



Safeguarding information for those working with children and young people

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Developing our safeguarding culture

Scripture teaches that all people are special because they are made in the image of God. This is, therefore, true for children and young people, who should be respected and protected. Within the Kingdom of God, children matter in their own right and are to be taken seriously.

The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Clergy and laity who work for the Church in a paid or voluntary capacity need to exercise the greatest care when working with those for whom they have been given responsibility.

The highest standards should be maintained, therefore, in all pastoral, counselling, educational, worship and recreational circumstances. The exploitation of any relationships for any purpose will not be tolerated.

The Diocese of Gloucester is committed to creating a culture of informed vigilance which takes children, and adults who are vulnerable, seriously – and will work closely, and in partnership with, the local authority and statutory authorities to ensure that we offer best practice advice and guidance.

The Diocese of Gloucester accepts the principle of The Children Act (1989) that the welfare of the child is paramount, and will follow all statutory requirements, and the national Church of England, House of Bishops' "Protecting all God's Children" and "Safer Recruitment" advice and guidelines.

If allegations of abuse are made, then the Diocese of Gloucester will respond without delay and collaborate fully with the statutory and voluntary agencies concerned with investigating such allegations of child abuse. It will not conduct investigations on its own and will work in partnership with the police, local authority, and others to follow legal compliance, and to ensure we are able to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person, or adult who has suffered abuse.

We as a parish are always seeking to follow and implement the policies of the Diocese of Gloucester for safeguarding those amongst us who are most vulnerable. If you have any concerns that this is not happening, please in the first instance contact our Safeguarding Officer (Nominated Person), Lynne Banks, in person or on 01242 602555. She can also be contacted by email at the following address: safeguarding@winchcombeparish.org.uk

The Safeguarding Policy for children is displayed on the parish noticeboard at St Peter's Church, Winchcombe and can be found on the parish website: www.winchcombeparish.org.uk

**Code of behaviour when working with
children and young people**

- Do** treat everyone with respect

- Do** provide an example you wish others to follow

- Do** plan activities that involve more than one other person being present or, at least, which are within sight or hearing of others

- Do** respect a young person's right to personal privacy within the appropriate professional boundaries

- Do** have separate sleeping accommodation for leaders and young people

- Do** provide access for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have

- Do** encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like

- Do** maintain a healthy adult lifestyle to role model to young people

- Do** remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned

- Do** recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse

- Do not** permit abusive youth peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying

- Do not** play physical contact games with young people

- Do not** have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others

- Do not** jump to conclusions about others without checking facts

- Do not** allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes

- Do not** exaggerate or trivialise child-abuse issues

- Do not** show favouritism to any individual

- Do not** make suggestive remarks or gestures

- Do not** rely on just your good name to protect you

- Do not** believe “it could never happen to us”

Confidentiality issues when working with children and young people

Where a child or an adult is judged to be at risk of significant harm and in need of protection, it will normally be necessary to share all relevant information with the statutory agencies.

You should explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be, shared and why, and seek their agreement.

The exception to this is where, to do so, would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime, including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

You must always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.

You should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information.

You may still share information if, in your judgment on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need in the public interest to override that lack of consent.

You should seek advice where you are in doubt, especially where your doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.

You should ensure that the information you share is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.

There are situations where safeguarding children advisers or co-ordinators are bound to share information with the authorities or other organizations who 'need to know' according to statutory guidance and their professional standards. For guidance on individual cases, the diocesan safeguarding officer should be consulted.

Guidelines on touching children and young people

- Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be construed as, sexually stimulating to the adult or child.
- Children are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances, i.e. when they need medical attention or for their own safety.
- Team members should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact and should express concerns to the Nominated Person.
- Touch should not be prolonged.
- Corporal punishment in any form should never be used.

Supervision of children and young people

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to children for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation
- Competence of adults, both general and on specific activities
- Requirements of the organisation/locale to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of pupils
- First Aid cover

Staffing ratios for visits are difficult to prescribe, as they will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and the efficient use of resources. However, a general guide for visit in normal circumstances might be, as an example, one adult for every six children.

Group leaders should assess the risks and consider and agree an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. There should be a minimum of one adult in charge. In addition to the adult in charge there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. Parents and Carers should always be aware of the level of supervision.

Below are suggested ratios of adult to child, recommended for a specific indoor/outdoor activity or holiday event. These are the ratios required in regulations governing day care for under-eights.

	Adult : Children
Two years and under	One : Three
Three years	One : Four
Four to eight years	One : Eight

Organisations such as OFSTED and the NSPCC safe network can offer more detailed advice and guidance on safe ratios.

Working with groups of children

Be well prepared

Try to have ideas 'up your sleeve' and be ready when the children arrive.

Be aware

Try to notice and avoid situations before they start. A look can do wonders. So can a quiet word or simply saying 'no'. Diverting attention can nullify what they are doing so it doesn't get out of control. Giving responsibility can also help.

Be calm and stay objective

Decide what is acceptable and what is not. Lay ground rules from the start and keep to them. Be firm, but matter of fact. Involve the children in making rules if you can. Don't be afraid to say 'no'. Think of ways to handle specific situations – decide what sanctions would be appropriate (e.g. restricting privileges). Have a signal for being quiet. Insist on quiet so that you can explain what you are doing. Mean what you say and be consistent.

Be fair, but firm

Have an element of choice if children refuse to join in.

Be prepared to listen

Be aware of children and their interests. Beware of misinterpreting behaviour or what they are saying.

Be yourself

But look critically at how you behave too. You are their example. Watch what you say and do. Try not to take remarks personally. Answer if you can – laugh if you can.

Be honest in answering questions

Build relationships

Get to know each child and find out about their background if you can. Also build a relationship with the family – involve parents if there is a problem (sooner rather than later) and ask for their help adopting a professional stance. Don't be critical of the child or the parents – say something like: "He doesn't seem very happy at Sunday School at the moment. Is there any way in which we can help him?"

Have someone to help you

Who can help diffuse situations whilst you are leading, perhaps by sitting with a child or taking them to one side to talk with them? Often disruptive children are seeking attention for some reason. Also try to share any problems with someone so you do not feel you are alone in having issues.

Have a male role model if possible

Some children lack a father figure.

Involve the children in 'doing' as much as possible

A busy and interested child is less likely to cause problems. Assess the suitability of activities for different children and different abilities. Check that it is not too easy/too difficult/too repetitious. Work at the children's level. Many children have quite short attention spans and you may need to be ready to change an activity at short notice. Incorporate flexibility and surprise. Games can help. Programmes should always be adaptable.

Praise children as much as possible

Give them a positive attitude. Be specific about the good behaviour you are praising: "Well done for clearing away so quickly" rather than "Thanks for your help".

See the child behind any wrong doing

See what might have led up to the bad behaviour. Is the child hurting in some way? Watch out for signs of abuse. Let children know that although their action is being punished, they are still valued and respected. Always let them know why they are being punished. *Also watch out for the quiet child and for the child who shows a change in their normal behaviour.*

Try not to stereotype children

Give them a fresh start each time.

Have a structure to your meeting

So that children have some idea of what to expect. This gives them a sense of security. However, once established, do not be afraid to break the routine sometimes. Similarly, building up rituals in worship can help children explore further into the unknown because they are firmly rooted in the known.

Try to avoid confrontational situations

Diffuse situations wherever possible. It is better to speak quietly to a child alone than make a scene in front of others.

Avoid embarrassing children

Avoid belittling them. Help them to work out for themselves what they did wrong and how they can change and also put right any hurt they caused. Support them in doing this.

Exclusion

If the worst happens you can say that you can no longer take responsibility for a child.

Remember

It is often the children who are misbehaving who are the ones who take on board all you say and do.

Pray!

And have others praying for you too.

Discipline: What can we do?

1. Team agreement

The leadership team should be in agreement as to the standard of behaviour allowed in the group.

2. The rules

The young people in the group must be given the boundaries of behaviour that are acceptable.

3. Supervision

Always ensure adequate supervision of activities by leaders. Have other leaders helping.

4. Control

If necessary stop all activities until order is restored.

5. Consistency

Apply all rules fairly and consistently.

6. Don't

Shout, lose your temper or strike a child.

7. Restraint

If your young people need to be restrained because of physical behaviour, training, advice and guidance should be sought from the local authority.

Transporting children

Where parents/carers make their own arrangements with friends and other parents for transporting children to and from activities, this is entirely an informal arrangement and no church responsibility exists, except to ensure that parents know their responsibilities for each event.

These guidelines apply to churches where children's activities involve transport by an employee or volunteer in the line of their specific church role.

A full Risk Assessment should be carried out prior to any activity. If you need any help with the assessment get in touch with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

A template Risk Assessment (see pages 38 - 41 of this document) is also available on the safeguarding pages of the diocesan website:

<http://gloucester.anglican.org/parish-life/safeguarding/safeguarding-general-resources/>

- Only those who have gone through the church Safer Recruitment procedures should transport children.
- All car drivers and escorts on mini buses/coaches, should have read the child protection policy of the church and agree to abide by this.
- Parental consent should be given for each activity and all journeys should be carried out with their consent and knowledge.
- PCCs must ensure that there is a clear policy that seat belts should be worn at all times, the driver should have adequate insurance and the vehicle should be road worthy.
- Drivers should avoid being alone in a vehicle with a child. Where a child is the last one to be dropped off, parents should know, and the child should sit in the back of the vehicle.
- At the collection or dropping off points do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that an appropriate adult collects children.

Arrangements when using mini buses

In addition to the above, consider the following:

- Ensure full compliance with mini bus regulations.
- Ensure that you have adequate supervision. As well as a driver, another responsible adult escorting the children/young people will be needed.

Social Media – tips for staying safe on the web

Social media plays a massive part in children and young people's lives today. It is instant, it is accessible, and it is a very attractive way for young people to be in touch with each other, and for others to be able to be in touch with them.

The informality that social media encourages can mean that it might be harder to maintain a professional distance that is required when working with children, young people and the vulnerable.

Communicating directly online with someone, for example with private messaging, is like meeting them in private. You're advised to send messages to groups, rather than individuals, or share them publicly.

Whilst sharing thoughts and reflections with friends or followers via social media can seem personal and private, it is not. By law, if one or more people can access it, content is classed as published, in the public domain and subject to legislation around libel, defamation, copyright and data protection. If you wouldn't say something in a public meeting or to someone's face or write it in a newspaper or on headed paper – don't say it online.

Be mindful of your own security - don't overshare personal information. Never publish detailed personal information such as your address or telephone number, unless in a private message to someone you know and trust.

If you are having Facebook pages for particular groups of young people, remember Facebook's own guidelines are that children should be at least 13 to have an account.

If you have a church website page or Facebook, or any other social media page for young people – ensure this is properly mediated and take professional advice.

Encourage young people to be social media aware - the NSPCC has helpful resources:

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/

Abuse: What to look for, what to do

Those who work with children have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a child. It is important to keep an open mind and consider carefully what your concern is.

Whilst these signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused, they probably indicate that the child or family is having some problems which should be followed up appropriately – usually through the investigations of social care professionals.

Churches SHOULD NOT carry out their own investigations. However, gleaned information that would be helpful to social care professionals can be vital in speeding up referrals.

Asking questions like ‘That looks nasty; how did you do that?’ or ‘I’ve noticed you have been upset recently; is there anything I can do to help?’ are perfectly ok questions. Checking the answers and being comfortable with them are key to keeping an open mind on what may be happening.

If you suspect a child or young person is at risk of abuse you must do something!

I. Kinds of abuse

Definitions of abuse (England and Wales)

The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria throughout England and Wales by the Department of Health, the Department for Education and Employment and the Home Office in their joint document, ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2015) are as follows:

Abuse and neglect

- 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. 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 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, for example domestic abuse between the child's parents. It may involve serious bullying, 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, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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 / abandonment)
 - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
 - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
 - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
 - it may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Spiritual abuse

- Abuse can occur in all cultures and religions. Within faith communities, harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, or obtrusive healing and deliverance ministries, any of which may result in children experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. If such inappropriate behaviour becomes harmful, it should be referred for investigation in the usual way.
- Careful teaching, supervision and mentoring of those entrusted with the pastoral care of children should help to prevent harm occurring in this way. Other forms of spiritual harm include the denial to children of the right to faith or the opportunity to explore a range of belief systems including growth in the knowledge and love of God.
- Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

- Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

A child may suffer more than one category of abuse.

2. The following may be signs of abuse

Those who work with children have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a child. It is important to keep an open mind and consider carefully what is causing you concern. This is not an exhaustive list, but just some examples to be aware of:

- Physical abuse: unexplained injuries or those that have received no medical attention, hidden injuries, signs of neglect;
- Sexual abuse: allegations made by the child or young person, preoccupation with sexual matters, sexual activity through words, play or drawings, severe sleep disturbances with fears and phobias, being sexually provocative with adults;
- Emotional abuse: regression of behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, inappropriate relationships with peers/adults, attention seeking, running away/stealing/lying, looking uncared for;
- Other: unexplained reluctance of children to be left in the care of an individual – unexplained mood changes.

NB: Physical abuse and neglect are difficult to hide. Sexual abuse can be almost impossible to identify and prove. Many symptoms of distress can point to abuse but there may be other explanations. It is important therefore, that the above signs are not taken as indications that abuse has taken place. They should make us stop and think, but not necessarily jump to conclusions.

3. If a child or young person wants to talk about abuse

It is usually very difficult for a child or young person to tell someone that they are being abused.

- Let them know that you will listen to anything they have to tell you, but that there are some things so serious that you have to tell someone else.
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Accept what the child or young person says, keeping calm and looking at them directly;
- Listen carefully and do not stop a young person who is revealing painful events;
- Never push for information or ask leading questions
- Be aware that the child or young person may have been threatened;
- Reassure the child or young person they were right to tell you;

- Let the child or young person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens;
- Make notes as soon as possible, writing down exactly what was said and when he/she said it.

**Record the date, time and location and whether other people were present.
Keep the hand-written record.**

4. What to do if you suspect abuse

- The person who first suspects or is told of alleged abuse is responsible for ensuring that his/her concern is taken seriously
- Suspicion may vary from a vague disquiet about possibly inappropriate behaviour to clear evidence of serious abuse with many intermediate levels
- Information may reach you from a variety of sources:
 - a child or young person claiming that he/she has been abused
 - another child or young person who is concerned
 - a member of the child's family
 - a fellow worker of the suspect
- someone who believes he/she is the object of malicious or unfounded rumour
- think through your own concerns

5. If you suspect abuse or feel that inappropriate behaviour is taking place;

contact the Nominated Person (see p2 for contact details)

If unavailable, contact The Diocesan Safeguarding Team:

Judith Knight	Head of HR and Safeguarding	jknight@glosdioc.org.uk
Becca Faal	Safeguarding Officer	bfaal@glosdioc.org.uk
Kate Peake	DBS Administrator	kpeake@glosdioc.org.uk
Jenny Stone	Safeguarding Training Administrator	jstone@glosdioc.org.uk

Church House, College Green Gloucester, GL1 2LY

Tel: 01452 410022

For out of hours safeguarding concerns please contact: 07944 680320

Website: www.gloucester.anglican.org/safeguarding

Gloucestershire County Council Children's Helpdesk 01452 426565

Out of ours emergency duty team 01452 614194

If an allegation or referral is made then the Nominated Person should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team as soon as possible to share information, to seek advice and support. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, or Head of HR and Safeguarding will refer immediately to the statutory bodies who lead on all allegations.

If an allegation is made against an authorised minister, it is normal that this will happen directly to the police or statutory services, who will be then be in direct contact with the diocese.