

CCS

SAFEGUARDING

POLICY

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Why have a Safeguarding Policy?

The leadership of Christ Church Southampton takes its responsibilities for the care and protection of children (anyone under 18) and vulnerable adults very seriously, and puts a high value on all its work with children and young people. These guidelines have been produced to ensure that this work is carried out in a way that brings glory to God. The objective is to reduce the risk of adverse incidents occurring against children, and to explain the procedure for reporting such incidents. They are in accordance with the Home Office Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) and guidance published by thirtyone:eight (formerly the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)) and the NSPCC. They are for the protection of children, young people, vulnerable adults and those who work among them.

Our aim is to be consistent with the Bible in its teaching that all people are God's special creation and as such are individuals with their own special characteristics and needs. Each should be respected, cared for appropriately, and protected from harm as much as possible.

Safeguarding is the collective responsibility of all but the final responsibility for decisions is with the Eldership of Christ Church, who are the Trustees of the Charity.

What activities do we provide?

Reference should be made to the Christ Church Southampton website www.christchurchsouthampton.org.uk for information regarding activities.

Safeguarding Coordinators

Any child or general safeguarding concerns should be brought to the attention of Simon Aellen, the Safeguarding Coordinator for Christ Church (SC), Marie Kiledjian. or, in their absence, to Liam Brocken, the Children's & Youth Pastor (C&YP).

Simon Aellen	M: 07810 438005	T: 023 8019 4727
Marie Kiledjian	marie.kiledjian@gmail.com	
Liam Brocken	liam@christchurchsouthampton.org.uk	

Recruiting Leaders

All adults involved with the care of children at Christ Church, salaried and volunteers, are considered leaders as far as this policy is concerned. All leaders of regular children's work are Partners or Associate Partners of Christ Church.

Supervision of activities

A minimum of two leaders will always be present for all group activities; three is preferred. It is better to cancel an activity than to be a lone worker.

Every effort will be made to ensure that a gender balance is maintained.

As a general rule, the recommended ratio of children to adults in the table below will be followed with the ratio normally calculated on the age of the youngest child.

	Adults	:	Children
0 to 2 years	1	:	3
2 to 3 years	1	:	4
3 to 8 years	1	:	8

As there is no official guidance for children over 8 the suggested ratio is two adults for up to 20 children, with an additional leader for every 10 children.

Situations when a leader is left alone with a child where they cannot be seen must be avoided. When it is necessary to work one-to-one with a child this should be done where it is easily observable by others.

Only adults approved by Christ Church will be allowed in the crèche area, except when a crèche child needs their own parent to care for their needs.

Other children will not be permitted in the crèche. Exceptions will only be made for the children of parents who are serving in crèche, with the approval of the C&YP and SC. Such children will be under the direct supervision of their own parent.

Conduct of Leaders

Leaders must take care over their own behaviour and language (no swearing or innuendo) with other leaders and children. Their example is a great help to the children.

Supervision of the behaviour of children and young people

The best way to ensure the smooth running of an activity is to endeavour to provide, as far as possible, activities that are interesting, fun and enjoyable. However, occasionally it will be necessary to challenge a young person's behaviour.

When unacceptable behaviour occurs, leaders will discipline ONLY as follows:

Verbal warning

Personal Challenge

Exclusion

The definitions of these stages are:

Verbal warning: *a request to stop unacceptable behaviour, explanation of why it is unacceptable and a warning of the consequences.*

Personal Challenge: *a child is challenged about their behaviour, away from the group, and in the company of another leader. The consequences of further behaviour*

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will be clearly explained. It is at the discretion of the leader as to whether the parents are informed. The child must always be informed if their parents will be told.

Exclusion: *this is only to be used as a last resort, after consultation with the C&YP and/or an Elder, and only when behaviour of a serious nature has been persistent. Parents will always be informed.*

Physical punishment must **never** be used even if a parent has given explicit permission. Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child who is harming themselves or others. In all cases the least possible force must be used and parents informed as soon as possible. All such incidents must be recorded and the information given to the SC.

Suggestions to help with behaviour management

Discipline is the education of a person's character. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life, is evidence of love and is God's heart (Hebrews 12:5-12 and Proverbs 22:6).

- Be insistent, consistent and persistent.
- Discipline out of love and never anger. Call on other leaders for support if you feel you may act unwisely.
- Do not discipline by using ridicule.
- Do not shout in anger or put down a child. Change tone but do not shout.
- Keep the ground rules simple and clear, and make sure the children understand what procedures will be taken if they are not kept.
- Never reject the child, just the behaviour. Encourage the child that you want them, but are not willing to accept the behaviour.
- Each child is unique and may need a different method of being dealt with.
- However, be aware that other children will quickly notice unfairness or inconsistency in your management of the group.
- Work on each individual child's positives, do not compare them to each other, but encourage them and build them up.
- Be a good role model and set a good example. Don't expect the children to do what you do not, and vice versa.
- Take care to give quieter and well-behaved children attention and don't allow some children to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that the other team members know what you have said as this avoids manipulation.
- Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive when together.
- Have the child sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to them.
- Encourage good behaviour by giving specific praise.

Parents' and Guardians' responsibilities

Parents and guardians are responsible for their children at all times whilst they are in the church environment, except whilst in a small group event when a leader accepts the responsibility. Once accepted, they are in Christ Church's care until a parent or guardian collects them. Parents and guardians remain legally responsible for their children whilst on the same premises.

It is the duty of a parent or guardian to bring and collect their children from meetings promptly, unless other arrangements have been made.

If a parent does not have the right of access to a child, the leaders of that child's group must be informed.

Definitions of abuse

Abuse is defined as any action that intentionally harms or injures another person. The five main types of abuse are:

1. **Physical:** someone deliberately hurting or injuring a child.
2. **Emotional:** a lack of love and affection; isolating or ignoring a child.
3. **Sexual:** adults (or other children) using children to satisfy sexual desires.
4. **Verbal:** language used by adults or other children to humiliate or frighten.
5. **Neglect:** failure to care for children and to protect them from danger, impairing health and development.

Preventative action

At all times leaders should conduct themselves in ways that will not risk the reputation of themselves, the church or the honour of Jesus Christ. False allegation is a terrible burden to carry. In the event that a parent/guardian appears to be implying abuse where there is none, it is wise to take preventative action. This may involve note-taking on all occasions of contact with that child and ensuring that another person who is aware of the issue is present at all times.

Procedure if abuse is alleged or suspected

We as a church and as individuals have a duty to respond to any report or suspicion of abuse made to us by a child or adult. Alleged or suspected abuse might be within the child's home, at school, or elsewhere. It could even be in one of our church children's activities.

See Appendix A for signs of abuse

If abuse is alleged or suspected leaders should act as follows:

Do not delay

Do not act alone

Do not begin an investigation

Consult the person you are directly responsible to: C&YP or SC

What to do if a child tells a Leader about abuse of any kind

- Keep calm and try not to appear shocked.
- Look at the child directly.
- Receive what the child says.
- Reassure the child they are right to tell you.
- Do not press for information or ask leading questions.
- Be aware the child may have been threatened.
- Let them know that you will need to tell someone else. Do not promise confidentiality.
- Finish on a positive note.
- Make notes as soon as possible, preferably within an hour of the interview. Write exactly what the child said. Record dates and times of these events.
- Sign and date the original notes and keep them even if subsequently typed up.
- Immediately refer to the activity leader, C&YP or SC.

The SC, in consultation with an Elder, may refer the matter to the Child Protection Unit. This is based at Southampton City Council Children's Assessment team:

14 Cumberland Place, Southampton, SO14 2BG

Telephone: 023 8083 3336

email: children.first@southampton.gov.uk

Policies on specific situations

Not all of these policies will be relevant to every group but should be read as needed.

Toileting

- Leaders should encourage young children to be independent.
- If a leader needs to escort a young child to the toilet, they must inform another adult.
- Only female leaders (over 18) may escort children to the toilet.
- If a baby's nappy needs changing, a parent will be called or two leaders will be present.
- If a toddler soils him/herself, one of the child's parents will be called to clean and change their child. In the event of a parent not being available, a second adult should be present.

Touching

- Touch should be related to a child's needs. A hand shake, pat on the shoulder, restraining touches if necessary, are all appropriate.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child. Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have from others.
- Activities involving inappropriate or intrusive touching must be avoided, as should activities that involve excessive physical contact or those which might encourage sexual behaviour.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream), encourage the child to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.

Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

Transport

Parents will normally make transport arrangements for their own children.

- If lifts are given, two leaders should normally be present in the car.
- Leaders will not give lifts to a child or young person on their own and only give a lift to a lone child when the risk of leaving them outweighs the risk of taking them. It may be possible to wait with a child in a public place for a parent to collect rather than to take them in a car.
- If the parents of a lone child cannot be contacted, another leader, the SC, an Elder or staff member must be contacted by the leader for permission to transport him/her in the car. This person will note the time of the phone call

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and be contacted after the drop-off to make a note of the conclusion of the journey.

- Children/young persons must always be asked to sit in the back of the car.
- Where a mixed group of young people are being taken to their homes, if a male is driving, the girls should be delivered home first. If a female is driving, the boys should be delivered home first.

If individual arrangements are made, these must be agreed with the parent/guardian. It is vital for reasons of safety that any such special arrangements are adhered to. If someone who is not one of our leaders regularly gives lifts it is best for them to be DBS checked and to go through the normal application process.

Electronic communication

- Leaders must not communicate via electronic means with children or young people aged under 18. All communication must be via parents or guardians wherever possible.
- Leaders must not hold children's or young people's mobile numbers or email addresses either on their phones or computers and must not communicate by these means unless the leader is a relative of the said child.
- Private emails or social media communications received from children are to be ignored just as if an unsolicited email or text was sent by a child, and the parent will be informed as quickly as reasonably possible.
- By exception the Anchored group will be allowed to use and communicate between themselves and the Anchored leaders via social media, in a way previously agreed by the leaders. However, the agreed system must only be accessible to the members of Anchored and their leaders and also include at least one other DBS-certificated Church Partner and a DBS-certificated Elder.
- Email correspondence between leaders and members of the Anchored group will have parents copied in, along with at least one other leader. All members of the Anchored group should be made aware of this protocol and the reasons behind it.

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Visiting

- No leader should invite an individual child to their home.
- If a group of children are invited to a leader's house, it must be with the knowledge and consent of the parents/guardians, and at least one additional adult must be present. If the two leaders are a married couple, a third DBS-certificated adult must be present.
- The home must be a place that is solely or jointly owned or exclusively rented by any of the leaders. This means that activities cannot be held in shared/student accommodation.
- Leaders should only visit a child in the child's home when a parent, guardian or other adult is present.

Residential trips

With residential trips there is necessarily more contact between leaders and children. Safeguarding for each trip will be discussed in advance by the C&YP, SC and a nominated Elder.

Photographs of children

Christ Church Southampton is committed to safe practice when dealing with images of children. No names or any other personal information that could enable identification of a child are to be used. Photographs of children will not be displayed on the church website without the previous agreement of the parents, guardians, or carers of those children. All images must be securely stored on a church computer or secure online facility and password-protected. The period of time between transferring images from a camera to a church computer should be kept to an absolute minimum and the images should then be immediately erased from the camera. Children's workers should not have photos of children on their personal devices which were taken at a children's event.

Novel situations

No policy can be written that covers every eventuality. If a situation arises that is not covered or where the appropriate action is unclear, it must be raised with the C&YP and SC and a record kept of the discussion by the C&YP. When the Safeguarding Policy is updated these notes will be considered and any necessary updates made.

Appendix A: Signs of abuse

Physical abuse

Bumps and bruises don't necessarily mean a child is being physically abused – all children have accidents, trips and falls. If a child often has injuries, there seems to be a pattern, or the explanation doesn't match the injury, then this should be investigated.

Emotional abuse

Children suffering emotional abuse may show a marked lack of self-confidence since they are used to being consistently isolated or ignored and seldom receive praise. They may not talk about their parent/guardian/carer with any warmth due to problems within a family, such as marital strife, mental health issues, drugs or alcohol.

Sexual abuse

Children who are being or have been sexually abused may:

- avoid being alone with people, such as family members or friends;
- seem frightened of a person or reluctant to socialise with them;
- show sexual behaviour that's inappropriate for their age;
- use sexual language or know information that you wouldn't expect them to.

Verbal abuse

Signs of verbal abuse or bullying are not always easily apparent. No one sign indicates that a child is being bullied but you should look out for:

- belongings getting lost or stolen;
- being unexpectedly reluctant to go to church or an activity;
- asking for or stealing money (to give to a bully);
- being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn;
- problems with eating or sleeping;
- bullying others.

Neglect

Evidence of a lack of appropriate supervision, medical or health care, or being left hungry or dirty, or without adequate clothing

A child may be experiencing abuse online if s/he:

- spends lots of time online, texting, gaming or using social media;
- is withdrawn, upset or outraged after using the internet or texting;
- is secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online/on phone;
- has lots of new contacts.

A more detailed guide of the signs of abuse can be found on the NSPCC website:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/information-service/definitions-signs-child-abuse1.pdf>

Appendix B: Checklist for C&YP, SC and Elders

(C&YP: Children's & Youth Pastor; SC: Safeguarding Coordinator)

1. Oversee leaders. Know the leaders and any weak spots they may have. Especially watch new leaders and offer help if needed. Do not let new leaders be alone with children until you are confident in their ability and conduct.
2. Obtain permission from parents and guardians for all activities. Let parents be aware of arrangements well in advance.
3. Be sure that all the leaders know where the First Aid Box is located.
4. Work as a team. If you see a leader acting in a way that might be open to misinterpretation (or especially if you see definite wrongdoing), they must be advised. A person who dismisses such concerns is putting themselves under suspicion and the matter should be reported to the C&YP and SC, or to the Elders if the C&YP or SC is under suspicion.
5. Only leaders who are DBS checked and appointed by the church are to be present at children's activities. There are to be no 'visitors' dropping in. Exceptions are made for guests (see earlier on page 4) and for a potential leader who may want to be involved in the future. In these cases, the visitor must always be in close proximity to a leader and be there with the C&YP's or SC's prior permission. (Prior means being well in advance of the session. A leader may not give permission to someone turning up at the session.)
6. Parents who wish to attend should be dealt with on an individual basis. Obviously we have nothing to hide and a parent has every right to know what their child is doing and with whom. However, we must realise that a parent is not DBS checked and cleared by the church and is therefore a theoretical risk to the other children and a concern for their parents. Any parent who wishes to attend must comply with the same rules as for any other visitor and understand attendance is a temporary arrangement.
7. Make sure children stay with the group. We are responsible for them for the time of the club or activity and the parents expect that. The child cannot be allowed to leave early and go where they want to. Different children have different boundaries of responsibility. We are only responsible from when they arrive until when they leave, unless we are collecting them and taking them back home. A child who is allowed to make their own way to and from the activity is a particular concern if they then want to leave and go. It may be wise to telephone the parent to inform them. They must realise that we are responsible for them and therefore we do have a say in when they can leave.
8. The ready acceptance of a new attendee is particularly important when considering Treasure Seekers. Like our adult church services, this is an 'open to the public' church meeting. As such, it is impractical to suggest or expect that we will have prior **written** parental permission for a child to attend – verbal permission is acceptable. We regularly have visiting families and openly invite

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them to come and worship with us, understanding that they may only be with us for a week or two. However, we will explain to parents that we have a policy for their child's protection and that if the child wishes to come regularly we will need written permission for the long term.

9. It is appropriate that the SC or a nominated Elder visit activities, specifically to check that we are in compliance with our own policy. As well as giving a record of compliance, this is intended to maintain relationships with the leaders and show that we are taking our responsibilities seriously.
10. If Christ Church Southampton undertakes to organise lifts or similar help for adults identified as 'vulnerable' then those who regularly help will have a DBS check if they have not already been recruited to children's work.
11. Christ Church Southampton is committed to regular safeguarding training for all leaders, thereby developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All leaders will receive induction training and undertake safeguarding training on a regular basis. The SC and one other Elder will participate in thirtyone:eight training (formerly CCPAS) unless they have other relevant professional experience. The Church Elders will also ensure that children and vulnerable adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.
12. Children aged 14 or above who regularly attend Christ Church Southampton, with the approval of the S&YC, may assist with our regular children's work. Children under the age of 14 who regularly attend Christ Church, with the approval of the SC, may assist occasionally with children's work, e.g. at a children's special activity day, or due to a special need. Before commencing such an activity, a Junior Helper Form is to be completed and signed by the child, parent/guardian and leader, and held on record by the C&YP. No person under 18 will be left alone to supervise a child or children. At all times a leader with a current DBS certificate is to be present and will be directly responsible for supervising the Young Assistant Leader.

**Appendix C: Responding to offenders
(who attend regularly or apply to join the Church)**

We regard the safety of children at Christ Church as of utmost importance. Due to the addictive and/or persistent nature of abusive behaviour, if a person has committed sexual offences, they should never again work or be placed in any position of responsibility that puts them in contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults. Similarly where an individual has committed offences of a violent nature a thorough risk assessment will need to be carried out to ascertain their suitability for working with the above.

This may include Christ Church seeking direct contact with the person's supervising probation officer (if supervised) or the police child protection team to ascertain the degree of risk.

As well as the above measures, there are several practical ways of managing those who may pose a risk.

1. Details about a convicted offender should be shared only with key individuals, e.g. the Safeguarding Coordinator and those with leadership responsibilities for children, young people and vulnerable adults. As well as addressing safeguarding issues, this should be done to promote greater understanding and support for the individual.
2. The person who poses a risk should never be on their own with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
3. A written set of guidelines should be developed for the person concerned, covering issues such as seating and activity participation, to avoid unwittingly placing the vulnerable in the vicinity of the person who poses a risk.
4. No undue attention should be given to an offender's story because they may derive pleasure from this. If the person does not keep to the boundaries set, the police should be contacted for advice. If the person no longer attends Christ Church, the statutory agencies, such as probation, police child protection team, or Children's and Adult Social Services, should be informed. This is because the individual may start to attend another church. If the statutory agencies are aware of this, they can share relevant information with the new place of worship.

NOTES

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