from the Thirtyone:eight safeguarding helpline on 0303 003 1111, selecting option 2. Thirtyone:eight is an independent safeguarding charity which works in close partnership with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST). The DST receives notification of any advice given by Thirtyone:eight, however, you will need to clearly state that you are calling from the Diocese of Peterborough.
- Where the concern is about a child, the Benefice Safeguarding Officer, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, should contact Northamptonshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – a joint Children's Social Services and Police Team. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection contact Adult Social Services or take advice from Thirtyone:eight as above.
- The MASH's office telephone number (office hours) is 0300 126 7000. The out of hours emergency number is 01604 626938
- The local Adult Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is 0300 126 3000. The out of hours emergency number is 01604 626938.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Benefice Safeguarding Officer, the absence of the Benefice Safeguarding Officer or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or Thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Benefice Safeguarding Officer/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or Thirtyone:eight. although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship/organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Benefice Safeguarding Officer/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Benefice Safeguarding Officer(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.



The role of the Benefice Safeguarding Officer/Deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion, consult with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

## SECTION 3

### Prevention

#### **Safer recruitment**

The Leadership will ensure all workers, whether paid or voluntary, will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description/person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and the Diocesan Self Declaration Form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate. At least *one* of the references should be from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children; the other can be a character reference
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the Benefice Safeguarding Policy and the Diocesan Code of Safer Working Practice with Children, and knows how to report concerns.

**No individual will be permitted to regularly work with children and young people unless the above process is successfully completed.** The process is only relevant for adult workers who will be regularly working with children and young people. The Diocesan Safer Recruitment Policy states that only people of 18 and over should do church work within Groups 1 and 2 (regulated activity or substantial contact with children and young people), so no criminal record check should be undertaken for anyone aged 16-18. Young people under the age of 18 and church members wishing to offer help on a 'one-off' basis can be used as 'helpers' but should never be in a position where they are providing unsupervised care of children. In these circumstances, the full recruitment procedure does not apply, however, it will be necessary to obtain basic information about the individual and take up personal references.

#### **Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct**

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers will be issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Leadership undertakes to follow the principles found within the 'Abuse Of Trust' guidance issued by the Home Office and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## SECTION 4

### Pastoral Care

#### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship/organisation. Pastoral Care is provided by clergy, lay pastoral ministers and a pastoral care team with a range of experience and expertise. Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

#### **Working with offenders**

When someone attending the church is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults the Leadership, working closely with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

**See Appendix 7** for detailed guidance in managing those who may pose a risk to children and/or vulnerable adults.

**See Appendix 8** for guidance and boundaries for pastoral carers.

## SECTION 5

### Practice Guidelines

As places of worship working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false accusation.

All workers, paid or voluntary, are required to sign to say that they will comply with the Peterborough Diocesan 'Code of Safer Working Practice for Church Workers with Children'.

Whilst the practice guidelines are in general related to children and young people, where there are obvious comparisons to be made in relation to vulnerable adults, e.g. safe environment, safe transportation, etc, the same guidelines should be followed.

#### **1. Safe practice with children**

Work with children must be carried out in a 'safe' environment. It is good practice to carry out annual risk assessments which take into account the age and activity of the group and the physical space the group uses.

The ratio of leaders to children should comply with the Children Act 1989:

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

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

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

For over 8s 1 leader for the first 8 children, then 1:12

Each group should have a minimum of two adults and it is recommended that a gender balance be maintained if possible.

Do not work alone:

- It is not safe for the children; if an incident occurred there would be no one else to help deal with it.
- It is not safe for the worker; if an accusation were to be made there would be no one to stand as witness.
- Avoid being alone in a room with children (and out of sight of other adults)
- Give thought to the appropriateness of giving individual children or young people a lift in your car and ensure you have parental consent.

Ensure that meeting places are safe:

- that the building is safe from intruders, entrances, stairs, etc, are well-lit
- that furniture is safe and secure
- that heating or electrical appliances are adequately guarded.
- that fire, health and safety regulations are known and in place
- that the needs of those with disabilities are taken into account
- that a First Aid kit is available in all venues used, and a log kept of any accidents.

Be clear about boundaries with regard to touching:

- keep all activities in public and in sight of other adults
- touch should be related to the child's needs and normally initiated by the child
- avoid any physical activities that may be construed as sexually stimulating to the adult or child.

Obtain parental/guardian permission:

- for normal group activity, a 'membership' record should be kept with emergency contact numbers

- get written permission for children to attend groups
- get written permission to take and/or use photographs
- keep a record of any dietary needs if food and drink is served
- make a note of medical or other needs as appropriate to the activity
- make sure that drop-off and pick-up procedures are established

## 2. General principles for running a group or activity

Some general principles for running a club, activity or service include:

- Ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions
- Ensuring that all activities are age appropriate, e.g. do not show films rated 15 if there are children younger than 15 present. Always seek parental consent to show films rated PG
- Consideration for the number of workers needed to run the group and whether they should be male, female or both
- A clear strategy for summoning additional help (if needed) in situations where a worker is working alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) required appropriate to the needs of the individual
- Clear guidelines on personal privacy, e.g. when working with children avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments
- Not allowing anyone under 16 years of age to be left in charge of children of any age or those attending the group being left unsupervised
- Only workers assigned to the group being allowed to participate in the activity. Other adults should not be allowed free access
- Making a note of other people in the building during the activity and any other events taking place at the same time
- Maintaining a register of those attending the club or activity, together with a register of workers. This should include a record of arrival and departure times, particularly if the participant does not attend the whole session. It is also good practice to keep parents/carers informed of the nature of activities
- Use the PINK FORM system to log unusual events, conversations or any concerns about the behaviour of a child or a vulnerable adult. This may be very helpful if, for example, leaders have to deal with a difficult member who subsequently makes an accusation of assault or a young person repeatedly makes sexual comments about workers that may, at a later date, result in an allegation of abuse. In this situation, written records would enable any allegations to be seen in context. Other information might include records of incidents such as fights, or observations of risky behaviour (such as using drugs), and the action taken. Children and their parent/carers should have access to information recorded about them in the log book.

## 3. Unexpected attendance at activities

Sometimes children and young people will want to join in with the activities without the knowledge of parents or carers, e.g. children playing outside or wandering the streets with no adult supervision. In these circumstances it is important to:

- Welcome them, but try to establish their name, age, address and telephone number. Record their visit in the register
- Ask if a parent/carer is aware where they are, and what time they are expected home. If this is before the session ends, they should be encouraged to return home, unless the parent/carer can be contacted and they are happy with the arrangement. In the case of children in particular, suggest the child seeks the parent/carer's permission to return the following week
- Link the visiting person with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and explain about the activity

- On leaving, give the person a leaflet about the group with contact telephone numbers etc, and perhaps a standard letter to the parent/carer inviting them to make contact
- Without an interrogation, you will need to find out as soon as possible whether they have any special needs, (e.g. medication), so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.

#### 4. Parents/Carers staying with children's groups

There may be occasions where parents ask if they can stay to watch the children's group's activity. It is important not to appear guarded but there may be concerns, particularly where the expectation is that all adults who work with children in any capacity should undertake Disclosure and other checks.

The Church should therefore consider the following:

- Parents can be permitted to observe groups but not take part. A distinction should be made
- It can help certain children settle into a group, if the child knows that a parent/carer is there. After the settling in period, if a parent/carer wishes to continue to stay, consideration could be given to them becoming a helper/worker but they would be required to undertake the same recruitment and selection procedure as with any other worker
- Whilst a person watching may be a parent/carer for one or more of the children, to the rest of the children they are stranger
- Be aware that for some children with special needs, it may be appropriate for their parent/carer to stay with them for an extended period. This should be considered on an individual basis to help the child become fully integrated into the group/activity.

#### 5. Suggestions and complaints by parents/carers

Where a parent or carer wishes to make a complaint or make a suggestion about any activity or group the Church is providing, it should be taken seriously. It is a good idea in the first instance for them to speak to the group leader who should endeavour to resolve the matter. If the complaint has not been resolved satisfactorily, the matter should be referred to the Vicar to investigate.

#### 6. Encouraging good behaviour and dealing with challenging behaviour

Sometimes children and young people may become angry, upset or disruptive. Occasionally their behaviour may endanger either themselves or others in the group.

It is recommended that each group develops a Behaviour Policy which the children and young people are familiar with and are asked to comply with. A Behaviour Policy should be short, succinct and memorable to everyone. Groups for young people may ask the members to sign the Behaviour Policy at their first session. A suggested policy outline is below.

##### A template Behaviour Policy

At this group you are required to act in the following ways:

**Respectfully:** We expect that you will respect yourself, respect others and respect the environment that you are in.

**Responsibly:** We expect you to take responsibility for your actions and accept that there will be consequences if your behaviour is not respectful.

The leaders of this group are committed to **Relentlessly** encouraging and supporting the group members. The leaders will not give up on you, if you do not give up on being respectful and responsible towards the leaders and the other group members.

### Establishing good group dynamics

It is important that children and young people know who is in charge of the group. Leaders must be 'friendly', but not 'friends with' the children and young people in their group. There is security for young people in knowing who is in charge of the space they are in; if they do not know, then it is likely that they will try to become leaders of the group themselves. It must be clear that adult leaders are in charge of the sessions.

It might be helpful, when dealing with particularly challenging or vulnerable children and young people, to talk about 'boundaries' rather than 'rules' and to help them see that poor/unacceptable behaviour will have consequences. It is vital that leaders of groups understand what the Chain of Consequences are, and that they are clear in how to implement these. The primary responsibility of leaders must be to the safety of those in the group, so the needs of an individual must be secondary to the safety and well-being of the group. It is recognised that at some groups with 'loose-edges', (where young people are arriving and leaving throughout the sessions) the dynamics can often change as the session progresses. **Physical aggression and verbal violence must always be challenged using the following steps.**

### Chain of Consequences

*Leaders should always respond to challenging behaviour together, and not independently.*

- Leader alerts child/young person to the fact that they are failing to act respectfully or responsibly, using a **firm command to stop**.
- If the behaviour continues, the child/young person is **given a warning** that they will be asked to leave the session.
- If the behaviour continues the child/young person shall be asked to leave\*.
- If a child/young person is acting aggressively (which includes both verbal violence and physical aggression), then 'reasonable and proportionate force' can be used where necessary in self-defence or in defence of another person within the group. Only as a last resort should a leader break up a fight - but always with someone else.
  - Section 3(1) Criminal Law Act 1967 states:  
"A person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime...."
- Depending upon the seriousness of the behaviour, it may be necessary to give a warning that the Police will be called. If a child/young person has significantly harmed other people or property the Police shall be called immediately.

*\*Where the disruption is being caused by a child, their parent/carer should be asked to come and collect them from the group.*

The leaders involved should always record what happened in writing as soon as possible after the incident using the PINK FORM system. This should include:

- What activity was taking place
- What might have caused the disruptive behaviour
- The person's behaviour
- What was said and how the worker and others responded
- A list of others present who witnessed the incident.

Parents should be informed if their child has been restrained.

## **Restorative Justice Approach**

Although a young person may be asked to leave a session, this does not mean that they should not be contacted. It is suggested that within a few days of the incident, a leader should make contact with the young person (possibly through school or a telephone call). They should be reached out to as soon as possible and their behaviour, and its implications, explained in a discussion. It should be underlined that they will be welcomed back at a future session but that they must be aware that they must conform to the agreed Behaviour Policy.

### Other considerations for 'drop in' style groups

#### **Signing in/out**

For 'drop in' style groups, *anyone* who enters the building while the session is in progress must be signed in. Name/telephone number/address should be the minimum information asked for. This sign-in should also include adults who may enter the church (to pray, for example) while the group is in progress, so that the group leaders always know who is in the building. A 'welcome desk' should be located where children/young people enter the session, and this desk should be manned for the whole session. When children/young people leave, they should be 'ticked out' as well. (Up to five columns may be required for this - as young people may come and go several times during a session (to make private phone calls or go shopping etc).

#### **Space and shape of sessions**

All young people arriving should be made to feel welcome. A good way to do this is for the person on the welcome desk to shake hands with young people as they arrive and state how pleased they are to see them. This makes it clear to the young people that they are entering someone else's space, and that boundaries therefore exist (handshaking or other appropriate physical contact only). Newcomers should be shown around so that they feel welcome to the session and that any 'mystery' is removed, but also so that it is clear who is in charge. Explain which areas of the church are out of bounds. Physical boundaries may be required to be put up within the Church to make it clear what areas are 'out of bounds' (without removing the goal of allowing the young people to feel that the church is their space).

#### **Serving food**

Serving of food should not be a 'free-for-all' with young people just helping themselves. Like any of the other activities, young people should understand that there are boundaries (for example how many they may have, who is served first, may they have more than one, etc). Control of food is important in this environment, not least to ensure that it is still available to those who arrive half-way through a session, or that those young people who may be less self-confident still have the same opportunity to have their choice.

## **7. Anti-bullying policy and practice**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Children can bully each other, be bullied by adults and can sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour within any organisation. Some common forms of bullying can be:

- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing including via emails, social networking or text messaging
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual - sexually abusive comments or gestures
- Racial - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of racial differences
- Homophobic - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation
- Unofficial activities such as initiation ceremonies and practical jokes which may cause children physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended.



There should be a known zero tolerance to bullying so if it does occur, children and leaders are able to report the matter and it can be dealt with promptly and effectively. There can be an expectation that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will report it.

Whilst the child being bullied needs protection, the person/people doing it need to address the reasons for their behaviour and be encouraged to relate to others in more positive ways.

## **8. Solvents and Illegal Substances**

Workers should be alert to possession and use of illegal substances. If a worker becomes aware a child or young person may be abusing solvents, they should be encouraged to seek professional help from their doctor or a counsellor specialising in this area.

Having said this, it is a criminal offence to allow anyone attending an activity run by an organisation to supply illegal drugs or *use them* on the premises. The churches have a policy of zero tolerance on all illegal substances and will inform the local police for advice in dealing with such situations should they arise. All those attending the activity should be made aware of this protocol which should be clearly displayed. For the individual involved:

- Ask them to stop, warning them of the consequences if they do not e.g. suspension or ban from the group.
- Inform parents/carers if the young person is under 16 years.
- Inform the parents/carers if the young person is over 16 years (with their permission).
- Discuss with the young person the proposed course of action, that the local police will be informed
- Write down the content of any discussion with the young person, including the action taken and keep this in a secure place.
- Liaise with the police to devise a strategy for dealing with the use of illegal substances if it becomes an ongoing issue.

## **9. Special Needs and Disabilities**

Workers should be aware that any child, young person or vulnerable adult attending an activity who has a special need or disability may need extra help in areas such as communication and mobility (e.g. use of sign language and assistance in going to the toilet). They may behave in a non-age appropriate way. For example, a young person of 17 might behave more like a 2-3 year old, particularly in demanding cuddles or sitting on a worker's lap. So it is important to set appropriate boundaries that take their needs into account, but also protect workers from false accusation.

The Churches should:

- Ask the child or young person attending the activity, and parents or carers how their needs can be met, ensuring all workers involved with them are aware of their expectations. This includes the number of workers needed to assist for a specific activity to prevent injury. Some of these needs may be more easily met than others, so be realistic
- Ideally ensure that a worker of the same gender assists if they need help with toileting, but again discuss with the person, their family or carer to discuss their preference and your ability to provide this. For example, at Junior Church there may only be female workers, so is a male child happy for a female to provide personal care, and are the parents comfortable with this?
- Developing appropriate disability awareness including the use of different forms of communication (e.g. sign language) and language etiquette.

## **10. Trips out**

If the Church arranges a day trip or visit for children and young people under 18, parents or carers should complete and sign a consent form for the activity. Sample forms are available on the CCPAS website (contact Parish Office for details). The Church should also carry out a risk assessment of the activity to ensure all eventualities are covered and all adults in the team know what to do in the event of an accident or emergency.

On the day it is important to remember to take a fully charged mobile phone, all essential records and equipment and allocate named children to named pairs of adults.

## **11. Transportation**

Where children and young people are being transported by mini-bus, the organisation needs to ensure there are guidelines in place and that these apply to all drivers and journeys carried out on behalf of and with the knowledge of the organisation. This does **not** apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between adults with parental responsibility.

Advice for transporting children, young people or vulnerable adults is as follows:

- Driving should be restricted to those who have gone through the Church's recruitment procedures for workers
- All drivers must have read the Safeguarding Policy of the organisation and agree to abide by it
- Parents/carers must give their consent for their child to be transported
- The driver should hold a full driving licence; the vehicle must be adequately insured and the vehicle road worthy
- Having checked drivers, it is reasonable to expect that they may be alone with a child for short periods. Consideration should therefore be given to dropping off the least vulnerable last and plan routes accordingly. Two workers in a vehicle do not in itself guarantee safety - there have been incidents where workers have acted abusively together
- Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in the vehicle with someone they are transporting. If, for example, a child wants to talk to a driver about something and has waited until other children have been dropped off, the driver should explain that it isn't convenient to talk there and then, but arrange to meet them at a location where there are other adults around with the knowledge of the group leader. (Remember they may want to talk to the driver about an abusive situation)
- When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle it is good practice to insist those being transported stay in the same groups on the out-going and return journey. This will avoid anyone, at worst, being left behind
- At collection or dropping off points no child or young person should be on their own and the driver should make sure they are collected by an appropriate adult
- It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular individual e.g. where there has been a disagreement or they have romantic feelings for a driver
- If parents or carers do some transporting, ensure they are made aware that such arrangements are their own responsibility and not the Church's.

## **12. Swimming Trips**

There should be an increased adult to child ratio for all swimming trips and prior to the trip the swimming ability of a child/young person should be established. A swimming consent form for each child (or a copy) should be taken by the group leader on the trip. A copy should also be retained by the contact person in the Church.

Before any visit to a swimming pool check:

- there will be a qualified lifeguard present at all times
- first aid/rescue equipment is readily available and this would preferably include a poolside telephone/alarm.

If appropriate to your party, check that the pool caters for children with disabilities. There should be adequate signs indicating the depth of the pool and depending on the age of the group you are taking, it is advisable to make sure that the shallow end is shallow enough! If the maximum depth of the pool is less than 1.5 metres, diving should not be permitted.

Checks should be made that the changing rooms are safe and hygienic and there is a changing room for each sex. They should be supervised while children are in there by at least two leaders per changing room. They should be of the same gender as the children, but supervised in such a way that the leaders do not watch the children actually getting changed. It may sound obvious but it is inadvisable for children to swim immediately after eating.

Children and children's workers should follow the rules of the pool. It is important children and young people know how to behave and take their lead from workers' own behaviour. Group leaders should supervise behaviour at all times and there should be a minimum of two leaders present while the children are in the pool.

Whilst the pool's lifeguard will be on duty to supervise swimmers this does not reduce the duty of care of leaders and workers, including being able to account for the whereabouts of all those participating in the event.

It is worth bearing in mind that because water activities often involve partial nudity, potential abusers are more inclined to make advances. This may include the person lingering around changing rooms or toilets. One way to supervise visits to the toilet is to use the responsible buddy system, i.e. two or three go to the toilet together. One uses the toilet whilst the others stand outside the door.

Swimming or paddling in the sea, rivers, lakes or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities and a risk assessment must be completed before organising such an activity. Prior to organising a visit to open waters group leaders can look on local websites or contact the local tourist information to make sure the area is safe.

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters should be allowed only as a supervised activity, preferably in a recognised bathing area with a qualified lifeguard present. Obviously weather conditions should be taken into account. Even with lifeguard cover, children should always be in the sight of the group leader and team. One of the team should stay out of the water for better surveillance and preferably hold a relevant life-saving certificate. Leaders must ascertain the level of the children's swimming ability and ensure adequate, increased supervision ratios for the particular group.

The limits of the swimming area need to be explained to the children before they enter the water along with other matters specific to the location. In addition, signals of distress and recall need to be adopted and clearly explained. It is important to establish a base to which members of the group may return if separated.

### **13. Sleepovers**

Sleepovers should be discussed and arranged in advance by the workers so that agreements can be made on the best way of caring for the children given the venue, number of children, age and gender mix, etc. Children are best protected in an environment where the adults caring for them are aware of the possibility of abuse by adult and child alike and accept the need to be watchful.

The following issues need to be considered when organising a sleep-over:

- There must be adequate insurance cover on the building to cover this activity including any limits on numbers
- Prior to the sleepover, the building should be checked for suitable fire exits and workers should know where the water, electricity and gas can be turned off and the location of fire extinguishers. A fire drill should be carried out as soon as possible after entering the premises for the night
- Parents/carers must complete a medical consent form and an activity consent form in respect of their children's medical care, travel and collection arrangements, sleeping conditions, food, other specific activities (e.g. games)

- Parents/carers should be given written details of the arrangements for the night with the contact number of an identified children's worker, not simply the phone number of the premises
- Specific responsibilities should be designated to workers to ensure clarity of roles
- Make sure there is a qualified first-aider in attendance
- Males and females should sleep separately. If is a mixed sex group, female and male leaders will be needed
- Adults should not sleep in the same room as the children unless it is considered the group needs to be supervised at all times. It may be more appropriate to appoint an adult to conduct random night patrols
- Appropriate night attire must be brought
- Changing and showering facilities should be single-sex and separate for children and adults. If these are limited facilities, timetables need to be drawn up
- All medical information and emergency contact numbers must be easily accessible and workers should have access to a telephone or mobile phone.

## **14. Residential Holidays**

### **a) Appointment and Supervision of Workers**

Where holidays are being planned with workers from different organisations, e.g. Soul Survivor, it is important that they all use the same appointment process, forms and procedures. This can be achieved by one of the organisations assuming responsibility for this (with the agreement of the others) and checked by the Benefice Safeguarding Officer. Workers should be given an opportunity of meeting together before the holiday to discuss the programme/activities. It is also essential that workers receive supervision, to ensure a consistent approach to all work, particularly where a number of different groups have come together.

### **b) Responding to Allegations**

Workers should respond to allegations of abuse in accordance with the agreed Safeguarding Policy and procedures. If there is an allegation against a worker, this should be reported to the police local to the holiday location. The worker should not be informed of the allegation. Until the worker is seen by the police they should be supervised as carefully as possible to prevent any possibility of further abuse or allegation.

Once the worker has been interviewed by the police, they may well need to be asked to leave camp until the matter has been fully investigated. They should only return to the camp or other activity if the police are satisfied that there is no case to answer. The reason for not informing the worker of the allegation is to prevent him/her, if guilty, covering their tracks (e.g. by silencing their victim) before police arrive, or if innocent, false assumptions being made. Either way, this action will help to safeguard all those on the holiday and/or an innocent worker. It is the expectation that all workers and helpers accept the camp policy and act according to it.

### **c) General Safety**

It is the responsibility of the workers to know the whereabouts of every child or young person at all times, including monitoring access on and off the site.

Safety rules should be applied as appropriate (e.g. keeping clear of guy lines). All workers should keep a daily log of camp activities and any significant incidents recorded in the logbook.

All those going on the holiday must complete a Health Information and Consent form, and consent for specific activities must be obtained.

### **d) Electrical Equipment**

Camp organisers should ensure all equipment has been PAT approved. (PAT stands for Portable Appliance Inspection). Any appliance with a plug attached to it is classed as a portable appliance. A PAT test minimises the risk of potential fire and/or electric shock and the Health and Safety Executive recommends that tests be carried out

every 2-3 years. If this is not done there is a risk of invalidating any insurance policy and it also runs the risk of a claim for damages/compensation as a result of accident or injury.

#### **e) Fire Safety**

The organisers should have a fire safety procedure, which should include the following:

- For a camp especially, everyone should be warned of the danger of fire. If the holiday is in a building then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. Ideally a fire drill should be practised on the first day of the camp/holiday
- When using a building as a residential facility, ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. It should also comply with fire regulations
- In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children, young people, and vulnerable adults taking into account those with disabilities (e.g. a child who is hard of hearing).

#### **f) First Aid**

There should be at least one worker who holds a recognised and valid First Aid Certificate and is trained in how to administer an auto injector. The First Aider should ensure that on the site of the holiday camp:

- All leaders and helpers are aware of those with known allergies and their allergy action plans.
- all young people with medical conditions, including allergies, carry their medication. Medication being stored on a child's behalf is kept securely and is always available to the child.
- All the activities on the trip will be risk assessed to see if they pose a threat to allergic group member and alternative activities planned to ensure inclusion.
- First Aid boxes are available, and their location known
- The First Aid kit contains those items recommended by St. John Ambulance
- Written records are made of all accidents and injuries
- They have the name and telephone number of the local GP practice to hand, in a non -urgent situation that requires medical attention, will call 111 to receive medical advice. For any urgent or life-threatening conditions, will phone 999.
- They have access to medical consent forms for all those on the camp

#### **g) Adventurous Activities**

No child should participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent/carer. The organisers should ensure that workers engaging in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996, the Camp Organisers need to ensure that the premises are licensed.

The Adventure Activities Licensing Scheme is a Government sponsored scheme, which was introduced in 1996 under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations. The scheme ensures that those who provide certain adventure activities to young people under the age of 18 years, will have their safety management systems inspected. Where appropriate, a licence is then issued.

On 1st April 2007, and as a result of widespread government regulatory reorganisation, the responsibility for implementing the regulations was transferred to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The organisation that carries out inspections and issues licences on the HSE's behalf is the Adventure Activities Licensing Service.

#### **h) Food Health and Hygiene**

The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 2013 (Natasha's Law October 2021) states that anyone who handles food or whose actions could affect its safety must comply with the regulations.

#### **i) Sleeping Arrangements**

Arrangements for residential holidays should be considered carefully. It would be unwise for a worker to share sleeping accommodation with 1 or 2 children. In a large dormitory, adults sharing sleeping accommodation with children might be acceptable or on an activity such as youth hostelling where it is customary practice. Look at arrangements which

are age-appropriate and provide security for the child and that would be considered safe for children and workers. Ensure parents are aware of the arrangements.

#### **j) Insurance**

It is important for the organisers to ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all eventualities such as personal accident (e.g. death or disablement), lost or stolen property and personal liability. If the trip is at a centre it is also important to establish that there is appropriate Public Liability Insurance.

### **15. Filming and taking photographs**

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or film footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or filming prohibited but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the Church know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. The worker should write to parents or carers to explain what is happening and leave the onus on the parent/carer to contact them if they have any objections. In addition to this:

- It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures
- When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers
- Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on the Church website or Facebook page.

### **16. Social media and engaging with young people**

These guidelines relate to internet, email, mobile phone and social networking. For many young people this is their preferred means of communication and it can be an extremely effective tool within youth work. However, while it brings great opportunities, there are also significant risks and it is important that guidelines are followed.

Leaders communicating with young people or vulnerable adults via the internet, social networking or mobile phone must be criminal records checked in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

It is recommended that:

- If a worker expects to communicate with young people in the group via email, messenger, social networking sites (i.e. Facebook) or texting, written permission from the child's parents should be given
- One-to-one communication between a worker and a young person should normally be avoided, all communication should be in a page or group context
- If it is necessary for a worker to communicate with a young person individually, it should be through an approved 'work' account that a supervisor or approved third party can also access and review the conversations
- Communication should be from a specific account/address known to the young people, parents and supervisor
- Clear and unambiguous language should be used in all communications. Avoid abbreviations that could be mis-interpreted
- Do not use any comment or picture of a young person without written parental permission. The guidelines above on the taking of images must be followed.

#### **a) Mobile Phones**

- Employed workers should be supplied with a mobile phone dedicated for work purposes. This allows for the phone to be switched off outside working hours, and for usage to be accountable
- The work phone number should be the only number that young people are given; a worker's personal number should remain private
- Texts that raise concerns should be saved and passed on to a supervisor or approved third party within the organisation. Conversations raising concerns should be discussed as soon as possible.

#### **b) Email and Instant Messenger Apps**

- Be aware of who has access to computers, or other devices, used for communication between workers and young people
- There should be a 'curfew' on instant messenger communication and this should only take place during normal working hours
- Conversations should be logged, saved and regularly reviewed with a supervisor before they are deleted. Make sure that young people know that a supervisor has access to the conversations
- Video or Voice messenger should be done in public so that other people are aware of what the worker is doing and to whom they are speaking.

#### **c) Facebook and Social Networking Sites**

- Staff members (e.g. youth workers) must NOT use a personal Facebook account and profile for work with young people, they should create a professional account to manage their communications with young people
- To create a professional or 'work' account and profile, enter your work email in the sign up box, adding 'Work' or another suitable term after your last name to distinguish your professional profile from your personal (i.e. John Smith Work)
- Your supervisor/Named Person should be aware of the account name and password so that they can at any time log onto the account to monitor the communications. Young people should be made aware that information is shared in this way.
- You should ensure your organisation/church name is entered onto the profile you create. Also make sure you use work contact details and web address.
- Adding interests makes your profile more interesting, but only share information appropriate to the young people you will be working with.
- You should use a photo of you in an official/work setting.
- You should consider entering a 'expectations statement' under 'about' in your profile such as:

*I am a youth worker with a keen interest in social media which I use to share about the groups and events we run through St Peter's Church. I also post lots of links that I think young people who come to our groups would find interesting. I generally only log-in to Facebook a few times a week during my work hours. If you need to contact someone from St Peter's Church urgently then please call ....*

- Any communication or content that raises concerns should be saved or printed, shared and discussed with the supervisor.
- Workers should only accept friend requests for this profile from young people known to them, that they have met offline.
- Communication should normally be in the public domain wherever possible (by using group mailings or public wall posts)
- Where groups are set up, they should be closed, and not open to the general public. The worker should retain administrative rights and moderate the group, only sharing those rights with a supervisor and other trusted workers.
- Workers with personal social networking accounts must customise their privacy settings in order to maintain the boundaries between their personal and professional lives. They should avoid uploading inappropriate personal information.

## Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement, will abide by our parish Safeguarding Policy, procedures and code of practice.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and vulnerable adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This Safeguarding Policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.






## SECTION 7

### Leadership Safeguarding Statement

The Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) of St Peter's, Oundle, St Leonard's, Glapthorn and St Mary the Virgin, Benefield [hereafter referred to as Leadership] recognises the importance of ministry with children and young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The following statement was agreed by the PCCs on the following dates:

	<i>Date</i>	<i>PCC Chair Signature</i>
St Peter's, Oundle	12/09/2024	
St Leonard's, Glapthorn	04/07/2023	
St Mary the Virgin, Benefield	20/02/2024	

**The churches in the Oundle Benefice are committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being.**

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the churches in this benefice unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities
- Ensuring that workers adhere to the agreed procedures of our Safeguarding Policy and the Diocesan 'Code of Safer Working Practice with Children'
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding
- Following any denominational or organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection
- Supporting the Benefice Safeguarding Officer in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children/vulnerable adults



- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship/organisation
- Supporting parents and families
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work
- Supporting anyone at any of the three churches who has been affected by abuse
- Adopting and following the 'Safe and Secure' safeguarding standards developed by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

**We recognise:**

- Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child
- Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

**We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.**

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult then speak to one of the following who have been approved as Benefice Safeguarding Officers for the benefice.

**Louise Foote**                      Benefice Safeguarding Officer

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the Church Office.

## Appendix 1

### Abuse and Neglect of Children: What is it and possible signs?

#### 1. Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

The four definitions of child abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2010 and 2013).

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

#### **Physical abuse**

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.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child 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 and 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**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);

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

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

## **2. Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)**

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

### **Physical**

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation\*
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse\*

### **Sexual**

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia\*

### **Emotional**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying
- Self harm and suicide attempts

### **Neglect**

- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, Untreated illnesses,
- Inadequate care, etc.

\*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

## Appendix 2

### Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Vulnerable Adults)

The following definition of abuse is laid down in 'No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse' (Department of Health 2000):

*Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.*

In giving substance to that statement, however, consideration needs to be given to a number of factors.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

#### **Physical Abuse**

This is the infliction of pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

This is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent, or where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses this to override or overcome lack of consent.

#### **Psychological or Emotional Abuse**

These are acts or behaviour, which cause mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the vulnerable adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adult's emotional health and development or any other form of mental cruelty.

#### **Financial or Material Abuse**

This is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions

#### **Neglect or Act of Omission**

This is the repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or to others. A vulnerable person may be suffering from neglect when their general well-being or development is impaired

#### **Discriminatory Abuse**

This is the inappropriate treatment of a vulnerable adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc. Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals. Discriminatory abuse links to all other forms of abuse.

#### **Institutional Abuse**

This is the mistreatment or abuse of a vulnerable adult by a regime or individuals within an institution (e.g. hospital or care home) or in the community. It can be through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect or poor professional practice.

## Appendix 3

### Initial Response to a Concern or Allegation of Abuse

If a child or vulnerable adult wants to talk to a worker or volunteer about abuse they may be suffering, it is important to reassure them that you will take what they say seriously. You must however, **not** promise to keep what they say a secret, as to protect them in the future, you will need to pass on what they say to someone else. Offer the child/young person/vulnerable adult privacy but remember their and your safety – in the case of children, ensure that another adult knows where you are at all times.

#### 1. Effective Listening

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

#### Helpful responses

- You have done the right thing in telling
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

#### Don't say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

#### 2. Record Keeping

If there is a concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may have been abused or a direct allegation of abuse is been made, it is important the person receiving this information does the following using the PINK FORM system:

- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the person talking) including a description of any easily visible marks or injury.
- Write down exactly what has been said, when s/he said it, what was said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of an activity).
- Write down dates and times of these events and when the record was made.
- Write down any action taken and keep all hand written notes even if subsequently typed up.

These notes should be passed on to the Benefice Safeguarding Officer to assist them should the matter need to be referred to Adult or Children's Social Services or the police. If the matter is so serious that a referral to the latter is

being considered, the Benefice Safeguarding Officer must consult the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, but this should not delay protective action being taken if the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer is unavailable. Any referral should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours and we should expect an acknowledgement of our written referral within one working day of receiving it.

All documents should be signed, dated and kept for an indefinite period in a secure place. Consideration should be given to any procedures that have already been adopted by the organisation and it is important that the conditions laid down by organisation's insurers are followed to ensure there is appropriate cover against any claims. There is also a requirement for some allegations to be reported to both the Charity Commission (if the place of worship or organisation has charitable status). The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or Thirtyone:eight can offer independent advice that will be followed by written confirmation of the advice given.

If the Benefice Safeguarding Officer, or Deputy, is not contactable or they are subject of the concerns, the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer should be contacted as outlined in Appendix 4.



## Appendix 4

### Involving Children's Social Services or the police where there is concern for a child

It is known that families who find themselves caught up in the child protection system often experience many other disadvantages. Intervention at an early stage will help families tackle their problems before parenting difficulties escalate into abuse. Local authorities are being urged by the government to promote a more positive image of the child protection system to encourage and enable people to gain access to the help and advice they need.

The guidelines also suggest that, where appropriate, a referral for further support should follow Children's Social Services initial assessment of the needs of the child and the family. It may be clear from this assessment that it should not be treated as a child protection issue, but that the local authority should consider the support that can be provided for the family. Some cases, however, will need to continue as a formal child protection investigation.

Crucial to any assessment is a knowledge and sensitivity to racial, cultural and religious aspects. Differences exist not only between ethnic groups but also within the same ethnic group and between neighbourhoods and social classes. Whilst different practices must be taken into account, it is also important to remember that all children have basic human rights. Differences in child-rearing do not justify child abuse.

#### **1. Physical Injury or Symptom of Neglect**

Where there is a physical injury or symptoms of neglect the Benefice Safeguarding Officer should *immediately* do the following:

- In discussion with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, Victoria Kellett, tel. no: 01733 887040) agree who will contact Children's Social Services and/or the Police. Do not tell the parents/carers in such circumstances. If the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer is not available, Children's Social Services and/or the Police must be contacted in order to safeguard the child.
- If a child needs urgent medical attention an ambulance should be called or they should be taken to hospital, informing the parents/carers afterwards of the action that was taken. The hospital staff should be informed of any child protection concerns. They have a responsibility to pass these concerns on to the statutory authorities. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer should be informed of action taken.
- If the concerns for the child centre round poor parenting it may be appropriate to speak to the parent/carer, offer practical domestic help and suggest, for example, a chat with the health visitor, doctor or Children's Social Services. Where the concern is not of an immediate child protection nature, then the consent of the parents/carers and child (where of sufficient age and understanding) must be sought before a referral to Children's Social Care can be made.
- If a parent/carer is unwilling or frightened to seek help, then offer to accompany them. If they still fail to acknowledge the need for action it is possible to informally discuss the situation with Children's Social Services without divulging their personal details (such as names and addresses) unless, of course, Children's Social Services consider the situation to be serious enough to do so. In these circumstances it is important to realise there may be a bigger picture. Information may have come to light that might be a vital missing piece in the jigsaw. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer should be consulted to give advice in these situations.
- It is important to take older children's wishes into account when deciding whether to talk to parents/carers unless other children are potentially at risk.

#### **2. Concerns or Allegations of sexual abuse:**

Where the concern or allegation of abuse is sexual, the Benefice Safeguarding Officer should *immediately* do the following:

- In discussion with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer agree who will contact Children's Services (Out-of hours, the Emergency Duty Team). DO NOT try to investigate the matter. If the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer is not available, Children's Social Services and/or the Police must be contacted in order to safeguard the child. The

important thing is to relay the information to Children's Social Services and/or the Police so they can carry out any investigation and take appropriate action under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

- In the case of very severe sexual assault (such as rape), which may have occurred over the last few days, contact the police. Remember to make a note of what the child alleges and the circumstances surrounding the allegation because of the possibility of being called to give evidence at court. Do not touch or tamper with any evidence, such as clothing and dissuade the child from cleansing themselves.
- DO NOT tell the parents/carers, as they could be involved. It is also important no one else who might be involved is inadvertently alerted to the situation because this might lead to the child being 'silenced'. Allegations of sexual abuse are usually denied and often difficult to prove. Remember, the child's welfare must be the first consideration at all times.
- Keep information confidential and share on a need to know basis only so that any alleged perpetrator is not warned or 'tipped off'. The child or young person also has a right for their privacy to be respected as much as is possible.

Should the Benefice Safeguarding Officer, in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer not feel it necessary to refer the matter to Children's Social Services but the worker (or anyone else) has serious concerns for the child's safety, then they should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or the relevant authorities themselves. The safety of the child over-rides all other considerations and it is important to remember that sexual abuse of children is a serious crime.

If the allegation is made against someone who has responsibility for implementing the Safeguarding Policy, the referral should be made direct to Children's Social Services or appropriate professional advice sought, e.g. from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer or Thirtyon:eight.

### **3. What next?**

#### **Action by you**

Having spoken with Children's Social Services or the Police, act in accordance with their advice - they may already have concerns of which you are not aware. Following your telephone referral, you must confirm the referral in writing to the Children's Services Department within 48 hours. Government guidance 'What to do if you're worried about a child being abused' states that if you have not heard from Children's Services within 3 working days of a written referral, then contact them again. They have a duty to respond to your written referral.

#### **Why you must not alert the parent/carer**

A child or young person might make a direct allegation of abuse naming the person who did it. Because of fear, confusion or other reasons the allegation might not be wholly accurate.

Informing a parent/carer of the allegation could damage any subsequent investigation by the statutory authorities if their reaction inadvertently alerts the person under suspicion e.g. the parent/carer going to see them to sort the matter out. It is vital no one from the organisation informs the parent/carer of the allegations at this stage. This decision should be left to the statutory authorities.

Another very important reason the alleged abuser is not contacted is that they could try to silence their victim with bribery or threats. Also, they could dispose of any incriminating material such as books, videos, DVDs, photos, computer files or text messages.

See **Appendix 7** for guidance in how to respond to an alleged offender or perpetrator.

#### **Action by Children's Social Services**

Children's Social Services will normally make enquiries of local agencies (e.g. health, school etc.). As mentioned above, guidance to local authorities encourages them to provide help and support to a family as 'a child in need' rather than mounting a formal child protection investigation wherever this is appropriate. Government guidelines expect there

to be an early strategy discussion between statutory agencies to plan the child protection investigation, particularly where there is to be a joint investigation between the Police and the Children's Services Department.

The church and/or person(s) involved in the referral should act on the advice of Children's Social Services concerning their role during any investigations e.g. support to the individual or family.

Following enquiries, there will be a further discussion and, if appropriate, a child protection conference will be convened. If informed yourself, let the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer know the outcome of the investigation and the date of any conference in order that they have the opportunity to attend. The leader/worker may also be invited to attend this meeting, either to contribute to the meeting or as a support to the parent or child.

## Appendix 5

### Involving Adult Services/Social Care or the police where there is concern for a vulnerable adult

In the same way that concerns about the safety and well-being of a child are managed, concerns about a vulnerable adult should be passed to the Benefice Safeguarding Officer (or Deputy), who in discussion with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, will decide who will contact Adult Social Services if this is the agreed action.

The primary responsibility for managing any investigation process rests with managers of the Adult Social Care social services teams. When the concern is about someone in residential care, the Care Quality Commission will be involved. Where a crime may have been committed, the police will investigate.

Organisations have a duty to act on any concern of abuse of a vulnerable adult to ensure that the situation is assessed and investigated. The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the person concerned.

#### **1. Responding in an emergency to a vulnerable adult who alleges abuse**

Adult Social Care Teams operate Emergency Duty Teams (EDT), outside regular office hours, at weekends and over statutory holidays. They are available to offer advice and will also take action to protect a vulnerable adult, including arranging emergency medical treatment and, where appropriate, involving the police.

A member of the EDT would not be responsible for a criminal investigation but if the allegations are serious, a co-ordinated approach between the police and the EDT may result to produce the best possible outcome for the vulnerable adult.

#### **2. Action by Adult Social Care**

Once a referral is made to Adult Social Care they will check to see if the vulnerable adult or alleged abuser is known to them. If the vulnerable adult is known, details of the referral will be passed on to the worker involved. The worker and a team manager will then decide if an Adult Protection Inquiry should proceed. If the individual isn't known to Adult Social Care, it is likely a duty worker and manager will make that decision.

#### **3. Adult Protection Inquiry, Involvement of Relatives/Carers, Mental Capacity and Decisions**

##### **Adult Protection Inquiry**

The initial action taken in an Adult Protection Inquiry is to convene a strategy meeting with all the appropriate agencies. There is now great emphasis on not working in isolation and the strategy meeting, by its very nature, facilitates communication and joint working between the various groups. If it is thought a crime may have been committed, the police will also be included in this process. The aim of the meeting is for the agencies involved to reach a consensus on planning and co-ordinating the investigation and ultimately produce an Adult Protection Plan. Information is shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

##### **The Investigation Process**

The purpose of any investigation is to:

- Protect the vulnerable adult from serious harm
- Establish and record the facts about the circumstances giving rise to the concerns
- If appropriate, establish evidence for formal proceedings (e.g. criminal, registration or disciplinary)
- Establish with the vulnerable adult whether they feel that their personal safety is at risk, whether they want professional intervention to occur and what their views are on sharing information about the incident with other staff that need to know
- Decide if protective or other action is needed for the vulnerable adult or others
- Identify the sources and levels of risk

- Decide whether actual or suspected abuse has taken place and record the reasons for these conclusions
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in respect of any perpetrator
- Consider the communication needs of the vulnerable adult and ensure that an appropriate service is offered (this includes people with dementia, those whose first language is not English, people with sensory impairment, or people who have learning difficulties)

The matters highlighted above will be considered at a Case Conference that will include all the professionals and agencies involved in safeguarding the adult. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and/or Benefice Safeguarding Officer may be invited to attend the Case Conference. Decisions will be taken and a plan of action formalized in light of the information gathered at the Case Conference. This is called an Adult Protection Plan.

### **Adult Protection Plan**

The Adult Protection Plan sets out for the vulnerable adult:

- The steps to be taken to assure their future safety
- Treatment or therapy they can access
- Any changes to the way services are provided
- Support through any legal action they may take and in seeking redress for things that have happened
- Putting in place any on-going risk management strategy where appropriate.

### **Involvement of relatives / carers**

Generally, families are informed of an allegation of abuse and the action being taken. However, they may not be informed where:

- The vulnerable adult is able to give informed consent and does not wish their family to be informed.
- The alleged perpetrator is a member of the family
- Where a police investigation is likely and rules of evidence apply.

### **What if the vulnerable adult doesn't want certain action taken?**

The mental capacity of the vulnerable adult is a key factor in deciding what action can be taken. All actions should be based on the presumption of mental capacity (Mental Capacity Act 2005) and on the consequent right of an adult to make their own choices in relation to their personal safety and well-being. In normal circumstances an adult has a right to follow a course of action that others may judge unwise or eccentric, including one which may lead to them being abused. In such instances Adult Social Care should be informed so that they can put in place a safeguarding plan proportionate to the level of risk so that, as far as possible, the adult continues to be protected.

The exceptions to allowing a person to make choices about their safety from abuse and neglect would be:

- Where the person lacks mental capacity to make such a choice
- Where the rights or safety of others would be compromised in allowing the person to exercise their right in making choices about their safety from abuse and neglect.

### **Acting in the best interests of the vulnerable adult**

Where a vulnerable adult lacks the mental capacity to protect themselves or other vulnerable adults from abuse, it may be necessary to take action in their (and possibly others) best interests, on their behalf.

Issues of capacity and consent are a key element in all aspects of adult protection work. Capacity refers to the ability to make and understand a decision, act, or transaction. However, there remains a fundamental duty to balance the person's right to autonomy with their need for protection.

In law there is the assumption that if you're an adult, you are able to make your own decisions, unless it's proved otherwise. As long as you can understand the information relevant to the decision, retain the information relevant to

the decision, have an ability to use the information in order to make a decision, and have an ability to communicate that decision, then the decision is yours to make.

Any decision concerning mental capacity will follow an assessment carried out by doctors and/or Adult Social Care. When making a decision the following factors are taken into consideration:

- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Cognitive Functioning
- Communication Problems
- Suggestibility, Conformity, Compliance, Acquiescence
- Sensory Impairments
- Cultural and Religious Views
- Power and Status
- Gender

If there is a proven lack in mental capacity of the vulnerable adult, the person authorized to make decisions on their behalf should:

- Act in a way that promotes their health and well-being, and prevents deterioration in their quality of life.
- Ensure that any interventions are as limited as possible and carried out in a manner that is least restrictive of the person's freedom of action.
- Ensure that any decision is made with due regard to the process of law.
- Make every effort to establish the past and present wishes and desires of the person concerned as well as any other factors the person would consider important if they were not incapacitated.
- As fully as possible, include the person in any decision or action affecting them.
- Consult the views of appropriate people concerning the person's wishes and what actions would be in his or her best interests.

Any decisions taken that are deemed to be in the person's best interest should be clearly documented to show how the decision was reached.

## Appendix 6

### Allegations against Church Workers and Volunteers

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedures outlined above in **Appendices 4 and 5**, the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with the designated officer in each local authority to manage cases where an accusation is made against someone working with children (whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity). These individuals are often known as Safeguarding Advisers or Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO).

## Appendix 7

### Managing those who pose a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults

Anyone who has been found guilty of sexual offences against children since the 'Sex Offenders Act 1997' will be on the Sex Offenders Register, and therefore known to the police. However, many people who offend against children are not convicted, and cannot therefore be classed as 'offenders'. Where there are reasonable grounds for concern that a person poses a risk to children or adults who may be vulnerable, his/her involvement with a church will still need to be assessed for risk and managed, and appropriate boundaries may need to be applied.

#### **Initial Response by the Parish**

When it is known that a member of the congregation, or someone wishing to join the congregation, has sexually abused a child or young person, or is not convicted of an offence against children but nevertheless may pose a risk, for example:

- they have an offence for violent or sexual offences against adults
- an allegation of abuse against a child or adult has been investigated, but the matter has not proceeded to court, or the person has been acquitted
- a person has demonstrated erratic behaviour which is actually or potentially violent or a risk to children or adults who may be vulnerable; this may be due to substance misuse, a mental disorder or a disability
- a complaint or grievance has been received alleging inappropriate behaviour, which is not criminal the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer must be consulted, so that a safe course of action can be agreed in conjunction with the relevant statutory agencies where required, and a confidential agreement put in place.

#### **Convicted Sex Offenders**

Anyone who has been found guilty of sexual offences against children since the Sex Offenders Act 1997 will be on the Sex Offenders Register, and therefore known to the police. If you are informed by a statutory agency (e.g. the Police or Probation Service) that a known sexual offender wishes to join your church, or is already a member of your church, then contact the DSO before you take any action, and pass on the details of the officer who has contacted you. The DSO will then draw together a meeting which will include parish representatives (usually the incumbent and the Benefice Safeguarding Officer) the referring officer from the statutory services and the offender.

#### **What to do if a Convicted Sex Offender wants to join the Church**

At the meeting described above, the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will guide those present through an assessment of the risks posed by the offender in the particular environment of church worship and activities. The statutory agency will already have carried out a risk assessment on the person, which will be taken fully into account. A plan for the person's inclusion in the church will be drawn up, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer will co-ordinate the instigation of the plan. A written agreement ("confidential agreement") will be drawn up and signed by the person posing a risk.

The written agreement is made primarily to reduce and minimise the risk to children and adults. The agreement also aims to create a safe environment for the person posing risk, through protecting them from false allegations and the risk of re-offending, supporting them and enabling them to receive appropriate ministry within explicit bounds of confidentiality.

A support group will be set up in the church, whose purpose will be to monitor the agreement, as well as provide support to the person posing risk. Where the police or probation service are involved, they will be consulted and in some cases party to the agreement, and there will be an agreement to pass information about the person who poses risk in both directions.

The agreement will make clear how the person who poses risk can receive ministry and support to undertake work with a perpetrator to address their abusive behaviour. In-depth work with perpetrators is a specialist field and holds potential for danger. It should only be attempted by trained professionals. Any help provided by the church must not be seen as a substitute for working with the statutory agencies.

#### **The Written Agreement**



The agreement will set clear boundaries on the person's involvement in the church community, in order to minimise risk. Depending on the seriousness of the risk, limits may include:

- which services the person may attend
- whether s/he should be accompanied, and if so, by whom
- where s/he may sit
- what activities s/he may participate in
- what activities s/he is barred from; this is likely to include all direct and unsupervised work with children and young people, any official role or office in the church which gives him or her the status or authority deemed to be trustworthy
- other limits on his/her behaviour, and agreements about how his/her behaviour will be managed.

In circumstances where, for instance the victim is also part of the church community, or the church is one with a large number of children, the person posing the risk may be introduced to a congregation in another parish.

The agreement must be enforced and monitored, with no manipulation allowed. It must remain in place for as long as the person is a part of the congregation. The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer maintains a database of offenders for whom agreements are in place in the diocese, and ensures that such agreements are reviewed at least annually. In the event of the agreement being broken, statutory agencies must be informed, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer consulted in order to decide what further safeguards need to be put in place, and whether the person should continue as part of that congregation.

## Appendix 8

### Guidelines and Boundaries for Pastoral Carers

When pastoral care is being offered to those who have been abused there are a number of issues to bear in mind. It is important that all pastoral carers know what abuse is, recognise possible signs and symptoms and know how to respond to concerns.

Those seeking pastoral care within the Church are entitled to know what they can expect in terms of good conduct, that those caring for them are accountable and that the boundaries set are respected. All staff, volunteers and paid, are expected to follow the Peterborough Diocese Code of Safer Working Practice.

The pastoral carer can face difficult dilemmas including where pastoral relationships and friendships overlap. This can cause conflict of roles particularly in the area of confidentiality. For this reason the following should be considered in any code of practice:

- Those providing pastoral care should avoid any behaviour that may give the impression of favouritism or a 'special' relationship
- Where workers are providing mentoring and/or coaching roles this should be clearly defined
- Pastoral workers should be aware of the pitfalls of over-dependency in pastoral relationships
- This dependency can apply both ways. Ensure adequate supervision
- Workers should be aware of the limits of their ability/competence and seek further help when faced with situations outside their expertise
- Pastoral relationships have been known to develop into romantic attachments (both ways). If this becomes an issue, another carer should be appointed. This is because all pastoral relationships are ones in which the worker is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their work or nature of the activity.

#### **Safeguarding the integrity of the worker**

People who work with vulnerable adults particularly can become involved in aspects of their personal finance. For example, they may be asked to collect pensions, do shopping or carry out banking transactions on the person's behalf. When conducting a home visit, money may be lying about. It is therefore important to consider how to protect both the vulnerable adult and the worker from accusations of financial mismanagement or dishonesty. The following suggestions may help:

- Ensure that receipts are always given for purchases
- Don't move any money which may have been left out (e.g. when cleaning)
- Ideally two people should be involved when handling money
- Occasionally workers may be offered presents and/or monetary gifts by those they are caring for. These gifts should be declined if at all possible but if this will cause offence, all gifts and offers of gifts should be reported to the leader of the group and recorded. If specific guidelines are already in place these must obviously be followed.

#### **Visiting adults who may be vulnerable, in their homes (including residential homes)**

- Always do an assessment of risk before visiting someone in their own home. If there are any concerns or risks known before the visit is undertaken, give careful consideration to whether the visit is absolutely necessary, or whether you should be accompanied by another adult. Always carry a mobile phone on a home visit, and ensure that someone knows where you are and when you are expected to return
- Avoid calling unannounced – call by arrangement, if appropriate telephoning the person just before you go.
- If you are not known to the person you are visiting, carry identification, or a note of introduction from the church. Always knock on the door before entering a room or home, respecting the person's home and possessions
- As a general principle, do not give those you visit your home phone number or address. Instead, where possible leave information about a central contact point

- If you feel uncertain out of our depth, seek advice and if appropriate refer the person to another agency – knowing where to access information about other relevant services
- When referring someone on to another person or agency, talk this through with the vulnerable adult. Ask his/her permission before passing on personal information.
- Make the link with the new person/agency ourselves: if it is more appropriate for the vulnerable adult to do so themselves make sure they have all the information they need and that their contact will be expected
- Be clear about our boundaries – keep to agreed limits on how much time to spend with someone and how often to visit. Avoid taking on extra responsibilities on a bit by bit basis. Seek to be realistic about the amount of time available – not saying yes to every request for help. Be clear about what behaviour is acceptable – and what is not – from the vulnerable adult.
- Remember the needs of carers – treating them as individuals, including them if they wish, offer breaks where possible.