

*"Connecting People to Jesus
and One Another"*



**Walsgrave Baptist Church
Safeguarding Policy Handbook**

**Working with Children and Young People (under 18)
Approved and Published 16th November 2017**

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Then he put a little child among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, "Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf, welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me, welcomes not only me but also my Father who sent me."

1 Mark 9:36-37 (NLT)

1 INTRODUCTION

As a Christian organisation, Walsgrave Baptist Church, Coventry respects and values children and young people and seeks to promote best practice in working with those entrusted to our care. We also recognise our responsibilities for the safeguarding of children and young people as set out in current legislation and associated guidance provided by HM Government. We are committed to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all children and young people associated with the church.

In pursuit of this, the Church has adopted a Safeguarding Statement in conjunction with this Safeguarding Policy Handbook regarding safeguarding children and young people in the church.

1.1 About the Church's Policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church

The Safeguarding Statement outlines the church's approach to a number of different aspects of safeguarding. A paper copy will be displayed permanently on a notice-board in the foyer of the church premises.

Each worker with children and young people, whether paid or voluntary, will be given access to a full copy of this Safeguarding Policy Handbook and will be required to follow it.

A full copy of this Safeguarding Policy Handbook will also be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child or young person from the church or any person associated with the church.

This Safeguarding Policy Handbook will be monitored and reviewed at least annually, and a report on the outcome of the review will be presented to the Church Members' meeting.

1.2 About this document

This document should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Statement, and gives detailed information about the processes and procedures to be used to ensure effective practical implementation of the church's policies.

1.3 Acknowledgment

This document is based on the information and guidance given by CCPAS and in the BUGB document *Safe to Grow*¹.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Responsibilities of all who work with children and young people

All who work with children and young people should take personal responsibility for implementing the Safeguarding Policy as a whole.

Each worker should:

- Know and implement the *Safe Behaviour* code of practice (Section 5)
- Understand and follow the Safe Working Practice (Section 6)
- Be aware of ways in which children are harmed and possible signs of abuse (Section 3.2)
- Know what to do if a child discloses abuse (Section 3.3)
- Know who to speak to if you have any suspicions or concerns (Section 3.5)
- Know what to do if an allegation is made about a fellow worker (Section 3.6)

From time to time training in safeguarding issues will be arranged. **Everyone working with children/young people is expected to attend these events.**

2.2 Specific responsibilities of the Safeguarding Trustee and Designated Persons for Safeguarding

The Leadership Team, as the charity trustee body, has ultimate responsibility for ensuring the Safeguarding Policy is implemented and resourced.

As stated in the Safeguarding Statement, the church has appointed a member of the Leadership Team as the Safeguarding Trustee to oversee and monitor implementation of the policy and procedures on behalf of the charity trustees.

The church has also appointed Designated Person(s) for Safeguarding to advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and young people, and to take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

Individually or corporately the Leadership Team/Trustees, the Safeguarding Deacon/Trustee and Designated Persons should:

- Ensure the role of the Designated Person for Safeguarding is known to all
- Monitor compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures
- Supervise and support group leaders
- Process DBS checks
- Obtain and check references for workers
- Check relevant details on applications for disclosure
- Ensure workers have completed a Volunteer Agreement
- Ensure workers receive training in good practice
- Keep confidential information securely
- Keep up-to-date with child protection issues
- Review policies and procedures
- Be a point of reference for concerns re children or workers (see note below)
- Follow up expressed concerns

- Make any necessary referrals to Social Services

Note: If concerns relate to a member of the Safeguarding Group an alternative reference point is One of the Ministers.

2.3 Other roles

In this document, the following terms are used to denote those directly involved in work with children and young people, and have the meanings given:

Co-ordinator This is not a title, but denotes the leader with overall responsibility for a particular part of the work with children and young people or for a specific event

Leader/worker An adult person in a leadership position

Young Leader* As part of the succession planning and the training of young people, suitable individuals under the age of 18 years may be invited to undertake junior leadership roles to develop their skills and allow them to gain experience. Such Young Leaders will be encouraged to follow the best practice given in this handbook and to set a good example to the children and other young people with whom they are working. However, they will at all times be under the supervision of an adult leader who will be responsible for their actions, and they will not be counted as Leaders for the purposes of risk management (see section 6.2).

** Young Leaders (16+) will be subject to the formal DBS checking process.*

3 RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

3.1 Abuse and neglect

Someone may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused in a family or in an institutional setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

This is not an exhaustive list, but there are five main categories of abuse:

1. Physical abuse

Anything that causes physical harm e.g. hitting, shaking, burning. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

2. Sexual abuse

Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

3. Emotional abuse

Persistent emotional ill-treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

4. Neglect

Persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development.

5. Spiritual abuse

This term is not one of the official definitions of abuse but is increasingly being used to describe those situations where an abuse of power takes place in the context of a faith community.

3.2 Indicators of abuse

On occasions, an incident or injury will give cause for concern, but often it is a series of incidents which indicate a child may be, or at risk of, suffering harm.

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, e.g. bruises, burns, especially if on a part of the body not prone to such injuries
- Injuries which have not received appropriate medical attention
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- A child/young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/herself
- A disclosure/allegation made by a child or young person
- Someone expresses concern about the welfare of another child/young person
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or mood
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour or play
- Nervousness/watchfulness
- Inappropriate relationships with other children and/or adults
- Signs of neglect e.g.: under-nourishment, untreated illnesses, inadequate care or inappropriate clothing for the weather or time of year
- Unexplained money/gifts

It should be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is taking place. It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why any of the above are occurring.

3.3 Sharing the concerns of a child or young person

All who work with children and young people should know how to respond if a child or young person talks to them about an abusive or harmful relationship.

- Create a safe environment in which the child/young person can share their concerns
- React calmly to what is shared so as not to further distress the child or young person
- Listen carefully to what is said
- Allow time for them to say what they want to

- Do not rush or interrupt, or ask more questions than needed to establish whether there is a cause for concern, or to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- If it is necessary to ask questions to clarify what the child is saying, always use open questions; do not ask closed questions (ones that suggest what happened and who was involved)
- Accept what the child or young person says and take it seriously
- Reassure the child or young person, and tell them that you know how difficult it must be to confide in you
- Tell the child or young person that s/he is not to blame and that s/he has done the right thing in speaking to you
- Help the child or young person to understand what is going to happen next – the child should be informed that other people will need to be told about the concerns which have been shared and who those people may be

Do not promise or lead a child to believe that any child protection concern which affects them or other children or young people will be kept confidential.

- Be aware that the child or young person may be frightened and may have been threatened if they tell of what has been happening to them
- Remember that most children feel loyalty to their parents and other significant people in their lives and often find it difficult to say things to their detriment
- Make notes as soon as possible afterwards using the child's language and recording any questions that you asked to prompt for a response

3.4 What to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed

If the behaviour of a child or young person gives any cause for concern:

If an allegation is made in any context about a child or young person being harmed:

If the behaviour of any adult (including colleagues and members of the public) towards children causes you concern:

- **Do not** dismiss your concerns
- **Do not** confront an adult about whose behaviour you have concerns (but see 3.6)
- **Do not** take responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse is taking place
- **Do not** investigate allegations
- **Do not** act alone
- **Do not** take sole responsibility for what has been shared or any concerns you may have
- **Do** follow the church's procedures for responding to concerns, as given below

3.5 Procedure for responding to concerns

STAGE 1
A worker has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person or the behaviour of an adult
The person who has the concern has a duty to RECORD AND REPORT
A written record must be made of the concern using the standard Incident Form ² and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours If a child or young person is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Services without delay.



STAGE 2
The Designated Person receives the report of concern
The Designated Person has a duty to REVIEW AND REFER
The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social Services should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report. If a child or young person is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Services without delay.



STAGE 3
After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken
The Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee and the Minister(s) may have a duty to SUPPORT AND REPORT
Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the local Baptist Association, the Disclosure and Barring Service or the Charity Commission.

3.5.1 Stage 1 – RECORD AND REPORT

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person is to RECORD their concerns in writing and to REPORT their concerns to the Designated Person. The report to the Designated Person should be made within 24 hours of the concern being raised.

The duty to RECORD

As soon as possible after a child or young person tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern, a written record should be made.

The record should:

- Be made as soon as possible after the event
- Be legible and state the facts accurately (If hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- Include the child's name, address, date of birth (or age if the date of birth is not known)
- Include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- Include a description of any bruising or other injuries that you may have noticed and the demeanour of the child
- Include an exact record of what the child has said, using the child's words
- Include what was said by the person to whom concerns were reported including any questions asked
- Include any action taken as a result of the concerns
- Be signed and dated
- Be kept secure and confidential and made available only to
 - The Designated Person
 - Members of the Safeguarding Group
 - One of the Ministers as far as this is consistent with the welfare of the child or young person concerned and the possible pastoral responsibilities to any others involved
 - Representatives of the professional agencies

The Incident Form is available from the church office and the children's group files.

Records will be kept secure and confidential by the Safeguarding Group.

The duty to REPORT

If anyone has a concern about the welfare of a child or young person, that concern should be reported to the Designated Person without delay (within 24 hours). The report can be made in the first instance either in a face-to-face conversation or by telephone, but should always be followed up by submitting a written incident report.

If a child or young person is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services.

If such a report is made without reference to the Designated Person (because it was not possible to contact the Designated Person immediately), the Designated Person should be informed as soon as possible after the report has been made.

If concerns arise in the context of a children's or young people's group, the worker who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk through their concern with their group co-ordinator. However, such conversations should not delay a report being made to the Designated Person. The duty remains with the worker to report their concerns to the Designated Person.

If a concern is brought to the attention of a group co-ordinator by one of the workers, the leader should remind the worker of their duty to record and report, and will also have a duty themselves to report the concern to the Designated Person.

3.5.2 Stage 2 – REVIEW AND REFER

The duty of the Designated Person on receiving a report is to REVIEW the concern that has been reported and to REFER the concern on to the appropriate people.

If a child or young person is considered to be in imminent danger of harm a report should be made immediately to the police or Social Services.

The duty to REVIEW

In reviewing the report that is received the Designated Person:

- Should take account of his/her own experience in assessing risk to children and young people
 - A person who works professionally in safeguarding children and young people will be more competent in making balanced judgements about reports
 - A person without professional expertise will need to take more advice from others with expertise in reviewing reports
- Must take account of other reports that may have been received concerning the same child, family or adult
- May speak with others in the church (including the ministers) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision that will be made
 - Such conversation should not lead to undue delay in taking any necessary action and should be fully recorded
- May consult with their Regional Minister in order to seek guidance from their Association (see 3.10)
- May seek advice from the local Social Services department or police in knowing how to respond appropriately to the concerns that have been raised
 - Social Services will be willing to discuss a case with the Designated Person without the need to divulge names or identities in order to offer guidance to the local church. However, without sharing names or identities, information about that child or family known to Social

Services and vital to the decision making process may not be considered. If the advice of Social Services or the police is to make a formal referral, this advice should be followed.

The duty to REFER

In reviewing the reported concern, the Designated Person must decide to whom the report should be referred.

The Designated Person may:

- Refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child or young person is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation
- Refer the concern to others who work with the child or young person in question asking for continued observation
- Speak directly to the adult about whom the concern has been raised
 - This may be the parent/carer of the child or it may be one of the children's or young people's workers. If there is any question at all of possible sexual abuse or serious physical abuse the Designated Person should never address the adult directly but should refer their concerns to the police or Social Services. In these circumstances, to take the concern to the alleged perpetrator may place the child or young person at more risk, or could make any statutory investigation difficult to pursue because the child or young person may be intimidated
- Make a formal referral to the local police or Social Services department

The Designated Person should keep a written record of all actions taken in reviewing and referring a concern. A template of an incident report form is available from the church office.

All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the Designated Person in a secure location³.

3.5.3 Stage 3 – REPORT AND SUPPORT

Responsibilities in Stage 3 of the process are shared by the Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee and the Minister(s).

The duty to REPORT

Whenever a formal referral is made to Social Services or the police the Designated Person should

- Report the referral to the Safeguarding Trustee
- Report the referral to the Minister(s)
- Report the referral to the Regional Minister of the local Baptist Association

In certain circumstances, the Safeguarding Trustee acting on behalf of the trustees may also need to make further reports.

If an allegation is made against someone who works with children or young people, the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (See Glossary). The LADO is

located within Social Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children or young people has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or young person
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or young person, or related to a child or young person
- Behaved towards a child or young person in a way that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children or young people

If a worker has been removed from their post or would have been removed from their post (had they not resigned or left the church) because of the risk of harm that they pose to children and young people, there is a statutory duty to report the incident to the Disclosure and Barring Service. Referral forms are available from the DBS website⁴.

If a worker in the church has been accused of causing harm to children or young people, this would be classed as a serious incident that should be reported to the Charity Commission in the annual return.

A record will be kept of all safeguarding incidents and will be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy.

The Duty to SUPPORT

Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, the church continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected. Even when formal referrals to the statutory authorities are not made, those who make reports will feel uncertain and vulnerable and support will need to be offered to them.

- Child or young person

For the child or young person concerned, Social Services and other agencies may provide support and services. However, the church will have a role to play in complementing this support. The Designated Person should seek to work in partnership with other agencies, clarifying with them how best the church may be able to support the child or young person and to ensure that consistent help and support is being offered.

- Other family members

The church may similarly be in a position to offer pastoral and practical support to family members who may find they are trying to cope with a variety of feelings.

- Church workers and volunteers

Support and counselling should also be offered to those within the church who are involved in the incident. This could include the person who the child or young person shared their concerns with and the Designated Person.

- Ministers and Deacons

Ministers and Deacons should know to whom they would turn for support, advice and help when facing the pastoral demands of addressing a safeguarding issue. The local Baptist Association may be

particularly helpful in this respect, which is why the Regional Minister should be informed whenever a referral is made to the police or Social Services.

3.6 Responding to concerns about the behaviour of fellow workers

The basic three-stage process outlined above should form the basis for responding to all concerns within the church regarding the welfare of children and young people. If anyone in the church believes that the behaviour of one of the workers is placing children or young people at risk of harm (whether that worker is paid or unpaid, is a relatively new volunteer or is a senior and experienced youth worker) there is a fundamental duty to RECORD and REPORT.

It is important that all behaviour that crosses the line of what is acceptable or appropriate is challenged so that children and young people are never put at risk.

It is probably not appropriate or necessary to report all incidents to the Designated Person – particularly if they are one-off events – but a proper and proportionate response needs to be made. Workers need to be willing to point out to one another when their actions are inappropriate.

It is good practice for workers to meet together for a short time to de-brief after each session. This can be an occasion when the leader might remind members of the team about following good practice and highlighting any inappropriate behaviour.

It is good practice following each session for the leader to make a note of any incidents. This ensures transparency and also keeps a record that might be helpful if this turns out to be part of a recurring pattern of behaviour.

The leader of a group must take seriously their responsibility to supervise the behaviour of the workers in their group and encourage all workers to develop the highest standards in their conduct and in following the agreed code of conduct for workers. If a worker consistently ignores the code of conduct the leader should make arrangements for the worker to be more closely supervised until they can demonstrate that they are able to work within the framework of the church's Safeguarding Policy.

3.7 When the concern involves the Designated Person

If the Designated Person is not available, or if the concern relates to the Designated Person or a member of their family, then the initial report should be made to the Safeguarding Trustee or one of the Ministers.

3.8 When the concern involves a Minister

Whenever any concerns are expressed about a Minister the concerns must be taken as seriously as if they were being expressed about any other person connected to the life of the church.

Any safeguarding concerns involving a minister should always be reported immediately to the Regional Minister in addition to following the church's normal procedures.

3.9 The role of the statutory agencies in child protection

Following a referral to Social Services or the police, a decision will be taken about the most appropriate way to respond to the concerns raised.

In some situations, advice will be given about how the issues raised can be dealt with without the involvement of the statutory services and suggestions will be offered about how to access support from other agencies and services.

In circumstances where it is considered that a child is not at risk of significant harm but may benefit from assistance provided by Social Services, this will be acted upon where agreement is given by the parent to this assistance being given.

However, in those situations where a safeguarding concern has been referred, Social Services have a duty in law to make enquiries whenever they have reasonable cause to believe that a child living in their area has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm from abuse or neglect. They work with children, young people, parents, parents and other agencies to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children and young people. The police work closely with Social Services when there are safeguarding concerns and particularly when a serious physical assault or a sexual assault might have occurred, or in cases of serious neglect.

3.10 The role of the local Baptist Association in supporting churches

The Regional Minister should always be contacted immediately if any concerns or allegations arise concerning the Minister, whether or not the Minister is on the Baptist Union's accredited list of Ministers. The Regional Minister will often take a lead in helping the church to respond to such a situation and may need to instigate formal disciplinary procedures if the Minister concerned is an accredited Minister.

The Regional Minister should always be informed as soon as possible if there is a statutory investigation of one of the members of the church or congregation or of one of the church's youth workers relating to the welfare of children or young people. The Regional Minister should be informed even if the church is obtaining support and guidance from another organisation with regard to the particular safeguarding issue.

4 SAFE RECRUITMENT

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children and young people. For further information please refer to the church's Safe Recruitment Policy⁵.

5 SAFE BEHAVIOUR: A code of behaviour for workers

Our desire is to promote best practice in all of our work with children and young people. We would want to provide the best environment in which they can grow and develop into the people God intends.

These good practice guidelines are primarily to protect children and young people. However, they will also help to protect workers from false accusation or unwarranted suspicion.

5.1 Respecting children and young people

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity

- Use age-appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and the effect you are having on the individual child or young person.
- Listen well to children and young people. Be careful not to assume you know what a child or young person is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the body language to better understand what is being said.

Don't engage in any of the following:

- Invading the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or shower
- Rough games involving physical contact between a leader and child or young person
- Sexually provocative games
- Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even "in fun"
- Scapegoating, belittling, ridiculing, or rejecting a child or young person

When it is necessary to control and discipline children and young people, this should be done without using physical punishment. (A situation may, however, arise where a child or young person needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.)

Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed. If possible, the child's own parent or carer should be called in to carry out such a task.

Do not respond to excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.

5.2 Guidelines to avoid being alone with children and young people

All workers should plan their work with children and young people in such a way that they will not normally be alone with children or young people where their activity cannot be seen by others. Therefore:

- Children and young people must not be given access to church premises unless responsible adults are present
- A worker should never plan to be alone on church premises with children or young people
- Make sure that there is a suitable ratio of workers to children and young people (see also Section 6.2.3). There should be a minimum of two workers for any group, and in a mixed group this should ideally be one male, one female
- When there are insufficient leaders and workers to have two for each group, doors should be left open, or two groups should work in the same room
- At least two people should be present before the doors are opened as children and young people arrive for a group and at least two adults should remain until the last child or young person has left the building or room at the end of a meeting
- A worker should never invite a child or young person to their home alone. It may be acceptable to invite a group if another adult is in the house. Establish that each parent/carers knows where their child is and at what time they should return home or need to be collected

5.2.1 Unplanned occasions when a worker is alone with children or young people

There may be occasions when, despite careful planning, a worker finds themselves in a situation when they are in sole charge of children or young people in the context of a church activity. In these situations, the worker should:

- Assess the risks involved in sending the child or children home against the risk and vulnerability of being alone with them
- Wherever possible, immediately phone another appropriate person to report the situation. This should be the Designated Person for Safeguarding or, if they are unavailable, the Safeguarding Trustee or another member of the youth leadership team in that order. Contact details for the Designated Person for Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Trustee are displayed in the foyer
- Make a written report of the situation immediately afterwards and give a copy to the Designated Person for Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Trustee. (The report serves two functions. It helps to ensure appropriate accountability for situations where there is increased vulnerability and risk. It also allows for the monitoring of situations where workers are on their own with children and young people. If the same situation keeps recurring, working practices can be reviewed)

There may be other situations when a child or young person asks to speak to a worker on their own. The most common situation is when a youth worker is offering support or pastoral guidance to a young person where privacy and confidentiality are important. The following guidelines should apply:

- If the worker believes that to speak to the young person on their own would place them in a vulnerable position (for example, because the young person has developed an inappropriate attachment to the worker) the worker should insist that another worker should also be present
- If it is possible for the conversation to be held in a quiet corner of the room where others are present, but where sufficient privacy can be assured, this option should be taken
- If this is not possible, the conversation is best held in a room with the door left open or where there is a glass in the door so that others can see inside the room
- Wherever possible another adult should be in the building and the young person should know that they are there
- Another adult should know that the interview is taking place and with whom
- A worker should set an agreed time limit prior to the conversation and stick to it. It is the responsibility of the worker as the adult involved to set this ground rule and to end the session at the designated time. Make another appointed time to continue if necessary
- A youth worker should not invite a child or young person to their home alone nor go to the child or young person's home if they are alone

5.2.2 Working one to one

A worker must consult with a member of the Safeguarding Team and obtain specific permission before undertaking any planned one-to-one work with a child or young person.

Where, exceptionally, it is considered appropriate by the Safeguarding Team for a worker to arrange one-to-one meetings with a child or young person, this shall be undertaken in a controlled and supervised way⁶.

5.2.3 Offering transport to children and young people

Vulnerable situations can be created when workers offer lifts to children and young people, either to take them to and from church activities or to take them on planned outings. (Please note that this section should be read in conjunction with Risk assessment – procedures for transporting children and young people (See 6.2.4))

Parents/carers are normally responsible for travel arrangements to and from meetings.

If it is necessary for a child or young person to be given transport:

- their parents/carers should be asked to sign a consent form in respect of travel arrangements and they should be informed at what time to expect their children home
- Whenever possible, two adults should be present in a car with children and young people
- If the same group of children are regularly given lifts, consideration should be given to picking them up or dropping them off in a different order each week so that the same child is not always the first to be picked up or the last dropped off
- Avoid giving lifts to children or young people on their own. If they are travelling alone with a worker, they should be asked to sit in the back seat of the car
- Workers should not spend any unnecessary time alone in a vehicle with a child or young person – long conversations in the car outside church premises or home, or unnecessary diversions should be avoided
- Workers should avoid being alone in a car with a child or young person who is particularly vulnerable; for example, a child with a crush on a leader, or a child whose behaviour is difficult to manage

5.3 Guidelines for appropriate physical contact with children and young people

The following guidelines are helpful when considering whether or not touch is appropriate in any given situation.

- For whose benefit is this taking place; is it for the sake of the child or young person or is it for your own benefit?
- If no-one else is present it is always advisable to avoid physical contact

- Use physical contact in a way that conveys appropriate concern but in a way that is least likely to be misconstrued. For example, an arm around the shoulder standing by the side of a child or young person may be more appropriate than a full “hug”
- Remember that not all express friendship or affection in the same way and some people (children included) find excessive touching an infringement of their personal space
- If you find that the child or young person is cringing or responding in a negative way to being touched, then stop immediately and find an alternative, non-tactile way to convey your concern
- Workers should be prepared to be accountable to fellow workers for their use of touch and physical contact and should listen to the concerns of others if it is felt that boundaries are being crossed

5.4 Abuse of trust

Relationships between children or young people and their leaders can be described as “relationships of trust”.

It is wrong for a leader to enter into a sexual relationship with a young person (under 18).

It is not acceptable for a leader to form a romantic relationship with a child or young person with whom they have a relationship of trust.

- If a new romantic relationship occurs where the leader is a young person, the leader should cease either the relationship of trust or the romantic relationship with the young person
- If the young leader is already in a romantic relationship with a young person when they are appointed this may continue but arrangements should be made so that the effect of the relationship of trust is minimised (e.g. by keeping them in separate groups)

5.5 Electronic Communication

Electronic communication has become very important and popular in recent years, and is an easy way to communicate with young people in particular. However, there are dangers associated with its use that call for vigilance. Therefore, the church recognises electronic communication as a legitimate means of communicating with young people **only as long as strict protocols are followed** concerning the nature of the communication. Electronic communication must never become a substitute for face-to-face contact with young people.

- A worker may only have the personal email address or mobile phone number of a young person with the express written permission of that young person’s parent/carer. This permission can be recorded on the young person’s group Registration Form⁷
- Workers may only use electronic means of communication with those children and young people for whom appropriate consent has been received. Workers must not put any pressure on children or young people to reveal their personal email address, mobile phone number, etc.
- Direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided

- Only workers who have been appointed under the church's agreed safeguarding procedures should use any electronic means of communication to contact children or young people on behalf of the church or one of the church's organisations
- Contact with children and young people by electronic communication should be for information-giving purposes only and not for general chatter
- Where a young person in need or at a point of crisis uses this as a way of communicating with a worker:
 - Significant conversations should be saved as a text file or screen shot if possible, and
 - A log file kept of when they communicated and who was involved
 - A member of the Safeguarding Team should be informed as soon as reasonably practical
- Workers should not share any personal information with children and young people, and should not request or respond to any personal information from the child or young person other than that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their role
- Workers should be careful in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives
- Clear unambiguous language should be used, avoiding the use of unnecessary abbreviations
- Electronic communication should only be used between the hours of 8.00 am and 10.00 pm
- Emails to young people should include a church header and footer showing this to be an official communication from a youth team member

5.5.1 Mobile phones

- All contact using a mobile phone must strictly follow the church's Media and Electronic Communications Policy⁸, a copy of which is available on request from the office and will be provided to volunteers and staff working with children and young people
- The church may provide a youth worker with a mobile phone for the purpose of communicating on church business. The relevant number should be those made known to parents (See 6.1.2)
- Contact with children and young people by mobile phone should be for information-giving purposes only and not for general chatter
- "Text language" should be avoided so that there is no misunderstanding of what is being communicated
- "Text conversations" should usually be avoided (that is a series of text messages/emails being sent to and fro between mobile phones)
- The use of the phone camera must comply with the church's policy on photos/videos (See also section 6.4)
- Workers should not retain images of children and young people on their mobile phone

5.5.2 Instant Messaging Services (IMS)

- Instant messenger services should not be used, except in emergency as detailed below
- Where a child or young person in need or at a point of crisis uses this as a way of communicating with a worker:
 - Significant conversations should be saved as a text file if possible
 - A log file should be kept of when they communicated and who was involved
 - A member of the Safeguarding Team should be informed as soon as reasonably practical

5.5.3 Web and Social Networking Sites

- The church has its own web and social networking sites, which shall only be created and operated in the name of the church with the full knowledge and permission of the Leadership Team, and must at all times be operated strictly in accordance with the Media and Electronic Communication Policy
- Youth workers wishing to communicate on church business using social networking must use only these official church sites, and only through agreed profile pages. The official church sites must only be used for church business
- Youth leaders must ensure that all content is appropriate for young people to see
- Personal social networking sites must not be used for church-related communication, and youth workers should not add a young person as a “friend”/contact on their personal site because of a church connection
- Lower age limits of social networking sites should be adhered to (this varies for each site)
- Be aware of the content of photos that may be uploaded on to your site
- Be aware that children and young people could view photos and communications of other people linked to that social networking site
- All communication with young people should be kept within public domains
- Workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny
- Copies of communications should be retained and where possible other workers should be copied in on communication

5.6 Alcohol, illegal substances and medicines

No alcohol or illegal substances are allowed to be present or consumed at activities or events organised by the church where the church has responsibility for children and young people.

No leader or worker must be under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances at any time when they have responsibility for the care of children or young people.

All drugs and substances required by children or young people for medicinal use must be notified to the senior leader at or before the start of the activity and handled in accordance with agreed procedures.

6 SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

6.1 Parental consent

The church will work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure the well-being of children and young people. Therefore, when children and young people are in the care of a church organisation it is important:

- To have the consent of the parent/carer
- To have a point of contact in the event of an emergency
- To know key information about the child or young person that may impact on their well-being
- To provide clear information to parents/carers about the organisation and activities the child or young person is involved in and the safeguarding policy of the church

6.1.1 Registration and consent forms

Parents/carers should complete a Registration Form for Children and Young People, which includes a consent section, for each child attending a WBC group. The relevant forms are available from the Church Office, or in the children's group files.

It is the responsibility of the group co-ordinator to obtain parental consent forms, to store and use the information in accordance with the church's Data Protection Policy⁹, and to endeavour to ensure that the information retained is accurate and up-to-date.

Parents/carers should therefore be required to complete a consent form annually, and asked to ensure that any subsequent changes to contact details or information on medical conditions are advised to the leader as and when they occur. Parents/carers are permitted to check the details of forms they have previously completed and if no changes need to be made on the anniversary of the form being completed/checked, they can sign and date the same form again.

The details on the consent form should be available to the co-ordinator of the group or activity each time the group or activity meets so that the contact details and medical information is readily available in the event of an emergency. This information should be available to other workers in your organisation on a need-to-know basis.

6.1.2 Keeping parents/carers informed

Parents/carers should be given the following information:

- The name and contact telephone number for the leader of the group/activity attended by the child or young person
- Outline details of the group/activity the child or young person is attending, including the start and end times of the event, together with expectations as to whether children or young people should be collected or whether they make their own arrangements to go home

NB: In some families there are legal constraints on contact with children by absent parents. Where children are collected from activities nominated persons should be identified by the parent/carer as acceptable to carry out this task.

- That the church has a Safeguarding Policy for children and young people and that in the event of the parent/carer having any concerns about the welfare of their child in relation to the church, they should contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding
- The name and contact number of the Designated Person for Safeguarding
- This information should be reviewed and re-distributed annually, and when significant changes occur

6.2 Children, young people and the church's Health and Safety policy

The church has adopted a Health and Safety Policy¹⁰ which is designed to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, a healthy and safe environment for all who are involved in the activities of the church or use its premises. A copy of the Health and Safety Policy is posted on the notice board, and supporting information is available from the church office. It is an integral part of the policy that all those who take part in church activities or use its premises are responsible for complying with the requirements of the policy and playing their part in maintaining a healthy and safe environment.

6.2.1 General requirements

- Before the start of each session, ensure that the room(s) and any equipment or furniture to be used is in a safe condition
- Make sure you know the location of fire exits and extinguishers, and First Aid equipment
- Record the details of any accident, however minor on the Incident Forms provided in the children's group files
- Report any major accident (i.e. needing a visit to hospital or GP) to the Church Secretary and Health and Safety Officer
- Any "near-miss" should also be reported to the Church Secretary and Health and Safety Officer
- Security: Have procedures in place to prevent
 - Children/ young people leaving the building during an activity without being noticed
 - Strangers entering the premises during a children's/young persons' activity without being noticed

6.2.2 Risk Assessment – general

The church's health and safety processes include a risk assessment of the premises, which is carried out at least once per year and takes account of the various users including children and young people. A copy of the most recent assessment record is available for reference in the Church Office. The Health and Safety Officer and Church Secretary will welcome input from the leaders of children's and young people's groups on safety matters, and these should be confirmed in writing.

General Risk Assessments

It is the responsibility of the co-ordinator of each group to ensure that a general Risk Assessment¹¹ is carried out for the activities of their group at the beginning of each year or set of sessions, considering the programme and the venue, and that a copy is submitted to the Church Office. The risk assessment should also be reviewed, and updated if necessary, whenever there is a significant change to the activities, people involved, or venue, and any resulting updates must be notified to the church office. Risk Assessment forms are available from the Church Office, or in the children's group files.

Specific risk assessments

These must be carried out for activities that are out of the ordinary, for example a trip out or an activity with particular risk factors (See also Hazardous Activities below), and a copy submitted to the Church Office.

Recording

Routine and specific risk assessments must be recorded, and standard forms for this purpose are available from the church web-site or the church office, and the Health and Safety Officer or Church Secretary will be pleased to provide guidance and support on request.

Hazardous activities

Most of the regular activities of the church and its organisations would be considered non-hazardous, or, if hazardous and included in the normal programme, will be covered by the group's annual Risk Assessment.

A "Hazardous Activity" is an unusual or one-off activity or event where there is a higher than usual risk of injury (including, for example: barbeques; canoeing, swimming or other water based events; firework displays; rock scrambling; rollerblading; or the use of bouncy castles and similar inflatable devices;) either on our premises or elsewhere, when organised by a church group or other body acting in the name of the church.

Whenever such an activity is being planned, a Hazardous Activity Form must be completed and submitted, together with a Risk Assessment, in accordance with the Hazardous Activity procedure (See the church web-site or ask the church office or Health and Safety Officer).

NB: The activity must not go ahead until specific permission has been granted in response to the information submitted. Therefore, adequate time must be allowed for proper consideration of the request.

6.2.3 Risk Assessment – ratios

An important aspect of any risk assessment is ensuring that you have a suitable ratio of staff to children and young people. A number of factors will come into play in assessing the ratio for any particular activity or group:

- **The age of the children and young people** – generally speaking the younger the children the higher the ratio should be of adults to children
- **Special needs** – Do any of the children have special needs that will require additional support?

- **Behavioural issues** – Do any of the children or does the group as a whole present challenging behaviour that can be difficult to control?
- **The venue** – If the venue is large and sprawling and it is difficult to contain children and young people while on the premises it may be necessary to have additional personnel
- **Location** – Activities that take place away from the church premises normally require a higher ratio of adults to children than those that take place inside
- **Covering for emergencies** – How will you manage if someone has an accident and needs immediate medical attention? If one of your workers is likely to be “on call” is there sufficient cover in the event that s/he is called away?
- **Gender balance** – If you have a mixed group of children and young people it is ideal to try to ensure that you have both male and female workers present. This becomes increasingly important for older age groups

Recommended minimum ratios

The following table represents recommended *minimum* ratios of adults to children. This should be your starting point in calculating appropriate ratios for your groups and activities. If any special factors emerge within your risk assessment you should increase the recommended ratio in order to ensure the safety of the children and young people.

Remember that in calculating the ratios of workers to children you should not include young leaders who are under the age of 18 among your number of adult workers.

Age range	Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities
0 – 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 8 additional children
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

What happens when ratios fall below the required level?

The ratio of adults to children can fall below the optimum level in two different types of situation:

- In a one-off situation where a member of the leadership team is unavailable for one session and it is not possible to arrange alternative cover
- On a more permanent basis, where it is not possible to find sufficient volunteers to staff a group at the desired level

The one-off situation

When the first of these scenarios arises the remaining leaders should:

- Determine whether it is safe to continue with the planned programme
 - Are there ways of working that would reduce the risks?
 - If this is a week when additional staff were required because of the nature of the planned activities should the activities be changed?
- If children's and young people's safety is being put at unacceptable risk, then the event should be cancelled
- Write a report detailing:
 - The circumstances that led to the reduced staffing levels
 - The actions that were taken to reduce the risk to the children and young people.
- Give a copy of the report to the Designated Person for Safeguarding

If the reduced staffing will lead to one adult being alone with a child or a group of children or young people (if there is time) the event should be cancelled. If there is an emergency that leads to this situation, then the worker who is left alone should follow the practice outlined in the code of behaviour (see 5.2.1).

The ongoing situation

When insufficient volunteers can be found to staff a particular group at the optimum level a careful assessment of the situation should be made to see if the risks can be reduced or managed in a sustainable way.

- Are there ways of adapting the programme that would reduce the level of risk?
- Could the group meet at the same time as another group so that in the event of an emergency additional staff cover is available on the premises?
- Could a cap be placed on the number of children or young people attending the group to keep the ratio within manageable limits?

Any decision to run a group with staff ratios that are below the recommended level must be taken by the charity trustees of the church (i.e. the Leadership Team).

The decision should be recorded in their minutes together with

- The reasons why they believe this decision is justified

- Any measures that have been taken to minimise the risks to children and young people

In no circumstances should the trustees plan to continue running a group where only one adult will be present with the children and young people.

6.2.4 Risk assessment – procedures for transporting children and young people

Please note that this section should be read in conjunction with the code of behaviour for transporting children and young people (See 5.2.3).

It is church policy that parents/carers are responsible for transporting their children and young people to and from the normal venue for activities.

If informal private arrangements are made between parents the following procedures do not need to be applied. However, if the transport arrangements are offered and made by the church or organisation the procedures set out below must always be in place.

Whenever an appointed children's or youth worker gives a lift to children (other than their own children) to a church-run children's or young people's activity they must follow the procedures laid down by the church.

When children and young people are transported in cars

- Written permission from the parent/carer must be obtained
- The driver must understand and agree to the church's code of behaviour when transporting children or young people (see 5.2.3)
- The driver must have fully comprehensive insurance which covers voluntary work (or in the case of a paid worker, insurance that covers them for transporting others in the course of their employment)
- Seat belts must always be worn and the proper child seats and child restraints must be used for young children in accordance with the law
- If a volunteer driver who has not been appointed as a children's or young people's worker is used to transport children and young people on church activities, the driver must be appointed following the procedures outlined under the church's Safeguarding Policy
- A person should not be used as a driver for children and young people when their criminal record shows a record of driving offences that suggests that the person may not be a safe driver

When a mini-bus or coach is used to transport children or young people

- The mini-bus or coach must be fitted with seat belts on all of the seats and seat-belts must always be worn
- The number of children, young people and adults must not exceed the capacity of the coach or mini-bus so that all can have an allocated seat with a seat-belt
- When using coaches, ensure that the company has full insurance cover

- When using a self-drive mini-bus, the driver must hold the correct category of driving licence to comply with the requirements of the law, and special requirements may apply if the passengers are making a contribution to the associated costs. Further information is available on HM Government web-site:

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/DriverLicensing/WhatCanYouDriveAndYourObligations/index.htm>

- When using a self-drive mini-bus, the driver must comply with the requirements of the hiring organisation, e.g. a requirement to hold a MiDAS certificate. Note that the hiring organisation's rules may be more stringent than the requirements of the law with regard to driver licensing

6.2.5 Outings and overnight events

For all events when children and young people are taken off the church premises:

- A special risk assessment must be carried out (see 6.2.2), including an assessment of the appropriate ratio of adults to children (see 6.2.3), unless trips out are the regular practice of the group (e.g. the church football team) where the activities must be covered by the general risk assessment
- Parents must be informed in writing of the arrangements
- The children and young people should be divided into groups, each with a responsible adult, even if the whole group is to remain together. Each adult should be given a written list of those children or young people for whom they have responsibility
- If travelling in several small groups, it is good practice to insist that the same group of children or young people travel with the same adult on both the outgoing and return journeys. This minimises the possibility of children or young people going astray because of false assumptions that someone else has taken them

Overnight events

For overnight events, particular care needs to be taken, not least when it comes to making arrangements for sleeping accommodation. It is impossible to lay down strict rules to cover all situations. However, sensible precautions will minimise the risks for children, young people and workers.

Best practice in these situations can vary according to venue, children's ages and other conditions and will need to be discussed by the workers prior to the event. Consider the following checklist:

Risk assessment:

- Particular note should be taken regarding the proposed venue and its suitability for providing sufficient rooms for children and adults to sleep, together with arrangements for toilets and washing etc.
- Are there sufficient fire exits from the sleeping accommodation in the event of a fire?
- Are all of the workers conversant with the procedures in the event of a fire?

- Ascertain prior to the event the local telephone numbers and other information that would be needed in the event of an emergency (caretaker or other contact for property if not on site, local doctor, the location of the nearest Accident and Emergency Hospital etc.)

Parental consent:

- Separate parental consent must be obtained for each event where the child or young person will be cared for overnight
- A contact phone number overnight for the parent/carer should be obtained for the particular night(s) of the event
- Parents/carers should be given the address of the overnight venue together with a contact phone number for making contact in the event of an emergency. If giving a mobile phone number as the main point of contact, please ensure beforehand that the signal strength at the venue is sufficient to make and receive calls
- Ensure that parents/carers have returned a health form stating any special dietary requirements and current medication, and also giving the name and telephone number of the child's doctor and consent for emergency medical treatment
- Consideration should be given to having a meeting with parents/carers before the event
- All consent forms and contact and health information must be taken with the group

Sleeping arrangements

- Males and females should sleep separately
- If it is a mixed group of both boys and girls, there must be a mix of male and female adult workers
- Come to a measured judgement based on the circumstances of the group you are taking away as to whether it is wise for adults to share sleeping accommodation with children or young people. This will depend on the ages of the children, their need of support, the likelihood of older children bullying younger children, and the nature of the venue. If adults share sleeping accommodation with children and young people, children and young people should always be able to dress and undress separately from adults. An adult should never sleep alone in a room with children or young people

Checklist for residential events

The following checklist will help to identify a number of important issues that should be considered for the safety and well-being of the children and young people when planning residential events:

- At least one of the workers/leaders must be responsible for First Aid and must hold an appropriate, valid certificate
- The person responsible for catering should hold a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate
- Check the insurance cover of any building in which you will be sleeping. There may be a limit on numbers it accommodates. If you exceed these, insurance can be invalid

- Check the building and know where water, electricity and gas can be turned off
- Fire safety
 - Know the fire drill for the building, and make sure you have a fire drill as soon as possible after entering the premises
 - Know where the fire extinguishers are
 - A Location Specific Plan should be displayed alongside the Fire Notice in each room
 - Church halls and rooms used for sleeping larger numbers of people **must** have **two** means of exit
- Know where the nearest hospital and doctor are. It is good practice to make contact with a local doctor prior to the event
- It is a good idea to notify the local police. This applies if you are sleeping in any building, even if only for one night, and even if it is your own church. Also it is helpful to inform the fire brigade
- Ensure that parents/carers have returned a Consent Form: Outings¹², which requests any special dietary requirements and current medication, giving the name and telephone number of the child's doctor and consenting to emergency treatment
- Residential activities must have safety rules
 - Letting adults know where you are
 - Not entering the kitchen without asking the cook, etc.
- Make sure that the children and young people have correct clothing for whatever activity they are taking part in. It is useful to issue a "kit list" for residential activities
- Where outdoor activities are concerned, either leaders should have the appropriate qualification, or if the activity is being provided by an outside organisation, then you should check that this organisation is registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority and has appropriate insurance. Current guidelines suggest that for any camping or hill walking activity, the basic qualification held should be the Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA)

6.3 Welcoming children into an all-age community

6.3.1 General

The church is an all-age community, with a gospel welcome extended to all. While the church will exclude from holding positions of trust with children and young people anyone who is believed to be unsuitable, we would want to do everything possible for those people still to find their rightful place within the community of the church.

There will be a number of occasions when children and young people will be present on church premises as part of the all-age community of the church where careful consideration needs to be given to what it means to provide them with a safe environment, including:

- Before and after church services

- Family or all-age services
- Social events that are open to the whole church family
- Rehearsals for productions that might include children, young people and adults

All of these situations give rise to circumstances where children and young people could be placed in a vulnerable situation should a bully or a potential abuser wish to take advantage. Therefore:

- It is important that the church Safeguarding Policy is adopted, owned and understood by the whole church membership. The annual review of the policy will address areas of church life where adults, children and young people come together but where no formal children's or youth activities are being organised. The report of the review will provide an occasion for educating the church meeting and helping all church members to understand their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding
- Wherever practicable it will be clearly communicated when representatives of the church are taking responsibility for the welfare of children and young people and when children and young people on church premises are in the care of their parents/carers
- The general rule is that parents and carers are responsible for the care and actions of their children and young people at all times, except when they are taking part in the activities of a designated church group or organisation
- Whenever children and young people are on church premises, regardless of whether they are in the care of their parents or of the church, the church will be responsible for health and safety issues regarding the church premises
- If anyone in the church is aware of a hazard affecting the welfare and safety of children and young people in the context of church-organised activities or relating to church premises, they have a duty to report it to the Health and Safety Officer and/or the Church Secretary so that action can be taken to minimise the associated risks

6.3.2 Before and after church services

- Children and young people should not be allowed to congregate in rooms in the church premises with no adult supervision
- Children under the age of eight years are not allowed on church premises unless they are accompanied by a parent/carer (or another adult identified by the parent/carer) when not part of an organised children's group
- Unaccompanied children are not allowed on the balcony at any time
- Children and young people are not allowed in the kitchens unless supervised by a responsible adult
- Children under the age of eight years are not allowed to leave their group or class unaccompanied. Groups must have a system in place to ensure that each child leaves only with

the correct adult. Once the children have been collected from their group, the responsibility for each child reverts from the group leaders to the parents or adult in charge of collecting them

- Unsupervised children must not be allowed to wander into the car park. The welcome team will endeavour to prevent this happening, but responsibility remains with the parents/carers
- Those responsible for the care of children should take particular care on those occasions when there is a baptismal service, as the baptistery will be open during some periods in the service
- The stewards should monitor the activities of any strangers on the premises, although this is the responsibility of everyone in the congregation
- If there are any adults in the congregation who pose a risk to children and young people their behaviour should be closely monitored during these times
- If the church has a known offender attending the conditions of the offender's contract must be fully enforced and adhered to (for further information, see 7.2)
- At the close of the service, the last person to leave is responsible for checking that the church building is empty and that all children and young people have left the church premises before the building is locked

6.3.3 Family or all-age services

- Parents/carers will remain responsible for the welfare of their children and young people

6.3.4 Multi-generational dramatic or musical productions

Care should be taken to ensure that the church's Safeguarding Policy is not compromised during the process, thus putting children or young people at risk. However, neither should fear about safeguarding issues make such a project unworkable, because it is thought that everyone who has any kind of contact with children or young people will have to have a DBS Disclosure.

Children and young people will be appropriately protected if the following guidelines are followed:

- Named people must be responsible for the care and welfare of children and young people during the rehearsals and production
- These people must be appointed under the procedures laid down under the church's Safeguarding Policy and they must be fully conversant with the church's policy and procedures
- At least two of these named people will be present whenever children and young people are involved in rehearsals and for the production itself
- These named people will be responsible for ensuring the welfare of children and young people and in particular will be vigilant to ensure that all interaction between adults and children is appropriate and does not pose a risk of harm to children and young people

6.4 Photography

It is not illegal to take photographs of children, however when taking photographs or video footage we must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Signed consent should be obtained from parents/carers for photographs to be taken at church activities. The consent form is part of the Registration Form and clarifies where those photographs are likely to be used (display board, website, press etc.) These forms are available from the Church Office, or in the children's group files.
- Photographing children and young people should be conducted with sensitivity and courtesy. Consent of the child is just as important as parental permission
- When photographs are displayed children and young people should not be identified by name, nor should it be possible to infer the identity of individual children and young people from the photograph
- Photographic material should be stored safely in a place that has been agreed and minuted by the Leadership Team
- Leaders should not store images of children and young people on their mobile phones
- Any photos sent to the press must not identify individual children or young people by name, nor should the names of individual children be able to be inferred from an accompanying caption or story
- Copies of photographs must not be distributed to other individuals without the permission of a parent/carer. This includes digital images
- Additional information on the use of photography can be found on the Baptist Union website: www.baptist.org.uk

6.5 Other user groups

Not all of the groups using the church premises will be organised and run by church members.

Outside hirers who are using the church's premises and who work with children and young people, are required to have a safeguarding policy and procedures in place, based on UK Government recommendations, and a clause to this effect is included in the church's standard hiring agreement. As evidence of this we are entitled to see a copy of the safeguarding policy and procedures document.

Responsibility to ensure that the safeguarding policy is being properly implemented lies with the group and their trustees. However, if it comes to light that a group using the premises is not following appropriate safeguarding procedures and that children or young people are being placed at risk, then this must be reported to the Designated Person for Safeguarding and the Church Office Administrator, and termination of the agreement will be seriously considered.

Some groups using church premises may need to be registered with OFSTED. If this is the case, the OFSTED registration certificate should be checked by the Centre Manager and details recorded.

7 A SAFE COMMUNITY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

When children and young people become a part of the life of the church they become part of a far wider community than that specifically involved in children's and young people's work.

This wider community life has the potential to enrich their development and growth, but it also brings with it additional risks that need to be addressed.

Firstly, this wider community involves the other children and young people, who are able to be cruel and unkind to one another. Procedures are therefore required to address the particular potential for bullying.

Secondly, children and young people may be on the premises and may interact with a wide range of people who will not have been through any kind of “vetting” procedure and who may not have any awareness of the church’s safeguarding policy and procedures. A particular issue arises when a person attends the church who is known to have offended against children or young people in the past.

7.1 Prevention of bullying

The church has an Anti-Bullying Policy¹³. A copy is available from the Church Office.

7.2 When a known offender is present

The church is a community that is welcoming and open to all. Those who have abused children and young people in the past are to be included in this welcome. However, the gospel imperative to welcome the sinner must be set alongside the gospel imperative that the protection of children and young people must be paramount.

When it is known that a person who has been convicted of sexually abusing children or young people is attending the church, their behaviour within the church community will be properly managed and a contract put in place. There may also be times when it is appropriate to take such measures with a person who has faced a series of allegations about sexual abuse of children and young people but has never been convicted.

If an offender is on the Sex Offenders’ Register they will be monitored under guidelines known as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). In the latest guidance, there is provision to require a written contract to be in place if the offender wishes to attend a place of worship.

In determining the details of the contract:

- The Safeguarding Trustee, the Designated Person for Safeguarding and the Minister must always be informed
- There should be a discussion about who should be informed of the nature of the offence and the details of the contract. The rights of the offender to re-build their lives without everyone knowing the details of their past offence should be balanced against the need to protect children and young people
- The Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee should determine whether the person is subject to supervision or is on the Sex Offenders’ Register. If so, the Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee should make contact with the offender’s Specialist Probation Officer (SPO) who will inform the church of any relevant information or restrictions that the church should be aware of
- The Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee should inform and take advice from the Regional Minister in the local Baptist Association

An open discussion must be held with the person concerned in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of the church. A written contract will be drawn up which identifies appropriate behaviour. The person concerned will be required to sign the contract. The contract:

- Will identify the meetings the person may attend
- Will specify that they will always sit apart from children and young people
- May ask that they are always accompanied by a befriender on church premises
- Will require the person not to attend small group meetings where children or young people are present
- Will require that the person declines hospitality where there are children or young people
- Will state that the person will never be alone with children or young people while attending church functions
- Will require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children or young people meet

The contract will be monitored and enforced. If it is broken, appropriate sanctions will be considered. Ultimately, it might be necessary to ban the person from attending the church.

8 GLOSSARY & ABBREVIATIONS

BUGB Baptist Union of Great Britain

CAYAC Children's And Young people's work Advisory Committee

DBS Disclosure and Barring Service

HM Government's Disclosure and Barring Service helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. It replaces the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

LADO Local Authority Designated Officer

The Government guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010* requires all county level and unitary local authorities in England to appoint a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who has the responsibility to provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies in monitoring the progress of any child protection investigations to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a thorough and fair process. In the same guidance churches are required to report all allegations against people who work with children and young people to the LADO.

MIDAS This is the award winning **Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme**, organised by the Community Transport Association. MiDAS is a nationally-recognised standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers. The scheme is designed to enhance driving standards and promote the safe operation of minibuses.

¹ Safe To Grow, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Sixth Edition 2011

² Incident Form 11B, WBC

³ Locked filing cabinet in Church Office, WBC

⁴ Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>

⁵ Safe Recruitment Policy 17A, WBC

⁶ Safe To Grow, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Sixth Edition 2011, Page 57

⁷ Registration Form for Children and Young People 10B, WBC

⁸ Media and Electronic Communication Policy 14A, WBC

⁹ Data Protection Policy 15A, WBC

¹⁰ Health and Safety Policy 7A, WBC

¹¹ Risk Assessment Groups and Events 7C, WBC

¹² Consent Form: Outings 10D, WBC

¹³ Anti-bullying policy 13A, WBC

Copies of the above forms and policies are available from the Church Office.