



Safeguarding Policy For the Protection of Children and Vulnerable People

April 2026

Contents

Our Vision For The Welfare of Children and Vulnerable People in Our Care.....	4
Key Definitions	5
WCP Working Guidelines.....	8
1. Volunteers	8
1.1. Appointment procedures.....	8
1.2. Volunteer contract.....	8
1.3. Renewal of volunteer contracts	8
1.4. Boundaries	8
1.5. Abuse of trust.....	9
1.6. The church leadership's expectations of a volunteer:.....	9
1.7. Procedures after persistent infringements by a volunteer.....	9
2. Group Leaders	10
2.1. Responsibilities of group leaders	10
2.2. Training and support.....	10
2.3. Staffing ratios.....	10
2.4. Risk assessment.....	10
2.5. Toilet.....	10
2.6. Keeping records.....	10
2.7. Young helpers.....	11
2.8. Photographs of children	11
2.9. Restraint	11
2.9.1. Restraint Strategy.....	11
2.9.2. Reasonable force	12
2.9.3. Procedure for engaging in restraint:.....	12
2.9.4. Recording an incident.....	12
3. Pastoral Care	13
3.1. Procedures for pastoral contact	13
3.2. Code of practice for pastoral care:	13
3.3. Professional confidentiality.....	13
3.4. Information sharing	13
3.5. Consent	14
4. Responsibilities of the church leadership.....	14
4.1. Oversight and monitoring	14
4.2. Informing people	14
4.3. Welcoming offenders	14
4.4. Review of the Safeguarding Policy.....	14
4.5. Trips, Events and residentials	15
4.6. Equal opportunities	15
5. SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE.....	16

Appendix 1 - The Walton Churches Partnership Policy Statement on Equal Opportunities	19
Appendix 2 - The Walton Churches Partnership Information for Volunteers	20
Appendix 3 - Confidential Declaration Form	22
Appendix 4 – Volunteer Contract.....	24
Appendix 5 - DBS Procedure	25
Appendix 6 – DBS Request Information	26
Appendix 7 - Pastoral Care and Support For Volunteers	28
Appendix 8 - Summary of the Principles of Ethical Conduct for Work with Children and Vulnerable People....	30
Appendix 9 - Special Needs Policy.....	31
Appendix 10 - Anti-bullying Policy	32
Appendix 11 - Behaviour policy	34
Appendix 12 - What to do in incidents of disclosure or suspected abuse.....	35
Appendix 13 - Incident Report Form.....	37
Appendix 14 - Reporting concerns about vulnerable Person	38
Appendix 15 - The Walton Churches Partnership Consent Form for under 18’s Regular activities – when parent not present in the building.	39
Appendix 16 – The Walton Churches Partnership Consent Form for under 18’s Regular activities – only to be used when parents remain in the building.	40
Appendix 17 - Volunteer Job Description – Children’s Group Leader	41
Appendix 18 - Volunteer Job Description – Children’s Group Helper.....	43
Appendix 19 - Volunteer Job Description – Youth Group Leader.....	44
Appendix 20 - Volunteer Job Description - Pastoral Visitor.....	45
Appendix 21 - Volunteer Job Description – Worship Group Leader.....	47
Appendix 22 - Safeguarding guidelines regarding social media & internet-based communications with children and vulnerable adults.....	48
Appendix 23 - Key Contact Numbers	49
Appendix 24 – Risk Assessment Template	50
Appendix 25 – Training Requirements	51
Appendix 26 – Safe Spaces	52
Appendix 27 - Disclosure flow chart	53
Appendix 28 - Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) Role Description	54

Our Vision For The Welfare of Children and Vulnerable People in Our Care.

"We are all children of God and, as a church, recognise that it is our responsibility to help everyone grow spiritually, morally and emotionally in a community, so that they will all be aware of and experience God's love in a safe and caring church environment."

Members of The Walton Churches Partnership (WCP) will adopt the following policy for all work with children and vulnerable people undertaken on behalf of these churches, for the support and protection of children, vulnerable people, parents/guardians, volunteers, members and the leadership team.

Safeguarding Policy

As members of The Walton Churches Partnership, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all.

1. We will provide a welcoming, nurturing and safe environment for everyone who take part in activities run by the church.
2. We recognise that our work with children and vulnerable people is the responsibility of the whole church community. This includes a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.
3. We will respond without delay to every complaint made which suggests that anyone may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation and we will have a clear reporting procedure in place.
4. We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and vulnerable people – whether paid or volunteering – in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of Criminal Records Disclosures.
5. We are committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and vulnerable people, and to providing supervision.
6. We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with him or her an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
7. We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.
8. We will seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or vulnerable people.
9. The church is committed to the Home Office Code of Practice *Safe from Harm* and adopts the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its booklet *Safe to Grow* and the Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Handbook We will encourage best practice and take note of how relevant bodies interpret requirements of the law.
10. Each worker with children and vulnerable people. must know the requirements and recommendations and undertake to observe them. Each shall have access to a copy of the WCP's agreed procedures and good practice guidelines.
11. As part of our commitment to children and vulnerable people, the WCP has appointed a Safeguarding Officer, a Verifier and a Recruiter – these may be the same person.
12. Each church in the WCP has appointed a Responsible Person. The Responsible Person role will be regularly explained, and their contact details publicly displayed. See details of these roles below.
13. We will advise the Diocese and other relevant bodies the registered body we use to process applications for Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures via the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)
14. We will advise the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and other relevant church officers as required if we receive a disclosure of concern.
15. We will maintain a structure for the overview of this work and provide the support necessary for the implementation of the above. This includes an annual policy review, checking that our policies are up to date, and supplying a copy of the updated policy statement to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Signed on behalf of The Walton Churches Partnership: _____

Print name: _____ Date: _____

Key Definitions

Children:

Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection. (Working Together 2023)

Parent:

A person aged 18 or over who provides or intends to provide care for a disabled child for whom the person has parental responsibility (Working Together 2023)

If it appears that this is not straightforward, consult the Baptist Union's Child Protection Advisory Panel and/or the Diocese safeguarding Adviser.

Vulnerable Person:

Any person aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

This will include, in particular, anyone who:

- Is living in residential accommodation, such as a care home or a residential special school, Is living in sheltered housing
- Is receiving domiciliary care in their own home
- Is receiving any form of health care
- Is detained in prison, remand centre, young offenders' institution, secure training centre or attendance centre or under the powers of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Is in contact with probation services.
- Is receiving a welfare service of a description to be prescribed in regulations
- Is receiving a service or participating in an activity which is specifically targeted at people with age-related needs, disabilities or prescribed physical or mental health conditions or expectant or nursing mothers living in residential care (age-related needs includes needs associated with frailty, illness, disability or mental capacity)
- Is receiving direct payments from a local authority/HSS body in lieu of social care services, Requires assistance in the conduct of his or her own affairs.

Neglect:

The persistent failure to meet a child's or persons basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment 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 caregivers) • ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment • provide suitable education It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs (Working Together, 2023)

Signs of Neglect:

Constant hunger; poor personal hygiene; inappropriate clothing; frequent lateness or non-attendance; untreated medical problems; low self-esteem; poor social relationships; compulsive stealing or scrounging; constant tiredness.

Abuse:

A form of maltreatment of a person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. A person may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. (Working Together, 2018)

Emotional abuse:

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a person as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development and wellbeing. It may involve conveying to a person that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the person 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 the person. These may include interactions that are beyond the person developmental capability, as well as overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the person participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing the person to frequently feel frightened, in danger, the exploitation or corruption of person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment, though it may occur alone. (Working Together, 2023)

Signs of Emotional Abuse:

Continual self-deprecation; self-harm or mutilation; desperate attention seeking behaviour; eating problems; substance abuse; neurotic behaviour, obsession or phobias; compulsive stealing or scrounging; social isolation; depression and withdrawal.

Physical abuse:

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a person. (Working together 2018)

Signs of Physical Abuse:

Unexplained injuries or burns; refusal to discuss injuries; improbable explanations; untreated injuries; disclosure of apparently excessive punishment; shrinking from physical contact; aggression or bullying; over compliant behaviour or a 'watchful' attitude; running away; significant unexplained changes in behaviour; deterioration in concentration.

Sexual abuse:

Involves forcing or enticing a person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the person 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 person in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging a person to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a Person 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 children. (Working Together, 2018)

Signs of Sexual Abuse:

Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body; sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age, e.g. in words, play or drawings; attempts to teach other children about sexual activity; sexually provocative or seductive behaviour with adults; inappropriate bed sharing arrangements at home; aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness; severe sleep disturbance, withdrawal from friends.

Child Sexual Exploitation:

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. (Working together, 2018)

Signs of Child sexual exploitation: suddenly behaves differently, anxious, clingy, depressed, aggressive, problems sleeping, eating disorders, wets the bed, soils clothes, takes risks, misses school, changes in eating habits, obsessive behaviour, nightmares, drugs, alcohol, self-harm, thoughts about suicide.

Modern Slavery

This covers slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can do to pressurise, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.

Domestic abuse

This can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

Signs of Domestic abuse.

There are different kinds of abuse, but it's always about having power and control over a person

N.B. A Person may suffer more than one category of abuse.

WCP Working Guidelines

1. Volunteers

In any case of doubt as to the appropriate course of action, the overall guiding principle is that the welfare of the child or vulnerable person is paramount.

1.1. Appointment procedures

The procedure for appointments is:

- Write a simple job description to clarify gifts and qualities needed to perform role in line with Equal Opportunities legislation and WCP Safeguarding Policy.
- Church Leadership (including Stewards and Ministry Leader) to agree job description. This is reviewed yearly changes agreed at the WCP AGM.
- A volunteer will have 6 months regular (at least once a month) attendance at one of the partnership churches.
- The Church Minister/ Stewards/ Group leader to have an informal chat with candidates to discuss suitability, experience; clarify role and expectations.
- Ask the candidate to read the information for Volunteers document (see Appendix 3), Confidential Declaration Form (see Appendix 4), Volunteer Contract (see Appendix 5) and DBS request form (Appendix 6).
- Pray for confirmation of God's will for the person.
- Bring the appointment decision to the Church Leaders/ Stewards.
- If appointment agreed, all new volunteers should complete the required safeguarding training within 6 months of starting to volunteer.

1.2. Volunteer contract

The aims of the volunteer agreements are:

- To have legal proof that the person volunteering has read and understood the WCP Safeguarding Policy and understood correctly the procedure in the event of disclosure.
- To be aware of the support and commitment that the WCP will offer to them.
- To be aware of the extent of the commitment that is expected of them.
- To satisfy our insurers that we are maintaining best practice with regards to protecting those in our care.

1.3. Renewal of volunteer contracts

- The volunteer contract will be renewed every 3 years with a DBS check required every 3 yrs.
- There ought to be a time for reflection in the two months leading up to when the current contract lapses, with a chance to look over the policies again, and think about their commitment to the group. They should have opportunity to renew their contract as the old one expires.
- Renewal also provides an opportunity to identify any training or support issues that the WCP should be aware of.
- The leaders of the WCP have overall responsibility for the volunteer contract, and should delegate a person or persons to oversee their implementation from each congregation

1.4. Boundaries

Workers and helpers must treat all children and vulnerable people with the respect and dignity befitting their age. They are strongly advised to avoid the following types of situation:

- Being alone in a room or a car.
- Praying with or counselling person alone in a closed room. (There may occasionally be the need to speak or pray with a person alone, but the adult should take reasonable precautions, for more detailed guidance in section 3 'Pastoral Care'.)
- Encouraging law breaking (under aged drinking; smoking; sex; speeding; drug taking; stealing; abuse; bullying.)

- Engaging in inappropriate relationships with those in our care, or using inappropriate communication such as unnecessary texting, e-mails, calls, social media, etc. Involvement in questionable activities such as rough/sexually provocative games.
- Giving personal care.

Those involved with children and vulnerable people should:

- Watch their language, tone of voice and body language to ensure they are not intimidating.
- Learn to control and discipline children without physical punishment, this must never be used even if they have the parent's explicit permission for this.
- Ensure that another adult is informed if a worker needs to take a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for children and vulnerable people.
- Gain parent's permission if a child is to be seen on his or her own. Another adult must be nearby and the child must know this.

Ensure that children and vulnerable person know that they can speak to an independent person in the church, or contact Childline if they need to talk to someone (see Appendix 15)

- Avoid showing favouritism to any individual.
- Not rely on just your good name to protect you.
- Not believe "It could never happen to me".

1.5. Abuse of trust

- A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or nature of the activity.
- It is unacceptable for a person in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow an abusive or sexual relationship to develop while the relationship of trust continues. A worker or helper who finds themselves developing such a relationship must discuss it with a member of the leadership team imminently.

1.6. The church leadership's expectations of a volunteer:

- Actively seeking and serving God. To love God and others.
- Regular in worship attendance and worshipful in spirit.
- Praying for children and adults in their care, as well as wider work of the church.
- Attending where possible all the planning and training events as appropriate.
- Actively promoting WCP work as a safe place.

1.7. Procedures after persistent infringements by a volunteer

The Leadership Team have responsibility to take appropriate steps in the event of any persistent infringements or breakdown in communication with a member of staff or a volunteer. The initial procedure will be a verbal expression of concern (which is recorded and dated). This is intended to support the individual and encourage them to improve, outlining what was wrong and what they need to do to improve. If the problem persists or is serious, then a formal meeting will be held, and if the Leadership Team is not happy with the result, a written formal warning can be issued (containing a time frame for improvement). In the case of persistent misconduct, a final written notice will be issued outlining the issues and consequences (removal from their position). Advice and support to be sought from Diocese safeguarding adviser to gain early support for both parties.

2. Group Leaders

2.1. Responsibilities of group leaders

The main responsibilities of group leaders are summarised here but all team members must work together to share them.

- Ensure that all team members (volunteers) have a copy of the Safeguarding Policy, understand it and act on it at all times, and ensure their 'volunteer contracts' are kept up to date.
- Lead discussion of this policy document and any updates. Keep it fresh in volunteers' minds.
- Help volunteers to be more effective by monitoring their work, discussing it with them if necessary and motivating them.
- Carry out and document risk assessments of all activities. Point out health and safety issues to the Leadership Team and other relevant persons.
- Ensuring children/vulnerable adults are returned to the care of an appropriate person. i.e parent or carer.

2.2. Training and support

It is important for everyone to take training seriously. Group leaders can identify training needs through:

The renewing of 'Volunteer Contracts'.

Pastoral care (see also appendix 8)

Meetings.

Informal conversations.

Key areas for training must include the safeguarding policy, behaviour management, anti-bullying policy, first aid and Health and Safety. Health and Safety is to include the premises, fire, access to buildings, first aid and accidents.

2.3. Staffing ratios

No child or group of children should be left unattended at any time. For meetings/events on church premises, volunteers should aim for 2 adults per group as a minimum depending on the circumstances. More helpers may be required depending on need and ability of the people attending. It is the group leader's responsibility to review and insure adequate staff requirements.

2.4. Risk assessment

Each church should have a general risk assessment of its premises included as part of its health and safety policy. This should be sufficiently detailed to cover all regular activities taking place on its premises. It is the group leader's responsibility to ensure that their activities are covered within this. For 'extra' sessions or activities – especially trips off-site – an event specific risk assessment maybe required this need to be agreed with the church leadership team prior to the activity happening. (Template can be found in appendix 27.)

2.5. Toilet.

No leader or helper should be taking a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet. If a child or vulnerable adult requests assistance, the leader should find the appropriate person (usually a parent, relative or carer) to help them with this activity.

2.6. Keeping records.

All records are to be kept in line with the WCP current GDPR policy.

The WCP must keep securely and make available to those authorised by the WCP:

- A file for each lay member of staff and volunteer who works with children or vulnerable people
- Letters and other correspondence pertaining to disclosures from the Baptist Union's Safeguarding Advisory Panel / Diocese of Oxford (as appropriate) should be kept for as long as those volunteers and employees are in a particular role for which Disclosure was obtained. After departure all that needs to be retained is a note of start and finish dates, position held and any issues which arose
- 3. A dated register of those who have been DBS cleared, for administrative purposes, such as ensuring renewals, or to

provide a quick reference. Employers' copies of DBS Disclosures are not to be kept longer than six months

- Any communication from third parties, e.g. complainants on any matter, the police or Social Services and a factual record of the actions taken.

It is essential to keep accurate records of any concerns, disclosures and allegations relating to children and vulnerable adults. Facts observed or disclosed must be accurately recorded, signed and dated. If records are being kept without the knowledge of the subject, it must be clearly recorded why this is so, for instance if there is a pattern of behaviour which needs to be monitored or third party information, such as a letter of complaint. Records of allegations must be retained including when they are unfounded together with details of investigations

These files should be kept in securely by the incumbent or the Safeguarding Advisor

Where files are kept on volunteers or employees they will be in principle entitled to see personal data on their file (subject to making a written request) but there are various statutory exceptions and also particular rules relating to third party communications. If you have concerns about whether information should be disclosed in a particular case, advice should be sought from the Baptist Union's Safeguarding Advisory Panel / Diocese of Oxford (as appropriate).

Accident and incident reports:

Everyone to be made aware of where the book or file is kept for recording accidents or incidents. Forms that have been filled out must be kept in a secure place in line with current GDPR policy.

Consent form:

Basic contact and medical information on every **person under 18 in a group** i(except occasional visitors) to be on hand at every meeting of the group. All records to be kept in a safe place. To be completed by parents or guardians and reviewed annually (see Appendix 17 **and 18**)

2.7. Young helpers

Helpers under the age of 18 cannot be considered as a second leader as they cannot get DBS clearance. Young helpers are very welcome and encouraged to lead all or part of a session but responsible for the group remain with the group leader.

2.8. Photographs of children

Photographs of children or vulnerable person may be taken but can only be published or displayed for church purposes if no child or vulnerable adult. can be identified within them. It is good practice to inform people attended the activity photo are being taken this can be done by displaying signs around the event or announcements from the leader.

2.9. Restraint

It is important that a church has a policy about the use of force to control or restrain children. All adults who help with the children's and youth work must clearly understand the strategies open to them. They must know what is acceptable and not. See the WCP Policy guidelines below.

2.9.1. Restraint Strategy

If the leaders of any group within the WCP become aware that a minor is likely to behave in a way that may require physical control or restraint, it will be sensible to plan how to respond. The planning needs to address:
Managing the child (strategies to de-escalate a conflict).

Informing the parents so that they are clear about what specific action the group leader will take.

Briefing the staff so they know exactly what action they should take.

Ensuring there will always be sufficient support if needed.

Medical advice about the safest way on holding children with specific health needs.

2.9.2. Reasonable force

Group leaders have responsibility to maintain the safety of all children in their care. Force may be used, but only as a last resort, and only in specific circumstances. This may involve using REASONABLE FORCE in the following circumstances to prevent a person from, or continuing in:

- Committing a criminal offence.
- Injuring themselves or others.
- Causing damage to property.
- Engaging in any behaviour that prevents the maintaining of good order and discipline in the group.

There is no legal definition of 'reasonable force', so in court it will always depend on all the circumstances of the case. It can only be considered reasonable if the particular incident warrants it, and the degree of force must be in proportion to the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequence it is intended to prevent. It should always be the minimum needed to achieve the required result. It will also depend upon the age, understanding and gender of the child.

2.9.3. Procedure for engaging in restraint:

Wherever practical, the adult should tell the child to stop, and what the consequences of continuing will be. The adult should attempt to continue communicating throughout the incident, keeping the voice calm and measured. Never should the impression be given that they have lost their temper.

If it seems inappropriate to intervene without more support, then remove other children who may be at risk, summon assistance from colleagues, and if necessary, phone the police.

The method for intervention may be:

- Standing between 2 children
- Holding
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Leading by the arm or hand
- Placing a hand in the centre of the back and pushing

Do not act in a way that might cause injury, such as:

- Holding by the neck
- Slapping or kicking
- Twisting a limb
- Tripping
- Holding or pulling ear or hair
- Holding a child face down to the ground.

2.9.4. Recording an incident

After an incident, the following details must be recorded using form in Appendix 14

- Name(s) of those involved, and where incident took place.
- Names of staff and other witnesses.
- The reason that force was necessary.
- How the incident began, including behaviour, what was said by each party, steps taken to diffuse the situation, degree of force used, how that was applied, and for how long.
- Response of child.
- Details of any injuries suffered or damage to property.
- Next steps (talking to parents, getting advice from other agencies as appropriate).

3. Pastoral Care

3.1. Procedures for pastoral contact

Pastoral support is an important part of the WCP ministries. It is important that it is carried out in a way that doesn't lead to dependency or abuse. See Appendix 9 for details on this.

3.2. Code of practice for pastoral care:

- Always meet in an open area where others are around but not too close. If the session is conducted at one of the churches, then another adult should be on site. If in a home, then at least one other person should be present in the house.
- In exceptional circumstances, if a person is distressed and more privacy is needed, use a separate room after telling another adult about the arrangements. Make sure that the person knows where the nearest adult is.
- It is best if women advise females, and men advise males.
- Keep a record of who is spoken to (not the content unless agreed with the person) in case follow up is needed. Sign, date and time the notes and keep them in a designated safe place.
- If a person is distressed they should be entrusted to another adult at the end of the session.
- If a situation is encountered where the listener feels uncomfortable, they should speak to a supervisor as soon as possible.

3.3. Professional confidentiality

The guiding principle is: NEVER promise to keep anything confidential. Transparency among those who need to know; confidentiality outside this group. No hard and fast guidance can be given but the following people should normally be considered as having a legitimate need to know:

- Incumbent/Senior Minister
- WCP Safeguarding Officer
- Church wardens
- Stewards

The Baptist Union's Safeguarding Adviser / Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Adviser (as appropriate) should also be informed. The WCP will need to approve activities carried out in the church's name and must be informed of situations of possible risk though without naming individuals.

Not all information is confidential. Confidential information is information which is not already lawfully in the public domain; the information must not be useless or trivial; and the information must have been given in circumstances where the confidant would reasonably have understood that what was said was confidential. Confidentiality is only breached where the sharing of confidential information is not authorised by the person who provided it, or by the person to whom it relates. The first option before sharing information should therefore be to seek consent, if appropriate.

3.4. Information sharing

Explain openly and honestly at the outset what information will or could be shared, and why, and seek agreement. While effect should be made to obtain consent from the children or families and vulnerable person lack of consent will not stop the sharing of information. If in your judgement there is sufficient need to share the information e.g. where a child, vulnerable person or others are at risk or significant harm. In all cases the person's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether to share information about them. It will normally not be appropriate to inform alleged perpetrators of abuse at the time when an allegation is made about them. Seek advice when in doubt. Ensure information is accurate, up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, shared only with those who need to see it, and shared securely. Always record the reasons for your decision, whether it is to share or not.

The key factor in deciding whether or not to share confidential information without consent is 'proportionality' – i.e. is the proposed sharing a proportionate response to the need to protect the public interest in question? You must weigh up what might happen if the information is shared against what might happen if it

is not, and make a decision based on a reasonable judgement. In sharing information the aim should be transparency and openness among those who need to know and confidentiality outside it. Identifying information should not be shared with spouses or partners.

Where you do not, for whatever reason, have consent to share confidential information, you may still lawfully share it provided that this can be justified in the public interest

3.5. Consent

There are some circumstances where it is not appropriate to seek consent to share information, for example where to do so would:

- place a child at increased risk of significant harm; or
- place an adult at risk of serious harm; or
- prejudice the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime; or
- lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm

Consent must be 'informed'. This means that the person giving consent must be able to understand why information needs to be shared, who will see the information, the purpose to which it will be put and the purpose of sharing it. Competence to give consent is always a matter of judgement. If you are in any doubt about whether a children or vulnerable person is competent to give consent, then seek advice from the Baptist Union's Safeguarding Adviser / Diocese of Oxford Safeguarding Adviser (as appropriate). It is good practice always to obtain explicit consent, preferably in writing.

4. Responsibilities of the church leadership

4.1. Oversight and monitoring

In order to ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is being carried out, the following questions must be asked of group leaders by the Safeguarding Officer each year:

- Do all volunteers have a copy of the WCP's Safeguarding Policy?
- Do all groups have at every meeting an up-to-date Registration Form for every child?
- Has the Safeguarding Policy been on the agenda of every formal meeting of the last year, so that volunteers feel free to discuss any matter contained in it?
- Is the practice of each group 'safe'?

4.2. Informing people

Key elements of the Safeguarding Policy should be displayed in an obvious place. This will act both as a deterrent to those looking to harm children and vulnerable people and will also provide information. Other key information will be displayed in other groups as leaders see fit.

4.3. Welcoming offenders

When someone attending our churches or who wishes to attend is a known or registered child offender, friendship is to be extended but a representative of the Leadership Team will meet the individual and discuss the boundaries within which that the person will be expected to keep. An appropriate contract governing the behaviour of the offender when involved in church activities will need to be drawn up and enforced. The Diocesan/BU Safeguarding Adviser will need to be involved in this process, including the opportunity to review and approve any contract.

4.4. Review of the Safeguarding Policy

A review of the Safeguarding Policy is to take place each year, and then submitted to the Leadership Team for agreement before being proposed for adoption by the churches at each of their AGMs. Current legislation and advice must be adhered to in the interests of providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults who attend groups based at any of the churches.

4.5. Trips, Events and residentials

The WCP leadership team must:

- Ensure training needs have been addressed for all adults
- Obtain consent form for the specific activities (Appendix 18) from person with parental responsibility for each child. The regular consent form will not cover this activity. (Appendix 17)
- Provide emergency telephone contact for the duration of the event to parents
- Maintain proper insurance cover
- Have in place procedures to monitor and review safety during off site visits and activities, including a risk assessment if required.
- Ensure adequate safeguarding procedures are in place
- Ensure all necessary actions are completed before the trip begins
- Ensure adequate first aid provision will be available

4.6. Equal opportunities

The Leadership Team acknowledges the importance of equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice, and will strive to role model this through open and honest decision making processes and equality of opportunity (Appendix 1).

5. SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Diocese of Oxford/ Central Baptist Union takes seriously complaints about our work and quality of service in all aspects of safeguarding. We view complaints as an opportunity to learn more about what is happening at parish level and improve the way we handle any safeguarding concerns as part of our continuous support to the parishes. If you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please follow the process below.

Please note, however, this procedure is not intended to provide a process for the resolution of safeguarding concerns or allegations. These should be reported in the usual way to your incumbent, Area Dean, Archdeacon, Bishop, Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) or another appropriate person who will refer your concern/s to the Head of Safeguarding within 24 hours, seeking guidance in line with the House of Bishops' Practice Guidance.

OUR COMMITMENT The Diocese of Oxford aims to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are dealt with professionally, in line with national legislation and all Church of England Safeguarding Practice Guidance

We are committed to doing all that we reasonably can, to promote and maintain a safer Church by following safer practices and imbedding an open and transparent culture within our diocese. Based on our belief that safeguarding is everybody's business, we work alongside our parishes to ensure that safer recruitment practices are in place and all involved are aware of their responsibilities through regular training for all Church Officers, area meetings with parish safeguarding officers and other awareness raising, monitoring and peer learning activities.

We are also committed to responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation ensuring that the needs of the victims and survivors of abuse are at the core of our response, whilst treating those who are the subject of safeguarding concerns with dignity and respect. Providing pastoral care and support as well as communicating regularly and clearly with all involved enhances our handling of the concerns as does our attention to any potential risk assessments for those who may pose a present risk to others.

We believe that our churches are open to all including those who might have been subject/s of safeguarding concerns or have committed offences in the past. In order to mitigate against any potential risk to others, we work with parishes to have in place sensible safeguarding agreements with those individuals at all times so whilst they are exercising their right to worshipping, the church remains a safe place for all. Anyone who is not prepared to enter into such an agreement, unfortunately, will not be able to worship in our churches.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of a safeguarding concern or allegation, please follow the procedure below.

AIMS OF THE PROCEDURE

The procedure outlined below aims to:

- provide a fair procedure which is clear and easy to use.
- be open and transparent about how complaints will be dealt with.
- ensure that all complaints are investigated appropriately.
- ensure that complaints are dealt with in a way that is timely and proportionate.
- maintain confidentiality at all times.
- ensure that lessons are learned so that safeguarding processes in the Diocese continuously improve.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Complaints

1. For the purposes of this procedure, a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern about the way in which a safeguarding matter has been dealt with by a Church Officer in the Diocese of Oxford.
2. The complainant must be the person directly affected by the issue or an interested party to the person affected (e.g. a close relative), and not an unrelated third party or wider observer.
3. All information will be handled sensitively, sharing information on a 'need to know' basis only and with due regard to our obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations.
4. The overall responsibility for this procedure and its implementation lies with the Diocese of Oxford, through the Diocesan Safeguarding Panel (DSP), who will receive an annual report of any concerns received, the outcomes and lessons learned.

Whistleblowing

5. Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work, e.g. an officer of the diocese, breaking or proposing to break the law, acting dishonestly in any way, or otherwise seeking to cover up any wrongdoing.

6. Such matters should be reported to the Diocesan Secretary or the Director of People and will be dealt with under the Whistleblowing Policy.

7. The Diocese has separate whistleblowing policies for clergy and employees of Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance (ODBF). Any whistleblowing that relates to parish employees and volunteers should be addressed to that parish in line with their local procedures.

8. Protect (previously named Public Concern at Work) operates a confidential advice line that covers protection of whistle-blowers. Their contact details are:

Advice Line: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/contact-protect-advice-line/> and website: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>.

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue that is being complained about or at the closest level to the person/organisation being complained about. For example, an issue relating to employees of a parish, would be handled by following the parish complaints or safeguarding policy and procedure.

If your complaint relates to the conduct of a member of the clergy, then it would be appropriate to make use of the initial stage of the diocesan complaints procedure Policies, Procedures and Safeguarding and as appropriate, use the Clergy Discipline Measure, further details of which can be found at Clergy Discipline.

We expect that all reasonable efforts will have been made to resolve a concern swiftly and informally if possible and appropriate. However, we appreciate that this may not always be possible or appropriate and therefore have the following process in order to deal formally with all complaints raised.

Stage One

In the first instance, the complaint about the handling of a safeguarding matter should be made to the Head of Safeguarding. If the complaint concerns the actions of the Head of Safeguarding in handling a safeguarding matter or other inappropriate action/s, then the complaint should be addressed to the Director of People who is also the Complaints Manager for the Diocese of Oxford. This can be in writing (letter or email) or by telephone. All telephone conversations will be recorded in writing and shared with the complainant to ensure accuracy.

You may need to be prepared to share detailed information on:

- What the complaint is about
- The full name of the person who is complaining
- The desired outcome
- Contact information of the complainant

The Head of Safeguarding will confirm that they have received the complaint and that they will respond fully within two working weeks.

A copy of this complaints' procedure will be supplied.

Within this timescale, the Head of Safeguarding will do the following:

- make all necessary and appropriate enquiries to establish the substance of the complaint and any attempts already made to resolve the matter informally.
- initiate further discussions or meetings with the complainant, if required, to fully understand their issue, seek clarity and be clear on what would constitute a resolution for them.
- speak with any other parties such as may be required in order to ensure that they have the necessary information available to respond to the complaint.

If it is not possible to respond to your concerns within two working weeks, they will advise you when a response can be expected.

If necessary, they will determine subsequent actions and where necessary, arrange mediation between the parties concerned.

It is hoped that an acceptable resolution will be found and that the complaint can be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction at this level.

Stage Two

If the complainant is not happy with the proposed resolution of their complaint at stage one, then within two weeks of being notified of the proposed resolution they must inform the Director of People (when Director of People has been involved in stage one, then the complainant must inform the Diocesan Secretary) of their decision to initiate stage two.

The Director of People (or the Diocesan Secretary when relevant) will:

- acknowledge receipt of the stage two complaint;
- confirm when a response can be expected.
- review all documentation and actions taken. Discuss with the complainant the situation from their perspective and why resolution could not be reached. All conversations will be recorded in writing and shared with the complainant for accuracy.
- discuss with the Head of Safeguarding and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (where appropriate) and consider what an appropriate response and resolution might be, including the appointment of an independent investigator to review the complaint.
- where necessary, take advice from the Diocesan Registrar and other legal and other professional advice such as may be required. The reply to the complainant within four weeks, where possible, will inform them of the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action to be taken as a result of the complaint.

The aim will be for complainants to receive a definitive reply within four working weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a further letter or email will be sent indicating when a full reply will be given;

This will be the final stage.

Monitoring complaints and lessons learned

The Director of People will ensure that a log is kept of all safeguarding complaints received, the timescale of the resolution process and the lessons learned. The number, type and outcome of any complaints will be reported once a year to the DSP so that any trends or further actions deemed necessary can be considered.

Referral of serious concerns to the Charity Commission

If you do not feel that the resolution of your complaint has resolved your concerns and the issues of concern pose a risk of significant harm to the beneficiaries, assets, services or reputation of the Diocese of Oxford, you may refer your complaint to the Charity Commission. Information about the kind of complaints the Commission will consider can be found on their website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-charities>.

Appendix 1 - The Walton Churches Partnership Policy Statement on Equal Opportunities

As an organisation using the DBS to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the WCP undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.

Disclosures are required for all candidates undertaking certain roles with children and vulnerable adults. Whether to require a disclosure is purely a function of the role and not the person applying.

It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information received.

We welcome people to serve the church on the basis of the right mix of talent, skills, character, potential and call of God, including those with criminal records.

A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to a person serving with children and vulnerable adults. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

In order to protect the confidentiality of those with criminal records, we will access Disclosures through the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding and Due Diligence checks. We invite the Baptist Union's Safeguarding Advisory Panel and/or the Diocese of Oxford to advise us in the appointment process when necessary, and we agree to act on their advice for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Appendix 2 - The Walton Churches Partnership Information for Volunteers

This sheet gives you information about a voluntary position working with children or vulnerable person. It is designed to help you consider whether you would be able to fulfil this role and to give you important information about the appointment process.

This church values its children and vulnerable people and we seek to ensure that those who work with them are suited for the role and are called by God because of this we also value those who give their time to work with children and vulnerable people. A thoughtful appointment process expresses our valuing of the children and vulnerable adults of our church and also expresses our valuing of those who work with them.

Description of position

Job title

Brief job profile

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Time

commitment Day of week From to.....

*weekly/fortnightly/monthly *Other:

.....
.....
.....

*Planning will be required which may take approximately hours per week

*You would also be expected to attend the following meetings:
.....

Line management You would be responsible to

You would be responsible for

All appointments are made initially for a probationary period of six months after which time the appointment will be reviewed and either confirmed or terminated.

Information for Volunteers

Appointment process

If you wish to be considered for the position the procedure will be as follows:

- You will be asked to fill in an application form and give the names of two referees.
- The references will be taken up.
- You will be interviewed. In the interview we will explore with you your gifts and your Christian experience; we will talk with you about any previous experience you have had in caring for children; and we will ask about your reasons for wanting to take on this role at this time.
- If, following the interview, it is decided to invite you to work with children, in order to offer the appropriate protection to children we will need to ensure that there is nothing in your past that indicates that you might pose a risk to their safety. To this end, you will be asked to apply for a DBS - Enhanced Disclosure.

- Once a satisfactory check is received you will be asked to sign a volunteer agreement and be offered training

Two points should be made:

First, we do not wish to prevent all people with past criminal convictions from working with children and vulnerable people in the church. Only relevant convictions will be taken into account – that is, convictions that suggest that a person might be a risk to children's or vulnerable people safety.

Secondly, the information will be treated in the strictest confidence. Indeed, if you are asked to apply for a Standard or Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS, no-one in this church will have access to the information. The application for the Disclosure will be processed by Due Diligence Checking. (DDC) If your criminal record reveals nothing of concern, the DDC will inform the church that you are 'not unsuitable' to work with children.

If there is any information that may give cause for concern, the DDC will pass the information on to a Baptist Union panel of specialists who will assess the information on the Disclosure. This panel is assisting the church in its appointment procedures. The panel will not disclose detailed information to the church but will advise the church whether or not you are unsuitable for the position in question. If the BU panel is involved you will be contacted before any advice is given to the church.

This church has an equal opportunities policy which covers the appointment of ex-offenders, which you can see on request. The DBS also has a Code of Practice which will also be made available to you on request.

Appendix 3 - Confidential Declaration Form



To be completed by those wishing to work with children or vulnerable people. The Confidential Declaration Form applies to clergy, employees, ordains, other adults and volunteers who are likely to be in regular contact with children or vulnerable people. This form is strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of law, will be seen only by those responsible for the appointment and, when appropriate, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or someone in a similar position. All forms will be kept securely under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. If you answer yes to any question, please give details, on a separate sheet if necessary, giving the number of the question you are answering.

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence (including any spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)?

YES NO

Note: Declare all convictions, cautions, warnings or reprimands however old or whether you are at present under investigation by the police.

Motoring offences that cannot be dealt with by a prison sentence need not be declared. Posts where the person is working or coming into regular contact with children or vulnerable people are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Convictions obtained abroad must be declared as well as those from the UK.

Have you ever been cautioned by the police, given a reprimand or warning or bound over to keep the peace?

YES NO

Are you at present under investigation by the police or an employer for any offence?

YES NO

Has your name ever been placed on the Protection of Children Act (POCA), List 99, the Protection of Vulnerable Adults List (POVA) or the barred lists maintained by the Independent Safeguarding Authority, barring you from work with children or vulnerable people?

YES NO

Has a family court ever made a finding of fact in relation to you, that you have caused significant harm* to a child or vulnerable person, or has any such court made an order against you on the basis of any finding or allegation that any child or vulnerable adult was at risk of significant harm* from you?

YES NO

Has your conduct ever caused or been likely to cause significant harm to a child or vulnerable person, or put a child or vulnerable adult at risk of significant harm*?

YES NO

Note: Make any statement you wish regarding any incident you wish to declare.

To your knowledge, has it ever been alleged that your conduct has resulted in any of those things?

YES NO

If yes, please give details, including the date(s) and nature of the conduct, or alleged conduct, and whether you were dismissed, disciplined, moved to other work or resigned from any paid or voluntary work as a result.

Note: Declare any complaints or allegations made against you, however long ago, that you have significantly harmed a child or vulnerable adult. Any allegation or complaint investigated by the police, Children's Services, an employer or voluntary body must be declared. Checks will be made with the relevant authorities.

Has a child in your care or for whom you have or had parental responsibility ever been removed from your care, been placed on the Child Protection Register or been the subject of child protection planning, a care order, a supervision order, a child assessment order or an emergency protection order under the Children Act 1989, or a similar order under other legislation?

YES NO

Note: All these matters will be checked with the relevant authorities.

* Significant harm involves serious ill-treatment of any kind including neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or impairment of physical or mental health development. It will also include matters such as a sexual relationship with a child or vulnerable adult for whom you had pastoral responsibility or were in a position of trust.

Declaration and Undertaking

I declare that the above information (and that on any attached sheets) is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I undertake to inform the relevant church authorities promptly should any convictions, court orders or allegations concerning matters of this kind arise.

Signed.....

Full name.....

Date..... Date of Birth

Address.....

.....

Please return completed form to:

Appendix 4 – Volunteer Contract



Name of worker
We welcome you as

You are joining a team which, together with the whole church, commits itself to the care and nurture of children or vulnerable adults. In behalf of the members of this church, we undertake to support you and your work, by prayer, by our interest and by providing resources and training.

The person who will give you primary support is:
She/he is there to discuss any matters of concern you may have.

The responsibilities of your role are:
.....
.....
.....
.....

Line management: You would be responsible to

You would be responsible for

Once a year you will have the opportunity to talk about your work, and, if you wish to continue, we will discuss your development and training as appropriate.
All appointments are made initially for a probationary period of six months after which time the appointment will be confirmed.
Working in this role is a responsibility, but it also bring great rewards. We hope you will enjoy your work.

Signed Minister

Signed Safeguarding Officer

Date

Declaration (to be completed by the worker)

I understand the nature of the work I am to do.
I have read the church’s guidelines for safeguarding children and vulnerable people. I understand that it is my duty to protect the children and vulnerable person with whom I come into contact. I agree to abide by the policies and procedures agreed by the church for the protection of children and vulnerable person.

Signed Date

One copy of this form should be retained by the worker and one by the church. If the person is appointed to a new role, or if the job description changes a new form should be completed.

Appendix 5 - DBS Procedure

DBS Disclosures must be obtained for those who work with children or vulnerable people and who are eligible for them. The WCP needs to register with an appropriate Registered Body which can provide this service. The WCP use DDC. If in doubt whether a position requires a DBS, consult the DBS eligibility checklist. DBSs should be renewed every five years.

All positions where a DBS Disclosure is recommended, receipt of a 'positive' or 'blemished' Disclosure, i.e. one which contains information relating to offending or other relevant matters, may lead to a risk assessment. However, a disregard will normally be applied when the offences disclosed are old and minor and where there are no other matters of concern. When a risk assessment is needed, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or Baptist Union Safeguarding Adviser will contact the WCP Recruiter and provide an Information sheet on positive DBS Disclosures. If any person has a complaint about the handling of their DBS Disclosure by the Diocese or the use of the information in it they should address their complaint to the incumbent, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, the Bishop or CBA Regional Minister. An appeal process is available for those who object to the recommendations arising from a risk assessment.

The Diocesan DBS Administrator advises parishes on DBS processes and Diocesan policy in relation to DBS matters.

Those eligible for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosures:

Holders of the following church-related roles will need to obtain DBS Disclosures. Their job or role description needs to be checked for inclusion of work which qualifies as regulated activity or a regulated position.

Those who obtain their DBS Disclosures through the appropriate Church hierarchies

All clergy (stipendiary and non-stipendiary, including all chaplains and retired clergy with a licence), Licensed Lay Ministers

Commissioned Lay Workers, including lay ministers, youth, children and family workers; again, these obtain their DBS Disclosures through the appropriate Church hierarchies

Those who obtain their DBS Disclosures through the Partnership/Parish:

Pastoral Assistants, where the role specifies relevant work

Commissioned and Non-Commissioned Lay Workers, including lay ministers, youth, children and family workers
Musical Directors, Organists, Choir leaders, where the activity includes children

All Tower Captains, Ringing Masters and Adult Ringers who train or teach children (under 18)

Youth Club (for those under 18) leaders

Sunday School (for those under 18) leaders

Children's advocates and children's officers

Leaders and Assistant Leaders of Church Parent and Toddler Groups

The PCC's Safeguarding Officer

PCC-approved Home Visitors for schemes that are wholly or mainly for families with children or for vulnerable adults

Leaders, helpers and drivers for PCC-approved luncheon clubs or other community activities that are for children or wholly or mainly for vulnerable adults

Appendix 6 – DBS Request Information



DBS Request information

Thank you for agreeing to work with children or/and vulnerable adults within the partnership.

All adults working with vulnerable adults and children require a DBS check to be completed.

For this check to be completed, please complete the slip below, you would then receive an email requesting identification document details to be entered, which I would then need to verify (I will contact you to arrange this).

Following this, the process takes about a week to complete.

Should there be any issues or queries, please contact me to discuss before providing your details.

My Email is keziahsis@yahoo.co.uk or you can text/call me on 07809713354 (I work long days so best to email or text in the first instance)

Rachael Jenkins
Safeguarding Officer

DBS Request Form

*Title: _____

*Forename: _____

Middle: _____

*Surname: _____

*Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY) _____/_____/_____

*Contact telephone number: _____

*Email: _____

Handout For Applicants Using The Online Process

What Information do I Need?

1. Your current full name and address
2. Any other names you have used, along with the dates you started and stopped using them
3. A full and continuous address history for the past 5 years, including UK postcodes, where applicable
4. Your passport details, if you have one
5. Your UK driving licence details, if you have one
6. Your UK National Insurance Number, if you have one

How Many Documents do I Need?

The application process requires that you produce a number of original documents to support the data you will provide on the online application form. All documents must be in your current name (excluding UK Birth Certificate). At least one document must show your current address and one must show your date of birth.

The acceptable documents are divided into the 3 groups shown below.

If you own a valid Passport and/or UK photocard drivers licence, you must produce these, plus 1 or 2 additional documents from any group to make a minimum of 3 documents in total for a Route 1 Application.

If you do not own a valid Passport, UK/EU photocard Drivers Licence, original UK Birth Certificate, Adoption Certificate or a Biometric Residence Permit and you are an EEA or UK Citizen, then you can proceed with a Route 2 application. This will require 1 document from Group 2a PLUS 2 other documents from either Group 2a or 2b and consent to DDC undertaking an Identity Validation Check with Experian Ltd.

UK and EEA citizens who cannot produce the required documentation and non-EEA citizens who cannot produce a Group 1 document will need to apply using the DBS's paper application form and attend a local police station to have their fingerprints taken.

How Are The Documents Grouped?

Group 1 Documents Group

- Any current and valid Passport • UK Biometric Residence Permit • Current EU/UK Photocard Driving Licence
- UK Birth Certificate (issued with 12 months of DOB) • UK Adoption Certificate

2a Documents Group

- Current, non-EU Photocard Driving Licence • UK/EU Paper Drivers Licence • UK Birth Certificate (issued 12+ months after DOB) • UK Marriage / Civil Partnership Certificate • HM Forces ID Card • UK Firearms Licence

2b Documents

- UK/EEA mortgage statement* • UK/EEA bank or building society statement** • UK bank account opening letter** • UK/EEA credit card statement** • UK financial statement (eg pension)* • P45* or P60* • Council tax statement* • Valid UK work permit or visa • Valid letter of employer sponsorship • Utility bill** • Benefit statement**
- Government correspondence (eg HMRC)** • Valid EU National ID card • Valid 'PASS' card • Letter from Headteacher or Principal (16 to 19 year olds only)

* Issued in the last 12 months ** Issued in the last 3 months

For more information, visit www.ddc.uk.net, or email contact@ddc.uk.net

Appendix 7 - Pastoral Care and Support For Volunteers

Support for volunteers

Once recruited as volunteers, people need to feel supported and valued in the work they are doing, and encouraged to develop their skills. They also need to feel able to stop when they are ready and, if appropriate, move on. Volunteers who are affirmed in the time and talents they are offering are much more likely to give long-term commitment to the organisation or project than those who feel taken for granted.

Tending to the needs of volunteers under you involves keeping communication channels open, staying in touch with their work-related and, where appropriate, personal needs, and providing them with practical support for the work in hand.

For most of the time, the volunteers will only require you to know and understand their needs, and to be available to them when they need help of any kind. Volunteers who are badly organised, taken for granted, unclear about what is required of them, never thanked, not given the equipment they need or offered their expenses, will soon vote with their feet!

Here are some of the ways care and support can be managed:

- Frequent Contact
- Support means providing volunteers with the time and opportunity to talk to the Sunday club leader, minister or pastoral key worker simply as a friend. At other times they may need to talk to their coworkers about matters which concern them, for example:
 - Any problems they may be experiencing
 - What they hope to gain by being involved in the project/work
 - Their perception of the project's effectiveness in its service to the church both generally and individually
 - What is worrying them
 - What they find satisfying about the work
 - What more could they do for themselves, the organisation and its users
 - How long they wish to continue in the work
 - Personal matters that are of concern to them (where appropriate additional pastoral support may be needed)
 - Ideas or plans for the future
 - Any matters not directly connected to the project/work but which are of importance to that individual
 - Training opportunities

'Small talk' plays an essential part in pastoral care

There are all kinds of support methods available, ranging from the informal to the structured. We aim to provide two or three of the following:

- Regular after services by the minister, pastoral key worker and Sunday club leader. Programmed one-to-one meetings between the volunteer and the leader once a term.
- An 'open door' policy by the Sunday club leader and pastoral key worker, allowing volunteers to call on him/her when they have need (set boundaries by perhaps publicising a list of hours when you can be contacted).
- Regular meetings of all staff and volunteers of the project/area of work, to chat/let off steam/enjoy time out together – all valuable for team building.
- Occasional meetings of volunteers with a third party, without the leader present.
- Occasional social events – a way of rewarding everyone's hard work i.e. a party, lunch together, an away day.
- Prayer support - '*prayer achieves the impossible*'

The encouraging and motivating effects of personal prayer support cannot be over stated. Prayer fuels our service to God and can be arranged through on a one-to-one basis, in house groups, team meetings (another means of building the team), and on a larger scale by praying for the team in services before they leave.

Thanks and Reward – volunteer Sunday

'Encouragement costs so little to give but is priceless to those who receive it'

Giving public recognition to the work of a project can not only serve to raise the profile of its work but also provide the means to congratulate the workers on their achievements and encourage them in their faithful service.

Managing Volunteers

Management support can combat the feeling of isolation of some volunteer tasks, and will help the volunteers to feel valued, accepted, and satisfied with what they are doing.

A volunteer is undertaking tasks voluntarily, not because of economic necessity and it is important that these tasks do not become seen as 'just another job'. You have got to 'release' the volunteer's commitment and imagination. The most compelling reason for volunteers staying with a Project is a feeling of belonging and of making a recognised contribution. Loyalty, interest and effort come from a sense of common purpose and clarity of expectations.

On the job support must be designed to provide active assistance for the volunteer.

The amount of management support given must be appropriate to the experience of the volunteer and the nature of the tasks. It is not primarily a corrective measure. Many volunteers will be well qualified to undertake the tasks but will still need periodic consultation.

Good management support will ensure that the Volunteers know what is expected – but will not insist on the precise way the job is to be done!

Affirming Volunteers

There is a price to be paid by anyone who involves volunteers. You can never please all of the people all of the time.

Language to use with volunteers:

The *six* most important words..... "I admit I made a mistake"

The *five* most important words..... "You did a good job"

The *four* most important words..... "What do you think?"

The *three* most important words..... "If you wish"

The *two* most important words..... "Thank you"

The *most* important word..... "We"

The *least* important word..... "I"

"To each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned itto prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4: 7, 12, 13)

Appendix 8 - Summary of the Principles of Ethical Conduct for Work with Children and Vulnerable People.

Ethical principles

Treat people with respect, valuing each individual and avoiding negative discrimination.

Respect and promote people's rights to make their own decisions and choices, unless the welfare or legitimate interests of themselves or others are seriously threatened.

Promote and ensure the welfare and safety of people, while permitting them to learn through undertaking challenging educational activities.

Contribute towards the promotion of social justice for people and in society generally, through encouraging respect for difference and diversity and challenging discrimination.

Professional principles

Recognise the boundaries between personal and professional life and be aware of the need to balance a caring and supportive relationship with people with appropriate professional distance.

Recognise the need to be accountable to people, their parents or guardians, colleagues, wider society and others with a relevant interest in the work, and these accountabilities may be in conflict.

Develop and maintain the required skills and competence to do the job.

Work for conditions in employing agencies where these principles are discussed, evaluated and upheld.

National Youth Agency Statement of Principles. December 2004

Appendix 9 - Special Needs Policy

Statement of intent

The groups in the churches at the WCP are inclusive, and everyone with special needs are welcomed. Wherever possible **all** people will be given the opportunity to participate in the same activities, having an equal part in the groups. Group leaders have the responsibility to ensure activities are inclusive and encourage antidiscriminatory practice, through adapting the setting, activities and opportunities to suit those in their care. To encourage anti-discriminatory attitudes, differences need to be recognised and accommodated.

What is required of parents / carers:

- Full details of the special needs together with any dietary requirements are given to the group leaders to ensure adequate staffing / activities / snacks are available.
- Liaison between parents/carers with group leaders or a key worker will regularly take place.
- Where appropriate, the leader and parents/carer will write a care plan and keep accurate reports of a child's progress.

Whilst the Church would like to accept all children with special needs, in line with Equal Opportunities concerning a child with Special Needs or disabilities, a timed, planned entry may be required in order to accommodate their needs in some activities and groups. This would of course be subject to appropriate staffing, premises, equipment and insurance being available.

The responsibilities of groups at the churches of the WCP:

- We are aware that some children and vulnerable people with varying special needs and disabilities sometimes require additional support.
- The group leaders will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing of all policies and procedures.
- Group leaders should allocate a Key Worker when necessary, who will work with the leader to ensure that the individual needs are met. Staff training will be provided as appropriate.
- Group leaders should take into account each person's age and stage of development, gender, ethnicity, home language and any disability.
- If specific needs are mentioned, further advice will be sought from parents / carers / other professionals.
- Flexibility is needed in adapting activities to meet the needs of those with disabilities.
- A list will be kept in an accessible place regarding children's food allergies and hypersensitivities. The WCP is committed to creating unrestricted and easy access to premises through appropriate building construction.
- Parents, children, staff and visitors to the churches of the WCP should be able to access the premises with the minimum of difficulty - through attention to signage and decoration, the width and positioning of entry, exit points and pathways, where ramps will be introduced as opposed to stairs.

Appendix 10 - Anti-bullying Policy

Statement of intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all, so they can meet in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in Children and Vulnerable People work. If bullying does occur, all children should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* group. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it to the leadership.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding things, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber: All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse.
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. People who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All paid staff, volunteers, children, and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All paid staff and volunteers should know what the policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All children and parents should know what the policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a church we take bullying seriously. Children, vulnerable people, staff, volunteers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. ➤ Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

Bullying may take place in school, in the family home, or in a church group. A person may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Everyone should be aware of these possible signs:

- A person is frightened of walking to or from the group
- Doesn't want to go on the school / public bus;
- begs to be driven to school
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic); begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence; starts stammering attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares; feels ill in the morning begins to do poorly in school work
- Has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully); has dinner or other monies continually
- "lost"; comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen) has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable; is bullying other children or siblings stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile; is nervous & jumpy when a message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Procedures

- Report bullying incidents to person in overall charge of session
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
- Attempts will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the children / vulnerable person will be reconciled
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Prevention

These may include:

- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters

Appendix 11 - Behaviour policy

We value each individual. The intention is to provide every person with the opportunity to reach their full potential in a safe environment which encourages co-operation, understanding and tolerance.

We want to:

- Value the individual, and help them value themselves and others.
- Develop in everyone a sense of self discipline and an acceptance of responsibility for their own actions, and develop an awareness of and adherence to acceptable and appropriate behaviour, thus creating a safe environment.
- Empower staff to determine and request appropriate behaviour from everyone.
- Ensure good behaviour is recognized and rewarded; that the policy is fully understood; and it is consistently implemented.

Code of Conduct:

- Care for each other
- Tell the truth
- Be responsible for all our actions
- Always try our best in everything we do
- Take part
- Make sure that the group is a happy place

Unacceptable behaviour:

We divide unacceptable behaviour into three broad bands:

Level one: Behaviour that can be effectively managed by the volunteer / staff- e.g. not on task, not taking instruction, answering back, interruption, minor unsafe behaviour, disrupting another child, chatting at inappropriate moments.

Responses: discussion with the person. The look!

Level two: Behaviour that is not so easily managed (may involve parents) – e.g. verbal bullying, threatening behaviour, isolated acts of violence towards objects.

Responses: Loss of privileges/choice of activity. Sharing of information with other staff. “Time out” in quiet place. Behaviour contract.

Level three: very serious behaviour. Formal involvement of staff and parents – e.g. major disruption of activity, physical violence towards people, abusive / threatening behaviour towards staff, dangerous refusal to obey instruction, leaving without consent.

Responses: Parents / staff informed immediately. Action plan agreed involving a member of the Leadership Team and parents in formal discussion. “Time out” and child has formal chat with staff member

Appendix 12 - What to do in incidents of disclosure or suspected abuse

We recognise that **disclosures** (i.e. when a specific allegation of abuse is made against a named individual) and **suspicion** (i.e. when concern is expressed about abuse that may have taken place or be in prospect) should always be investigated and acted upon swiftly, making the welfare of children the paramount consideration.

Receive

Listen to the person and accept what he or she says. Be very careful not to show shock or distaste. Stay calm and take what is said seriously. Be careful not to burden them with guilt (children rarely lie about abuse).

Reassure

Tell the person that they have done the right thing in telling you. Be honest and don't make promises that you can't keep – don't say "Everything will be ok" or "I won't tell anyone". Tell them they are not to blame and acknowledge how hard it must have been for them to tell you. Empathise but don't tell them what they should be feeling.

Respond

Accept the details as they are given and do not interrogate the person for full details. Ask open questions like "Anything else to tell me?" "Yes?" or "And?" Avoid leading questions like "What did she do next?" or "Did he touch your private parts?" as these sorts of questions may invalidate the evidence in any prosecution. Do not criticise the accused because the child may love them and reconciliation may be possible. Do not ask the child to repeat everything to another member of the team, explain what you have to do next and to whom you have to talk.

Record

Make notes at the time and write them up as soon as possible. Do not destroy your original notes as they may be required in court. Record the date, time and place, any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the actual words used by the person. Be objective in your recording and include statements and observable things. Omit your interpretations and assumptions.

Support

Provide the level of support requested by the person – this may mean letting go and accepting that your responsibility has ended once the appropriate people have been informed, or it may mean giving support throughout the process of investigation and afterwards.

Report

You may need to take immediate action. Consult your co-workers on the spot. You report concerns as soon as possible to either the safeguarding officer or minister, who will then refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. He or she may also be required by conditions of the church insurance policy to immediately inform the insurance company. This is the normal course of action and should be followed in all but exceptional circumstances.

If suspicions in any way involve one or more of the representatives you should report the matter to one of the other representatives. It is also the right of any individual, as a citizen, to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies, social services or police either at first or if they feel that the representatives have not responded appropriately to their concerns.

Social Services

If you believe that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, then you should always talk to Children's Services.

Make it clear that you are making a Safeguarding Referral

- During office hours: 9-5 Mon-Fri contact the **MASH on 01908 253169**
- Out of office hours (during evenings and weekends) contact the **Emergency Social Work Team on 01908 265545.**
- Alternatively, you can contact Social Services by email on info@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Police

Contact Milton Keynes Police Station on 0845 8 505 505 or via 101. If there is an immediate threat to life please call 999

NSPCC

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Child Protection Helpline, a free, 24hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

Tel: 0808 800 5000

CHILDLINE

For support and advice, calling free on **0800 1111**. ChildLine is a private and confidential service.

Appendix 13 - Incident Report Form

[This report form is for the purpose of keeping a record of reports made to the Responsible Person. As well as this report, you should make a full factual written record of your observations and any conversations, which should be signed and dated.]

Name of worker

Name of person

Date & time of incident

Nature of concern:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Have you made a full written record of the incident/concern? Yes No (Please circle) Who have you spoken to about your concerns?

) Name

.....

Social Services Yes No (Please circle) Name

What feedback have you received?

.....
.....
.....
.....

How have your concerns been followed up?

.....
.....
.....

Signature of Worker:

..... Date and time

Signature of Responsible Person

..... Date and time

Appendix 14 - Reporting concerns about vulnerable Person

Referrals of suspected abuse can be made to the local authority adult protection service, the police and other statutory bodies in the following circumstances:

- For a person over 18 try to obtain their consent, if unable to obtain consent still report you concerns.
- If the person is a vulnerable person with the capacity to make the decision, the information belongs to them unless there is a public interest concern
- If the person is a vulnerable adult who does not have the capacity to make the decision, then the church worker needs to decide on their behalf, taking good practice into account

Public interest concern

The public interest can cover a wide range of values and principles relating to the public good, or what is in the best interests of society. Thus, for example, there is a public interest in transparency and accountability, to promote public understanding and to safeguard democratic processes. There is a public interest in good decision-making by public bodies, in upholding standards of integrity, in ensuring justice and fair treatment for all. The public interest is not necessarily the same as what interests the public.

There are some circumstances in which sharing confidential information without consent will normally be justified in the public interest. Some examples below but this is not an exclusive list

- when there is evidence or reasonable cause to believe that a person is suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm;
- or to prevent significant harm to a child or serious harm to an adult, including through the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime

You never make these decisions on your own. If necessary, consult without identifying the individual concerned. This can be within the church or with the statutory services such as the church or local authority adult protection services

- Whenever possible make these decisions alongside the adult most directly involved, working together rather than enforcing a solution
- The adult has the absolute right to remain silent even if you do make a referral
- Take time to help the adult to develop trust, confidence, and, ideally, a willingness to agree to the referral
- If a referral is made, the adult may need support for a considerable time
- The referrer will also need support

A referrer can be made by contacting:

Milton Keynes Safeguarding Adults Team

Monday to Friday from 8:30am-5:00pm

01908 253772

Out of hours 5:00pm-8:30am Monday-Friday Weekends & Bank holidays 24 hrs

01908 605650

ascat@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Police

Contact Milton Keynes Police Station on 0845 8 505 505 or via 101. If there is an immediate threat to life please call 999

Appendix 15 - The Walton Churches Partnership Consent Form for under 18's Regular activities – when parent not present in the building.

Full name of child
Name by which child chooses to be known
Address
..... Postcode:
Telephone number(s): Date of birth / /

With whom does the child live?
Relationship to child:

Who has parental responsibility for the child?

Name:
Address (if different from above):
.....
.....
Postcode: Telephone no(s):

Additional contact: Name:
Telephone number(s): Relationship to child:

Medical information

Child registered GP practice
Telephone no:

Registration and Consent Form for under 18's

Whilst in our care it is important we know whether your child:

Has your child any health condition or disability that we should know about:

.....
Is your child on any medication (please list):

.....
Does your child suffer from any allergies (please list):

Declaration

I give permission for my son/daughter to take part in the normal activities of this group, I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities, including swimming, and outings lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group.

In an emergency if I cannot be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive necessary treatment by a medical profession in line with best interested practices:

Yes / No (Please circle)

Signed (parent or adult with parental responsibility) Date / /

Please note that this declaration can only be signed by those with parental responsibility (e.g. this does not include a foster carer).

Appendix 16 – The Walton Churches Partnership Consent Form for under 18's Regular activities – only to be used when parents remain in the building.

Full name of child

Name by which child chooses to be known

Who has parental responsibility for the child?

Name:

Telephone no(s):

Medical information

Registration and Consent Form for under 18's

Whilst in our care it is important we know whether your child:

Has you child any health condition or disability that we should know about:

.....

Is your child on any medication (please list):

.....

Dose you child suffers from any allergies (please list):

.....

Declaration

I give permission for my son/daughter to take part in the normal activities of this group, I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities, including swimming, and outings lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group.

In an emergency if I cannot be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive necessary treatment by a medical profession in line with best interested practices:

Yes / No (Please circle)

Signed (parent or adult with parental responsibility) Date / /

Please note that this declaration can only be signed by those with parental responsibility (e.g. this does not include a foster carer).

Appendix 17 - Volunteer Job Description – Children’s Group Leader

The nurture of our children’s faith is one of the most valuable roles in any church. We hope this is done in a variety of ways: through parents, through participating in whole-church worship, through the influence of Christian friends – and also through participation in Children’s Church.

The role of the Children’s Church Leader is to lead these sessions during the church’s morning worship. This will involve planning the session in advance: usually with prep-prepared material, sometimes with help from the Minister or another elder within the church. Although there are practical tasks required on the day, it is vital to recognise that the role is primarily about building good relationships of approachability and trust with the children, modelling the Spirit of Jesus. It also includes creating a welcoming environment that will help all children (including those visiting church that day) to feel included and to take part in learning together about Jesus.

We expect all Leaders to have:

- a personal faith in Jesus Christ and a lifestyle that reflects it – not that any of us are perfect, of course!
- An affinity for children and an understanding of the development of children (or willingness to learn about how they learn).
- A strong desire to work with children and to lead them in learning experiences within the church.
- A willingness to encourage new leaders, and to involve the Helpers each week.

In return, the Church commits to:

- provide you with at least one helper each week (without which the session cannot take place) f. support you in prayer and other practical ways
- help you plan sessions where appropriate – this may involve the Minister or other elder
- undertake regular review/support meetings at a mutually convenient time
- offer and pay for training as and when required/appropriate

Before beginning, you will need to have:

- Applied for a DBS disclosure and completed a Confidential Declaration
- Undertake required training.
- Met with the Minister or Group leader
- Signed the Volunteer Agreement

Practically speaking, the role involves:

- Planning material in advance (with or without assistance) – this may include other materials, props or worksheets. All expenses will be reimbursed, and we will allocate a budget for Children’s Church from church accounts.
- Arriving in good time for church and making sure the room is ready before worship begins.
- Liaising with your Helper for that week, before Sunday if necessary and during Sunday itself.
- Taking a register when children arrive (or getting your Helper to do this).
- Recording details of new children and speaking with parents (or getting your Helper to do this).
- Leading the session with the children.
- Ensuring guidelines for Safeguarding and Best Practice are followed – see WCP Safeguarding Policy document for details.
- Finishing the session in time for children to participate in Communion (or final song in Morning Worship).
- Clearing up after the service.

- Dealing with any immediate parent queries – noting that anything more involved can/should involve the Minister or other church elder.
- If you cannot attend a particular week that you had agreed to lead, undertaking to find a replacement Leader who has completed all necessary paperwork (DBS disclosure etc) – or informing the Minister as to your absence.
- Passing on any difficult queries to the Minister or Safeguarding Officer.
- Completing Safeguarding Training within 6-12 months of beginning to lead Children's Church.
- Attending any such additional training that would be beneficial.

Appendix 18 - Volunteer Job Description – Children’s Group Helper

The nurture of our children’s faith is one of the most valuable roles in any church. We hope this is done in a variety of ways: through parents, through participating in whole-church worship, through the influence of Christian friends – and also through participation in Children’s Church.

The role of the Children’s Church Helper is to assist the Children’s Church Leader with these sessions during the church’s morning worship. Although there are practical tasks required on the day, it is vital to recognise that the role is primarily about building good relationships of approachability and trust with the children, modelling the Spirit of Jesus. It also includes creating a welcoming environment that will help all children (including those visiting church that day) to feel included and to take part in learning together about Jesus.

We expect all Helpers to have:

- a personal faith in Jesus Christ and a lifestyle that reflects it – not that any of us are perfect, of course!
- An affinity for children and an understanding of the development of children (or willingness to learn about how they learn).
- A strong desire to work with children and to lead them in learning experiences within the church.

In return, the Church commits to:

- support you in prayer and other practical ways
- undertake review/support meetings at a mutually convenient time
- offer and pay for training as and when required/appropriate

Before beginning, you will need to have:

- Completed a Confidential Declaration
- Undertake required training.
- Met with the Minister or Group leader
- Signed the Volunteer Agreement

Practically speaking, the role involves:

- Arriving in good time for church and assisting the Leader in making sure the room is ready before worship begins.
- Assisting the Leader in taking a register when children arrive.
- Assisting the Leader in recording details of new children and speaking with parents.
- Assisting the Leader in running the session with the children.
- Ensuring guidelines for Safeguarding and Best Practice are followed – see WCP Safeguarding Policy document for details.
- Assisting in clearing up after the service.
- Informing the Leader in good time if you cannot attend a particular week that you had agreed to lead.
- Passing on any difficult queries to the Leader.
- Completing Safeguarding Training within 6 of beginning to help at Children’s Church.
- Attending any such additional training that would be beneficial.

Appendix 19 - Volunteer Job Description – Youth Group Leader

The nurture of our children's faith is one of the most valuable roles in any church. We hope this is done in a variety of ways: through parents, through participating in whole-church worship, through the influence of Christian friends – and also through participation in church groups, such as Rock Solid.

The role of the Youth group Leader is to plan and running of these sessions. Although there are practical tasks required on the day, it is vital to recognise that the role is primarily about building good relationships of approachability and trust with the Child modelling the Spirit of Jesus. It also includes creating a welcoming environment that will help all children to feel included and to take part in learning together about Jesus.

We expect all Leader to have:

- a personal faith in Jesus Christ and a lifestyle that reflects it – not that any of us are perfect, of course!
- An affinity for children and an understanding of the development of children
- A strong desire to work with children and to lead them in learning experiences within the church.

In return, the Church commits to:

- support you in prayer and other practical ways
- undertake review/support meetings at a mutually convenient time
- offer and pay for training as and when required/appropriate

Before beginning, you will need to have:

- Applied for a DBS disclosure and completed a Confidential Declaration
- Undertake required training.
- Met with the Minister or Group leader
- Signed the Volunteer Agreement

Practically speaking, the role involves:

- Arriving in good time and assisting the Leader(s) in making sure the room is ready before the session begins.
- Assisting with other Leader(s) in running the session with the children.
- Ensuring guidelines for Safeguarding and Best Practice are followed – see WCP Safeguarding Policy document for details.
- Assisting in clearing up after the session.
- Informing the Leader(s) in good time if you cannot attend a particular week that you had agreed to attend.
- Passing on any difficult queries to the Leader(s).
- Completing Safeguarding Training within 6months of beginning Role.
- Attending any such additional training that would be beneficial.

Appendix 20 - Volunteer Job Description - Pastoral Visitor

Supporting people in time of need is one of the most valuable roles in any church. We hope this is done in a variety of ways: through friendship, through the nourishment of church services and other groups, through specialist medical help where necessary – but also, as occasion requires, through pastoral care provided by a Pastoral Visitor.

The role of a Pastoral Visitor is to offer additional support to individuals at particular times, most typically during difficult moments in a person's life: perhaps caused by unexpected illness, the loss of a loved one, difficulties in other relationships, or a practical crisis, such as unemployment. A Pastoral Visitor is there to offer support, a listening ear and, if the person agrees, prayer and Christian encouragement.

It is important to stress that the role is primarily intended to serve people at particular times of crisis or need. It is not an ongoing relationship, which creates either dependency of the person on the Visitor, or expectations of a certain frequency of visit/contact. That said, it is likely that certain individuals will recur more often as people in need of support or visits, and certain Visitors may form particularly good relationships with certain people.

A Pastoral Visitor may visit people alone, with certain precautions (see 6 below), but will be part of a team and under the supervision of either the Pastoral Team Leader or the Minister (or both). Certain visits should not be conducted alone – in the event of any concerns, this should be discussed and agreed with the Minister/Pastoral Team Leader.

We expect all Pastoral Visitors to have:

- A personal faith in Jesus Christ and a lifestyle that reflects it – not that any of us are perfect, of course!
- A caring heart, responsive attitude to need and good listening skills.
- A willingness to work as part of a team, and be accountable to the pastoral leadership of the church.
- Completed Required safeguarding training and be aware of how to keep themselves and those they visit safe.

In return, the Church commits to:

- support you in prayer and other practical ways
- undertake regular review/support meetings at a mutually convenient time
- offer and pay for training as and when required/appropriate

Before beginning, you will need to have:

- Applied for a DBS disclosure and completed a Confidential Declaration
- Undertake required training.
- Met with the Minister or Group leader
- Signed the Volunteer Agreement

Practically speaking, the role involves:

- Liaising with the Minister and the Pastoral Care Team regularly
- Visiting church members and other parishioners as agreed by the Minister/Pastoral Care Team
- Occasionally taking (pre-blessed) home communion to church members and other parishioners who have requested communion and who are unable to come to services.
- Visiting church members and other parishioners who are ill or recovering from illness or bereavement – either at home, hospital or in a residential care home.

- Making a record of dates and times of visits and any important issues raised.
- Notifying another responsible adult (ideally a Pastoral Team member) of the date and time of visits you are conducting and having a mobile phone with you when conducting visits.
- Alerting the Minister and/or Pastoral Team Leader of any concerns or needs for additional support.
- Abiding by the WCP's Safeguarding Policy at all times, especially in regard to vulnerable adults.
- Observing confidentiality at all times, unless a criminal disclosure is made.
- Attending pastoral care team meetings.
- Passing on any difficult pastoral issues to the Minister or Pastoral Team Leader.
- Completing Safeguarding Training within 6 months of beginning to visit, and every 3 years thereafter.
- Attending any such additional training that would be beneficial.

Appendix 21 - Volunteer Job Description – Worship Group Leader

The nurture of faith is one of the most valuable roles in any church. We hope this is done in a variety of ways, through participating in whole-church in worship,

The role of Worship Leader is to support and develop people in servicing in the worship band, it is vital to recognise that the role is primarily about building good relationships of approachability and trust, modelling the Spirit of Jesus. It also includes creating a welcoming environment that will help all people to feel included and to take part in learning together about Jesus.

We expect all leaders to have:

- a personal faith in Jesus Christ and a lifestyle that reflects it – not that any of us are perfect, of course!
- A strong desire to work with people and to lead them into service in the church.

In return, the Church commits to:

- support you in prayer and other practical ways
- undertake review/support meetings at a mutually convenient time
- offer and pay for training as and when required/appropriate

Before beginning, you will need to have:

- Applied for a DBS disclosure and completed a Confidential Declaration
- Undertake required training.
- Met with the Minister or Group leader
- Signed the Volunteer Agreement

Practically speaking, the role involves:

- Plan and Run worship practices.
- Create a safe and open environment for people to join the worship group.
- Allow people to feel they can input and are listened to.
- Attending any such additional training that would be beneficial.
- Arriving in good time for church and making sure worship team are ready before worship begins.
- Liaising with church leader, before Sunday if necessary and during Sunday itself.
- If you cannot attend a particular week that you had agreed to lead, undertaking to find a replacement Leader who has completed all necessary paperwork (DBS disclosure etc) – or informing the Minister as to your absence.
- Passing on any difficult queries to the Minister or Safeguarding Officer.
- Attending any such additional training that would be beneficial.
- Ensuring guidelines for Safeguarding and Best Practice are followed – see WCP Safeguarding Policy document for details.
- Completing Safeguarding Training within 6-12 months.

Appendix 22 - Safeguarding guidelines regarding social media & internet-based communications with children and vulnerable adults.

Social media/internet-based communication guidelines

1. Parental permission must be given (by email) before any under 18 takes part in any communication or group. The Children must also be given the choice whether to take part or not – ie, no child should be added to a group without their permission.
2. This is not deemed to be an appropriate method of communication for children who are under-11.
3. WCP will authorise the use of Zoom video-conferencing for it work purposes under these restrictions:
 - 2 appropriate adults (DBS checked member of the church) will be in the group at all times. One of these must be the 'host' of the Zoom meeting – under-18s cannot use Zoom without parental permission and they must not have charge of the meeting (host).
 - The link to the Zoom meeting will not be emailed out to a child until an email given writing parental permission has been received. This link must not be made public in any way.
 - The private chat function MUST be disabled before the group begins
 - No recordings are to be made of any of the conversations without explicit parental permission in writing and the permission of all in the group.
 - The steward with oversight of the children's work, or Minister, will be given advance notice of any group activity using this method.
 - The children must be reminded that taking pictures of anyone without their permission is not appropriate – and so screenshots of the Zoom meeting can only be taken with the permission of all present. These must not be put on social media or shared in any way without the permission of all present,.
4. Currently WCP does not support the use of WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram or any other mobile or web-based apps for communication between children's leaders and children.
5. We will continue the practice of sending email information for children to their parents. However, if a leader wants to set-up a Zoom session with the children, they can email the parents directly, copying in the steward or minister. This email must state who the other appropriate adult in the group will be, and making it clear that the parents can say no – as can the child.

Our aim in this, as always, is to do all we can to nurture and care for one another in ways that are appropriate and safe for all. These guidelines are designed to protect everyone.

Promoting a safer church

The care and protection of children, young people and adults involved in Church activities is the responsibility of everyone who participates in the life of the Church

House of Bishops
Safeguarding Policy
for children, young
people & adults

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED

that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please seek advice from a Safeguarding Adviser or if necessary report the matter to the Local Authority Social Care Services or the Police without delay.

Local contacts available to speak to if you have any concerns:

Name:

Role:

Tel:

E-mail:

Name:

Role:

Tel:

E-mail:

Name:

Role: Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

Tel:

E-mail:

Local Authority Social Services:

**IF THERE IS IMMEDIATE RISK OR DANGER
PLEASE CONTACT THE POLICE ON 999.**

OUR COMMITMENTS

- Promoting a safer environment and culture
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children and vulnerable adults
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse or other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns/allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding to those that may pose a present risk.

HELPLINES

- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Stop It Now: 0808 1000 900
- NAPAC: 0808 801 0331
- Samaritans: 116 123
- Family Lives: 0808 800 2222
- National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247
- Respect Phoneline: 0808 8010 327
- National Careline: 0800 0699 784

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding

Appendix 24 – Risk Assessment Template

Activity	Risk	High/ Medium/ Low	Action to reduce Risk	High/ Medium/ Low	Comments

Appendix 25 – Training Requirements

Role	Basic Awareness	Foundation	Leadership	Safer Recruitment	Domestic Abuse	Permission to Officiate	PSO Induction
All Church Officers	✓						
Young Leader (16-17) assisting with activities with children / vulnerable adults	✓						
Helper or Leader of activity with children / vulnerable adults (paid/unpaid)	✓	✓			✓		
Employed Children, Youth or Families Minister / Worker	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Church Warden	✓	✓	Recommend in vacancy		Recommended		
House Group Leader	✓	✓					
PDP Encourager / Mentor and Faith Companion	✓	✓					
Lay Pastoral Leader	✓	✓			Recommended		
Authorised Listener	✓	✓			✓		
Spiritual Director	✓	✓			✓		
PCC Member	✓	✓			Recommended		
DBS Verifier / Recruiter	✓	✓		✓			
Pastoral Visitor / Home Visitor	✓	✓			✓		
Bishops Visitor	✓	✓			✓		
Bell Tower Captain Additional guidance for all Bell Ringing roles found here .	✓	✓	See 'Leadership'				
Parish Safeguarding Officer / Safeguarding Lead	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Authorised Minister – Preach / Communion / Funeral	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Ordinand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
LLM in Training	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Curate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Incumbent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Anyone who holds a Licence, Authorisation or Commission from a Diocesan Bishop (inc. Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers)	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Anyone holding Permission to Officiate	✓	✓	See 'Leadership'		✓	✓	

July 2025

Basic awareness and Foundation training can be accessed via [Church of England Safeguarding Training Portal](#). On the following website <https://www.oxford.anglican.org>. Leadership training is via Zoom. Dates can be found at <https://www.oxford.anglican.org>

Safe Spaces



is an independent and confidential support service for adults who have been abused by someone in the Church.

If you have been affected, however long ago, Safe Spaces can support you.

Call our free helpline

 **0300 303 1056**

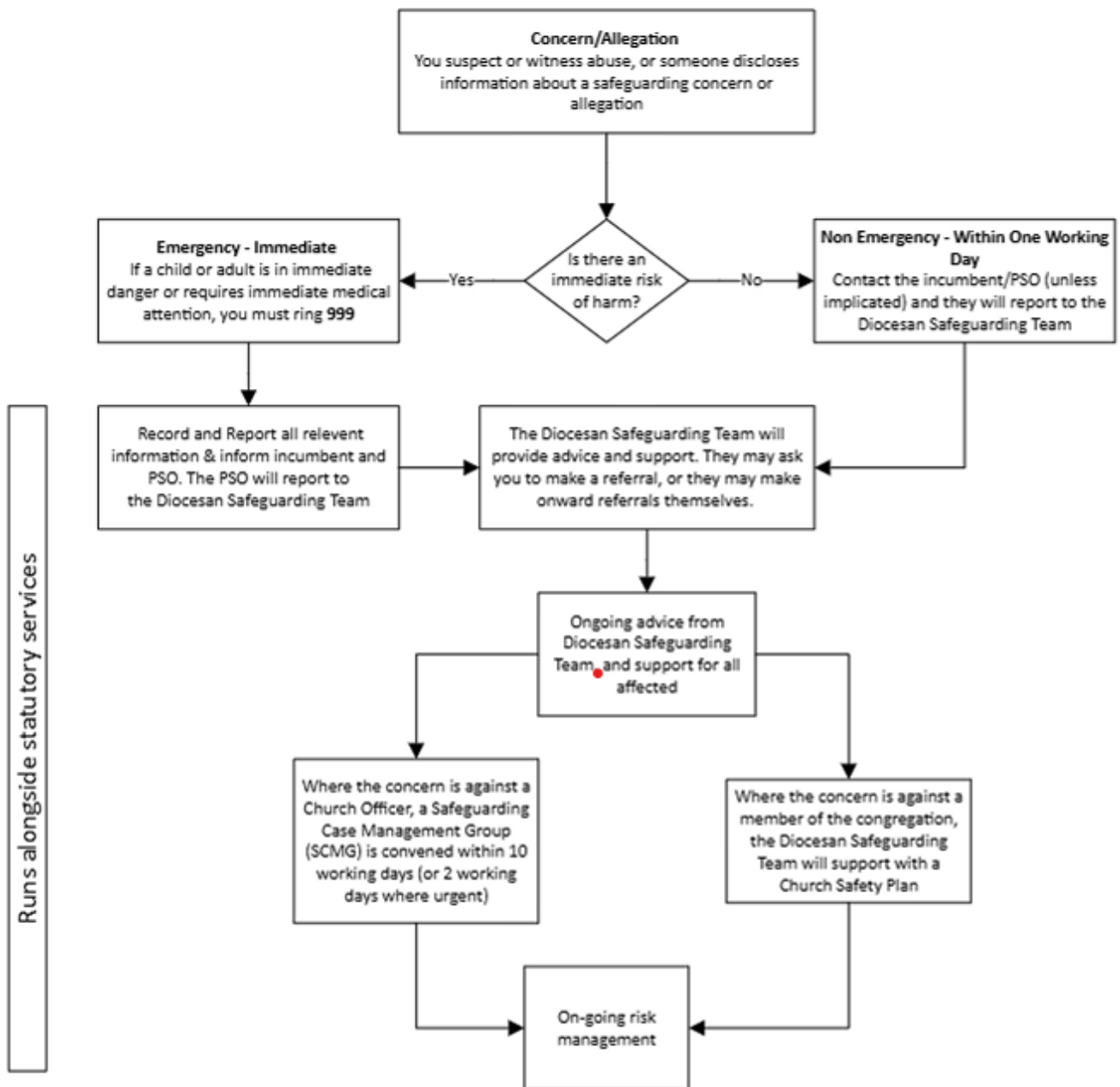
 safespaces@firstlight.org.uk

Opening hours
Mon- Fri- 9am-9pm
Sat- 9am-1pm
Sun- 1pm-5pm



WWW.SAFESPACESENGLANDANDWALES.ORG.UK

Appendix 27 - Disclosure flow chart



Appendix 28 - Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) Role Description

The Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) is the key link between the diocese and a parish concerning safeguarding matters. The PSO is appointed by and supports the Walton Churches Partnership in the delivery of its (the Council's) safeguarding responsibilities.

- Person specification:**
1. Willingness and aptitude to undertake the role, attend the relevant training and undertake their own development in the field of safeguarding.
 2. Ability to challenge in an appropriate, supportive manner.
 3. Ability to demonstrate why safeguarding is intrinsic to the Christian faith.
 4. Ability to instigate and manage difficult conversations.
 5. Ability to articulate the need for culture change with regard to safeguarding in the Church as a whole, and in particular in their parish community.
 6. Ability to demonstrate an empathetic and objective attitude with integrity when dealing with possible allegations of abuse.
 7. Ability to manage sensitive information and, where needed, understand confidentiality and data sharing.
 8. The PSO should not be related to, or have a conflict of interest, with the vicar / priest (or anyone acting on their behalf as an interim arrangement);
 9. Willingness to declare and explore with members of the Diocesan safeguarding team ways to manage any potential conflicts of interest

Role Description: Exact responsibilities may differ between parishes and different areas, depending on local circumstances. For instance, some parishes have a "team" of PSOs who share responsibilities, whilst other areas have one PSO supporting multiple parishes.

1. Be familiar with the Safeguarding e-manual | The Church of England and how it is implemented in local practice.
2. Establish positive working relationships with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer / Team.
3. Refer all safeguarding concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer / Team.
4. When someone is in immediate risk or needs urgent medical attention, report concerns to emergency services.
5. Discuss regularly with the parish priest / vicar and the PCC any emerging safeguarding issues and support them in resolving those issues.
6. Work with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer / Team to determine which members of staff and volunteers need which level of training and when refresher training is needed and ensure that this is satisfactorily completed.
7. Have an awareness of all activities involving children and vulnerable adults, keep a record of them and assist with the safeguarding risk assessment of these activities.
8. Help facilitate discussions about what the parish sees as a safe culture, what the current barriers may be and how they might be resolved.
9. Support the PCC in the delivery of its responsibilities around safer recruitment and people management – for instance, by maintaining records, supporting recruitment, coordinating DBS applications (including updates to DBS status), and seeking advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer / Team.
10. Ensure safeguarding contact details are displayed in all Church premises and on websites (where applicable);
11. Where appropriate, help the parish develop protocols to keep themselves and their visitors safe.
12. Contribute to relevant reports and meetings with a safeguarding perspective, to support the vicar / priest and the PCC in the delivery of their safeguarding responsibilities.