

Diocese of Worcester
Parish of St Martin with St Peter, Worcester

PARISH PROCEDURES FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Section 4.6 of the House of Bishops' policy document *Protecting All God's Children* (4th edition, 2010) requires all Parochial Church Councils (P.C.C.s) to adopt and implement a safeguarding children policy and procedures. The procedures outlined in this document complement the policy agreed by the P.C.C. and outline the ways in which its principles will be enacted within this parish. The terms 'child' and 'children' are employed in this document to signify any person or persons under the age of eighteen, in line with statutory and Church of England definitions.

1. We are aware of and will implement the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy Protecting All God's Children (4th edition, 2010) and the diocesan procedures.

The latest edition of the House of Bishops' policy document can be obtained and consulted online by all members of the P.C.C. and congregation (<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/37378/protectingallgodschildren.pdf>). A copy will also be kept in the Parish Office for consultation. The Diocese of Worcester's child protection policy and relevant documents are also available online (<http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/AJ/138>).

2. We are committed to the safeguarding and the care of children within our church community.

The theological rationale for our duty of care to children is outlined in Section 1 of *Protecting All God's Children*. The statutory framework is contained within Appendix 1 of that policy, although this framework does not take account of changes to legislation recording criminal records checks and safeguarding which have occurred since 2010. The commitment of this parish to the safeguarding and care of children are outlined in Appendix 1 (Expectations of Children's Workers) and Appendix 2 (Code of Safer Working Practice for Working with Children) of this document.

3. We will carefully select and train ordained and lay ministers, volunteers and paid workers who work with children, using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and other tools to check the background of each person as outlined in the diocesan procedures.

Ordained clergy and lay readers are trained and vetted through the diocesan system. This parish does not currently employ anyone in a paid capacity to undertake children's work. All volunteer children's workers will be recruited in accordance with Appendix 3 (Safe Recruitment of Children's Workers) of this document.

4. We will respond without delay to every complaint made that a child for whom we are responsible may have been harmed or is in significant danger.

The procedures to be followed if abuse is suspected or alleged are contained in Appendix 4 (Action to be taken in Cases of Suspected or Alleged Abuse) of this document.

5. We will fully cooperate with statutory agencies during any investigation into allegations concerning a member of the church community. We will inform the statutory agency of any suspected criminal offences or concerns of which we are made aware in respect of our contact with children.

All members of the church community, not only children's workers, officeholders or P.C.C. members, are required to cooperate with statutory authorities during an investigation into allegations of abuse. Vetting procedures are not infallible, and everyone therefore has a duty to be reasonably vigilant and raise any concerns with an appropriate figure (usually the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Incumbent).

6. We will offer informed pastoral support to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse and provide them with details of local and national support agencies.

Any adult approached by a child or young person with allegations of abuse should seek help and guidance from the Parish Safeguarding Officer. In some situations, the child or young person may need professional help. The number of ChildLine will be displayed on a church noticeboard, and information on other possible avenues of support can be obtained from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

7. We will supervise and support any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.

Any person who has been known to offend against children, or for whom a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check reveals such convictions, or who is on the DBS Barred List, will not be allowed to work with children and young people, nor will they be permitted to hold any official role or office in the church which gives any status or authority. Diocesan procedures are in place to ensure that the situation is risk assessed and managed on a multi-agency basis. An agreement will be signed with any known offender who wishes to be part of the church community under the supervision of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. As part of this agreement, support will be offered from a named person or persons and boundaries set in place for worship services, hospitality, etc. Only those few individuals with a need and a right to know details of the offences may be informed (typically, this would be the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, the Incumbent, and where relevant the Curate or other clergy). The highest level of confidentiality should be maintained.

8. We will review this policy annually and, as part of this, check that all our procedures and activities involving children, including the DBS service and checks, are up to date and in accordance with statutory obligations.

The Parish Policy Statement on Safeguarding Children, along with these procedures, will be reviewed each year at the May meeting of the P.C.C. The Parish Safeguarding Officer, or some other appropriate person acting under the authority of the Incumbent, will advise the P.C.C. of any changes to statutory obligations, Church of England guidelines, or Diocese of Worcester guidelines which may require the P.C.C. to amend or revise the policy. Should legislation or a change of circumstances so dictate, the policy and procedures must be reviewed and amended as necessary.

9. We will review our insurance policy for those working with children, ensuring we adopt the advice in the House of Bishops' policy.

The P.C.C., or those delegated to act on its behalf, will ensure that the insurance policy for the church and the parish centre provide adequate cover for all children's activities which take place. It will also check that all outside groups who hire or use the premises for children's work have appropriate insurance and safeguarding policies in place. Children's workers must ensure that all those responsible for the official transport of children in a church capacity are appropriately insured.

These procedures were discussed and agreed at the P.C.C. meeting held on Tuesday, 7 May, 2013.

The Revd Canon Ken Boyce (Incumbent and P.C.C. Chair)

Bill Simpson (Churchwarden)

Elizabeth Yarker (Churchwarden)

Appendix 1

Expectations of Children's Workers

All leaders and helpers in children's work must uphold the following principles.

- To make the welfare of a child a priority at all times.
- To treat all children with respect.
- To respect a child's right to privacy.
- To be a role model whom others wish to follow.

Those working with children are committed to the following.

- Prayerful, careful and thoughtful preparation of lessons and activities.
- Arriving in good time to ensure the room or activity space is ready.
- Creating an atmosphere of loving acceptance, where children may flourish, by listening to their stories and sharing life with them.
- Praying with children and helping them to become people of prayer as they grow in the Spirit.
- Being familiar with, and acting in accordance with, the Parish Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Health and Safety procedures.
- Informing children of the contact numbers for ChildLine.

Appendix 2

Code of Safer Working Practice for Working with Children

1. Guidelines for individual workers

You should:

- treat all children with respect and dignity;
- ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful
- always aim to work within sight of another adult;
- ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet and organise toilet breaks for young children;
- ensure that children know who they can talk to if they have a personal concern;
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure that another adult is around;
- if any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand;
- administer any necessary First Aid with others around;
- obtain prior consent for official photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed;
- record any concerning incidents and give the information to the group leader, having signed and dated the record;
- always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

You should not:

- initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g for comfort) should be initiated by the child;
- invade a child's privacy while washing or toileting;
- play rough physical or sexually provocative games;
- use any form of physical punishment;
- be sexually suggestive to or about a child, even in fun;
- touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively;
- scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult;
- permit abusive peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying or ridiculing);
- show favouritism to any one child or group;
- allow a child to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature;
- give lifts to children on their own or on your own;
- smoke tobacco in the presence of children;
- drink alcohol when responsible for children;
- share sleeping accommodation with children;
- invite a child to your home alone;
- take unofficial photos or videos;
- contact children via Facebook or any internet site;
- arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organised group occasions;
- allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person
- allow strangers to give children lifts.

Touch

Church sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children, while avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of child and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform parents as soon as possible. All such incidents must be recorded and the information given to the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

2. Additional guidelines for group leaders

In addition to the above guidelines for individuals, the group leader should:

- ensure that any health and safety requirements are adhered to;
- undertake risk assessments, record them and update as required, with appropriate actions noted
- keep register and consent forms up to date;
- have an awareness at all times of what is taking place and who is present;
- create space for children to talk – either formally or informally;
- liaise with the Parish Safeguarding Officer over good practice for safeguarding;
- always inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The Parish Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the Diocesan safeguarding adviser;
- liaise with the P.C.C. and keep the P.C.C. informed on children's work.

3. Responding to Child Protection Concerns

All procedures in Appendix 3 of the Parish Procedures for Safeguarding Children must be followed.

4. Special needs

All children must be welcomed to the group. Ask parents how best to meet a child's special needs and ensure this is recorded on the registration form or on an additional record if necessary. Toilets should be accessible for all. Advice should be taken on specific needs. It may not be possible to safely meet the needs of some children without extra carer help, specific aids and adaptations. This must be discussed with parents, risk assessed and safe conclusions agreed.

5. Consent

Consent must be from a parent or person with parental responsibility. It can be from a child if he/she has sufficient age and understanding in relation to the specific issue. So, for example, while parental consent is always required for a group residential holiday, a teenager would usually be able to consent to the photos from the holiday being displayed in church. You should record who has given consent for any specific activity and keep records of consent forms for the duration of the child's time with the group.

6. Registration

A registration form must be completed for every child who attends groups or activities. The form should be updated annually and also when information changes. The registration form must include the following information:

- Full name and address of the child,
- Name(s) and address(es) of those with parental responsibility,
- Date of birth,

- Emergency contact details,
- Medical information,
- Any special needs including activities which the child cannot take part in,
- Consent for emergency medical treatment,
- Consent for official photographs and videos, if relevant,
- Arrangements for attendance/how transported/collected, if appropriate.

Separate consent should be obtained for one-off events and activities, e.g. swimming, and also for outings and weekends away. All personal details and consent forms must be stored securely. Any group that includes children under 6 years of age and meets (without parents present) regularly for more than 2 hours a day or for more than 14 days a year must be registered with OFSTED. Seek their advice if you are unsure.

7. Recommended Staffing Levels

Recommended minimum staffing levels for children's groups are as follows. More help may be required if children are being taken out, are undertaking physical activities or if circumstances/risk assessment require it.

0-2 years	1 person for every 3 children	1:3
2-3 years	1 person for every 4 children	1:4
3-8 years	1 person for every 8 children	1:8
Over 8 years	1 person for every 8 children, then 1 extra person for every extra 12	

Each group should have at least 2 adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.

If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access in between them then it is possible to have only one adult per group, depending on the nature of the activity and the age of the children.

Young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they do is appropriate to both their age and understanding.

Adults who assist must be responsible to an appointed worker.

8. Safe Environment

1. Leaders must ensure that all venues used for activities have had a health and safety risk assessment and that any necessary recommendations are acted upon. Risk assessments must be up to date and revised for any new change of circumstances or activity. They should be retained on file in the parish.

2. A First Aid kit should be available at all locations used for children's work. Leaders and helpers must know where it is and supplies should be replenished by the Leader /designated person, as required.

3. If the church has an identified, trained First Aider it is important to know who they are and how to contact them for advice. With their consent, a notice with their name on can be displayed.

4. A First Aid kit and accident book should be available on the premises. The contents of the First Aid kit should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate a named person to check the contents at prescribed intervals.

5. All staff and volunteers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge through access to training. A list of First Aiders in the parish should be compiled and kept available. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book.

6. Leaders and helpers must ensure that equipment and materials are non-toxic, safe, and appropriate to the age of the group.

7. Registration sheets for children attending must contain details of any allergies or medical issues. Some children may need an individual risk assessment/response plan.

8. When it is necessary to cross roads, responsible adults will assist children.
9. Parental consent should include arrangements for a child or young person to attend a group or activity. Arrangements should be included on the registration form.
10. In case of fire, leaders and helpers should be aware of the location and use of fire extinguishers and of all exits from the buildings.
11. Leaders and helpers must be aware of the inherent dangers of certain activities and take appropriate precautions, e.g. cooking, scissors, electrical equipment.
12. Leaders of groups should try to ensure that someone has access to a mobile phone in case they need to make calls in an emergency. This is especially important when working in a separate building.
13. Guidance on safe transport (section 11) should be followed.

9. Venues

1. Meeting places should be warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter.
2. Electric sockets should be covered.
3. Toilets and hand basins should be easily available with hygienic drying facilities.
4. Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any intended activity.
5. If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by the Environmental Health officer and a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate acquired.
6. Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.
7. Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.
8. Adults should be aware of fire procedures. Fire extinguishers should be regularly checked. Smoke detectors should be fitted throughout the premises and regularly checked. A fire drill should be carried out regularly.
9. Unaccompanied children should be encouraged not to walk to and from your premises along dark or badly lit paths.

10. E-Safety

1. Ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional. Mobile telephones should not be used during activities and the telephone numbers of children should only be used to communicate general information about activities – i.e. details of date and time of events. Preferred practice is to contact parent(s) when communicating general information.
2. The use of electronic items should be restricted. If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
3. Do not make any relationship with a child through Facebook or any other social networking or internet sites. Children should never be friends of leaders or volunteers on Facebook. This is to protect the adult as well as the child.
4. Maintain a log of all electronic contacts with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.

11. Transporting Children on Behalf of Church

1. Prior to offsite trips, a consent form must be completed by a parent and returned to the group leader. Children without a completed form will not be permitted to accompany the group.
2. Any leader or helper transporting children by road must ensure that the vehicle has insurance to cover this activity. The vehicle must be driven with due care and attention by an experienced driver.
3. Time of collection and delivery must be agreed with the parent(s)/ persons with parental responsibility, and any delays or alteration to arrangements communicated to them.
4. All children must be secured to a fixed seatbelt or appropriate car seat when travelling in any vehicle. The number of children must never exceed the number of seat belts.

5. When leaders, helpers or volunteers are transporting children off church premises, they should try to ensure that there are 2 adults as passengers in the vehicle and that someone at base knows the route and the reason for the journey.

6. Should it be necessary to transport a lone child, it is preferable for the child to occupy a back seat.

7. If potentially hazardous pursuits are planned, they must be at a recognised centre with trained staff and adequate insurance cover. Swimming trips must always be to pools with qualified life guards or under the supervision of a leader with a lifesaving qualification.

Drivers

- All drivers for church organised activities should have held a full clean driving licence for over 2 years.
- Drivers who are not children's workers should be recruited through normal recruitment processes.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- Any driver who has unspent convictions for serious road traffic offence(s) should not transport children for the church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state, i.e. not over tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of any medicine which induces drowsiness.

Private cars

- Children should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parent/carer. This also applies to formally-arranged lifts to and from church activities.
- All cars which carry children should be comprehensively insured for both private and business use.
- The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church sponsored activities.
- All cars which carry children must be in a roadworthy condition.
- All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts, additional children should not be carried.
- At no time should the number of children in the car exceed the usual passenger number.
- There should be a non-driving escort as well as the driver. If, in an emergency, a driver has to transport one child on his/her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.

Minibus or coach

- Leaders and helpers should sit among the group and not together.
- If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored.
- Before using the minibus, ensure you know the up to date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive.

12. Recording

1. All groups must have an up to date list of members.

2. Parent(s) should be asked to complete and return a registration form. The forms will be held by the group leader.

3. If there are individual family issues (e.g. contact orders/ supervised contact) it is important that the details are recorded to ensure that the child is collected by an appropriate person.

4. At each group session a register should be kept of all those attending, including the names of visiting children. In the unlikely event of an evacuation of the building, the leader should take this register outside

5. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book held by leaders. Parent(s) must be informed.

6. Helpers under the age of eighteen provide a valued service. They should be respected and encouraged as individuals but it must be remembered that they too are minors and should not be left to supervise children alone.
7. If a child says they have been treated in a way which could constitute abuse, it is important to follow the procedures in Appendix 3 and to make a full record of what they say to you and what you say to them.

Appendix 3

Safe Recruitment of Children's Workers

All people appointed to lead children's activities or children's work will:

1. Complete an application form.
2. Have an interview with the Incumbent.
3. Complete a Confidential Declaration.
4. Have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, if applicable (see below).
5. Provide two references.
6. Sign a role agreement.
7. Have their appointment confirmed in writing following confirmation by the P.C.C.
8. Be provided with appropriate training and support.

Under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, all those who engage in regulated activity should undergo an enhanced DBS check and Barred List check. In this parish, the following are considered to be engaged in regulated activity within the terms of the Act and should only be appointed after these checks have been undertaken:

- Sunday Club Leaders
- Messy Church Leaders
- Head Server (if members of the serving team are under the age of eighteen)
- Organist (if members of the choir or organ pupils are under the age of eighteen)

If a DBS check reveals that a person has convictions which may make them unsuitable for the role in question, a risk assessment process will be undertaken with the guidance of the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor. Confidentiality and data protection must be respected at all times.

Until such time as the government introduces a framework for the portability and online checking of DBS certificates, this parish will conduct a fresh DBS check on an individual every five years. Criminal records certificates prior to 1 December 2012 were issued by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB); the CRB certificates of those recruited prior to that date have the same status as a DBS certificate and shall be renewed under the DBS framework after five years have elapsed since the date of the check.

Appendix 4

Action to be taken in Cases of Suspected or Alleged Abuse

Abuse can come to light in a range of ways and through different behaviours. If a child talks about their experience it may be directly to you, or it may be to a friend or other trusted person who then tells you.

When a child talks about abuse

Remember that an abused child is never responsible for the abuse. It is very difficult to tell someone about abuse. Many children have been threatened or they may not have the words to describe their experience. It is important that you react in a supportive way and that you do not try to investigate it yourself.

- Keep calm and do not look shocked.
- Allow the child to speak in their own words and do not correct or question.
- Listen carefully and accept what they say.
- Never push for information or ask leading questions.
- Reassure them that they are right to tell you.
- Tell them you believe them and you are glad they have told you.
- Tell them they are brave to tell you.
- Never make promises about what may happen, nor that what they say will be confidential. Tell them that you will have to tell someone who is responsible for keeping children safe.

Immediate actions

If a child will be in immediate danger when they leave you, telephone the Police.

In all cases, write down what the child said to you (date, time, who was there, etc.), using the child's actual words. Also, write down anything which you said. If you do not have time to do this or it is not appropriate, record what took place as soon as possible. Remember to sign and date the record, as it may be needed later.

Contact the Child Protection representative or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser for advice. Do not speak with parents or carers about the allegations.

When you contact the coordinator/adviser make sure you have the following information:

- Name, address and date of birth of the child
- Name(s) and contact details of the child's parent (s) or carer(s)
- Name of the person against whom the complaint is made
- Name(s) of any witness(es)

If you are unable to contact anyone for advice telephone Children's Services directly on 0845 607 2000. Do not delay by waiting to contact the Child Protection representative or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Children's Services will give you their advice and explain to you what will happen next, if they believe that the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm. If they are of the opinion that the child has not suffered, or is not likely to suffer significant harm, they will give you further advice, including information about informing parent(s) or carer(s).

Do not speak to anyone against whom allegations have been made. This will be done by those responsible for making enquiries under the Children Act. Always cooperate with investigating statutory agencies.

If you are in any doubt about whether a child is suffering significant harm, always remember that it is best to consult if there is any doubt.

Allegations against clergy, lay ministers, workers or volunteers

The Parish Safeguarding Officer must be informed immediately and he or she will advise the Incumbent (except where the Incumbent is the person causing concern) and the appropriate group leader (where relevant).

The Parish Safeguarding Officer must immediately advise the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Diocesan procedures are in place and must be followed.

Look after yourself. Expect to have to handle strong feelings. Do not hesitate to ask for help from the Incumbent or group leader if you need it. The Diocese can provide support to clergy and lay ministers.