

## The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

# ChristChurch

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ChristChurch is a member of the Catalyst network of churches, which is part of Newfrontiers. We are also members of the Evangelical Alliance.

ChristChurch is led by a team of Elders, the team is led by Simon Fry. The legal responsibility of the church falls to the trustees, of which Phil Reah is chair. Throughout this document, when we refer to the leadership team, we mean the elders and trustees responsible for the governance of the church. It is this team that who support and equip the safeguarding lead and deputy in their roles to protect children and young people from harm.

Charity Number: 1118740

Insurance Company Public Liability Insurance with Ansvar Insurance

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[Section 1: Introduction and Intent](#)

[Section 2 Signs and Symptoms](#)

[Section 3: Handling a Concern.](#)

[Section 4: Recruitment and Management of workers.](#)

[Section 5: Good Practice Guidelines.](#)

Including data protection, supervision, online sessions, transportation, food and drink, photography, residential trips.

[Section 6: Managing behaviour.](#)

[Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms \(CSE, CCE, County lines, HBA. Domestic abuse\)](#)

[Appendix 2: Prevent](#)

[Appendix 3: Sample Consent Forms.](#)

[Appendix 4: Code of Conduct for Children's and Youth Workers.](#)

[Appendix 5: Working with Offenders.](#)

[Appendix 6: Helping those with Suicidal Thoughts](#)

## **Section 1: Introduction and Intent:**

- The Church runs a number of groups for children and young people on a Sunday morning during the main service. Mid-week we run a parent and toddler group, a parent and baby group and an after school club for children in years 5 and 6. We have youth activities that take place on various evenings in the week. The majority of people involved in youth and children's work are volunteers. The church is led by the elders, and legal and corporate responsibilities are held by the trustees

### **Our commitment**

The church leaders recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child." As a Leadership, we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

"Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2023 Government guidance clearly identifies voluntary, charity, social enterprise, (VCSE) faith-based organisations and private sectors role in safeguarding children. There is a clear duty for the church to have robust safeguarding procedures in place and to work with other agencies to keep children safe. The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:Eight ( Formerly CCPAS Churches Child Protection Advisory Service).

The Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.

### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care (working with statutory agencies as appropriate), and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the place of worship / organisation. The prayer ministry team in the church are able to offer support to those affected by abuse.

## **Section 2: Signs and Symptoms**

### **Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse**

#### **Understanding abuse and neglect**

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

*1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

*2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

### **Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)**

The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)'.

#### **What is abuse and neglect?**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Staff and volunteers working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, workers should always act in the best interests of the child.

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or

valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)**

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

#### **Physical**

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation\*
- Cuts/scratches/substance misuse\*

#### **Sexual**

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse

- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia\*
- Self-harm, or other physical injuries
- Bleeding, itching, STIs

### **Emotional**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying
- Low self-esteem, tearful, angry
- Reluctance to be with specific people
- Intimidation, coercion and harassment

### **Neglect**

- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, Untreated illnesses,
- Withdrawn
- Poor hygiene, language, appearance, social skills
- Inadequate care, etc

\*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

### **Child on child abuse**

Workers should be aware that abuse is not just adult to child, but can be between children and young people, known as “child on child” abuse. This can include teenage relationship abuse, sexual violence or harassment, sharing nude/semi-nude images, physical abuse, upskirting and hazing/initiation rituals. Concerns should not be dismissed as “banter” or “boys being boys” but should be shared with the safeguarding lead or deputy.

**See also Appendix 1 for detailed signs and symptoms regarding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), County Lines, So called “Honour” based Abuse (Female Genital Mutilation) and Domestic Abuse.**

## **Section 3: Handling a Concern:**

### **How to respond to a child wishing to disclose abuse:**

#### **Effective Listening**

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in a more private area, but making sure that doors remain open and that a leader is not alone with a child/young person.

- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk
- Above everything else listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Try to remain calm, even if on the inside you are feeling something different
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Do not ask questions about the incident being disclosed.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

#### **HELPFUL RESPONSES**

- You have done the right thing in telling me
- I am glad you have told me
- I will try to help you

#### **DON'T SAY**

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- I am shocked, don't tell anyone else

#### **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE**

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Following procedures as below:

- All concerns should be recorded on the Concern Form located in wall mounted holders in the office or Pevensey Room. These should be recorded as soon as possible after the event and include as much information as possible. Write down the actual words used in the conversation if possible, rather than paraphrasing. Please do not discuss the concern with anyone else other than the safeguarding officer or deputy.
- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Eloise Reah (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") tel no: 07967 818741 or [safeguarding@christchurchhailsham.org](mailto:safeguarding@christchurchhailsham.org) who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- The safeguarding co-ordinator and/or deputy will use the East Sussex Continuum of Need to clarify the level of concern. Level 1 or 2 concerns will not be referred to the single point of advice, appropriate support will be offered or sign-posted to parents or

carers. Level 3 or 4 concerns will be referred to the single point of advice. All actions will be documented and recorded in the safeguarding folder, stored in a locked cabinet accessed by the safeguarding co-ordinator and deputy only.

- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to Jenni Joyes (hereafter the "Deputy") tel no: 07756 176254 or [safeguarding@christchurchhailsham.org](mailto:safeguarding@christchurchhailsham.org). If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to the thirtyone: eight (Formerly Child Protection Advisory Service CCPAS) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4550. Alternatively contact the single point of advice or the police.
- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the single point of advice. **If the safeguarding co-ordinator is unsure about whether to make a referral they should contact thirtyone:eight or the LADO. Go to the website and complete an online referral form.**
- <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/professional-resources/lado/>

- **Responding to disclosures of suicidal thoughts:**

- From time to time children or young people might disclose suicidal thoughts. These should always be taken seriously and the young person supported to receive further help. This might be urgent (contact parents to take young person to A&E/dial 999) or not. See appendix 6 for details on how to respond.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership replaces the local safeguarding board. Referrals, advice and all other forms of contact are made through the single point of contact (SPOA).</b></li><li>• <b>The Single point of Contact number is: 01323 464222</b> (Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm).</li><li>• Out of hours, with serious concerns that can't wait till the next working day, contact the Emergency Duty Service. 01273 335905 or 01273 335906– (Monday to Thursday 5pm to 8.30am, after 4.30pm on Fridays, weekends and bank holidays).</li></ul> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Email: <a href="mailto:0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk">0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk</a></li></ul> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>The Police telephone number is 999 in an emergency and 101 for non-emergency calls.</b></li></ul> |
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The Safeguarding Co-ordinator **may** need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern (for example the Chair of Trustees to log that a safeguarding concern is being dealt with, Insurance company to log that there is a possibility of a serious incident concerning safeguarding or a Designated Officer (LADO) if allegations have been made about a person who has a role with under 18's elsewhere.

- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the place of worship / organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.
- Concerns that have been raised but have not met the criteria for referral will be noted and recorded securely by the safeguarding officer/deputy. We will endeavour to follow these up and see if there is further support to be offered, or further concern after the initial action has been taken.
- The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs 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.

The role of the safeguarding co-ordinator/ deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

### **Reporting a 'Serious Incident' to the Charity Commission**

Under Charity Commission regulations a Serious Incident occurs where a result has, or could, entail '...a significant loss of funds or a significant risk to the charity's property, work, beneficiaries or reputation. They should be reported as soon as possible.

As far as allegations of abuse are concerned Charity Commission guidance states:

'You (the place of worship or organisation) should report this if any one or more of the following occur:

- There has been an incident where the beneficiaries of your charity have been or are being abused or mistreated while under the care of your charity or by someone connected with your charity such as a trustee, member of staff or volunteer.
- There has been an incident where someone has been abused or mistreated and this is connected with the activities of the charity.
- Allegations have been made that such an incident may have happened regardless of when the alleged abuse or mistreatment took place.
- You have grounds to suspect that such an incident may have occurred.

The Charity Commission states that these are 'zero tolerance' issues which would always be investigated by them. Serious incidents also include not having adequate safeguarding policies in place and failure to carry out Disclosure checks on workers and trustees (where legally possible); in summary, anything that could affect the good reputation of the charity.

Those charities whose incomes exceed £25,000 must declare all Serious Incidents as part of their Annual Returns. Failure in the latter respect also signifies failure regarding the charity's legal obligations. Charities can make a report in the following ways:

- Writing to Charity Commission Direct, P O Box 1227, Liverpool L69 3UG
- Telephoning 0845 300 0218
- E-mailing [RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:RSI@charitycommission.gsi.gov.uk)



## **Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:**

### **Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.**

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the single point of advice (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Decide whether or not it is appropriate to tell parents/carers about the referral, taking advice from the single point of advice if necessary.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact the single point of advice direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to the single point of advice.

### **Allegations of sexual abuse**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the single point of advice.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

### **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will liaise with a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The safeguarding co-ordinator may also find it necessary to contact or liaise with the DBS if the situation is that the nature of concern leads you to end the employment of the worker or volunteer or would have made this decision in circumstances where they have left voluntarily.

## **Section 4: Recruitment and Management of Workers:**

The Leadership will ensure paid workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self-declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

## **Volunteers:**

All those wishing to work with children and young people at ChristChurch must apply and follow the following procedure.

- Discuss their interest with the person co-ordinating the group or the Church Elders.
- The group leader to ensure the suitability of the candidate to work with children and or young people.
- Meet with the children/youth co-ordinators to discuss the work and have the church's safeguarding policy and working procedures explained.
- Have a DBS check completed and renewed every three years, or provide details of and consent to check a valid DBS through the Government update service
- Provide 2 references which comment on their suitability for the role.
- Agree to comply with the safeguarding policy.
- Encourage all workers to complete basic safeguarding awareness course.
- New workers are all given a copy of the code of conduct and expected to adhere to it.

## **Safeguarding awareness**

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis This may be done using materials provided by thirtyone:eight. We will also encourage key workers to attend any local relevant training where it is applicable to church settings run by the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership. We will offer training to all workers annually, alternating between general safe-guarding training and addressing more specific needs within smaller teams. New team members will be briefed on safeguarding and required to read and agree to the safeguarding policies before beginning to work with children/young people.

## **Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct**

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers will be issued with a code of conduct towards children and young people.

## **Section 5: Good Practice Guidelines**

As a church working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

In this document the term parent should be read to incorporate parent/guardian/carer or person legally responsible for the child.

### **Duty of Care:**

The Children Act 2004 (England) places a duty on organisations involved in providing services for children and young people to safeguard and promote their well-being. This means all workers should treat those they are caring for with respect and dignity as well as demonstrate competence and integrity. (There are similar expectations in other parts of the UK.)

The duty of care is in part exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships but also by workers taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-

being of those they have responsibility for, particularly in relation to sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Before individuals start working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent to their role.

**In addition, under Health and Safety at Work legislation, organisations have a duty of care towards the well-being of all workers and to ensure they are treated fairly. They are required to provide a safe working environment and guidance on safe working practice.**

### **Position of Trust:**

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in positions of trust. It is therefore vital workers ensure they do not, even unwittingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately.

Workers should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted. Any kind of sexual relationship between an adult worker and a child (under the age of 18) is never acceptable and if concerns arise in this area, this should be recorded and reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The trusting relationship between worker and child, young person or vulnerable adult means the worker should never:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships that are or may become sexual

### **Data Protection:**

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is designed to provide privacy protection for individuals about whom certain personal information is kept. It specifies requirements for those who keep the data, and it applies to all personal information however its stored. It's incorporated into UK law and all organisations, including places of worship, must comply with the rules on processing data.

The GDPR restricts how we may process personal information and prevents the passing of PI to other organisations without consent. However there are exclusions to allow us to comply with legal requirements such as passing safeguarding information to the authorities. The European Convention of Human Rights also makes provision for the disclosure of information in connection with 'the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others and for the prevention of disorder or crime.... Disclosure should be appropriate for the purpose and only to the extent necessary to achieve that purpose'.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm and therefore information relating to concerns that a child, or any other vulnerable person, is at risk of significant harm should not be withheld on the basis that it might be unlawful.

Information about allegations or concerns of abuse should not be shown to a parent or carer. Advice should always be sought from the single point of advice, Adult Services, or the police. Thirtyone:eight can also advise in such circumstances.

### **Good Practice Standards**

#### **Supervision**

The church will aim to provide:

A minimum staffing ratio of adults to children which is adequate, gender- balanced and

takes into consideration the type of activity, e.g. outside visit, camp, etc.

**Our Sunday morning groups are run in secure rooms with mixed ages, the ratios we work to:**

**Little Sparks** (babies to preschool):

0-2 years – one adult to three children

2-4 years – one adult to four children

**Generator:** (reception to year 6)

4-11 years – one adult to eight children

**Rooted Youth (young people in years 7-13)**

11-18 years – one adult to ten children

Only volunteers over 16 are counted as adults.

The minimum number of workers when working with children under 18 is 2, one of which must be a female. Where a married couple are both leaders, another leader should be present to maintain accountability.

Leaders should maintain an attendance register which will record

- The child's name and date of birth.
- A contact phone number for the responsible person (if not on site).
- Any known allergies and medical requirements.
- Any other information required by the session leader and helpers.

**The leader must also ensure that**

- They have identified the person responsible for the child while attending the activity.
- They keep a copy of the rota that shows the members of the team who were present for the last six months.
- Accidents are recorded on an accident report form. Parents need to sign that they have seen the form, and these then need to be stored securely.
- It is helpful to keep a logbook where any incidents or concerns can be recorded. This must be stored securely. Workers must bear in mind that young people are entitled to read what has been written about them.

**Consent**

All groups

- All parents/guardians can ask the group leaders about the aims and workings of the group.
- There will be a form to notify the group leader of any medical or other information required together with consent for the child to attend the group.
- All the main activities that have been explained as being part of the group will be considered to be covered by this consent.
- Where the activity is taking place outside of the normal range then specific written consent is required from the parent/ guardian.

- Where there is the possibility of having to provide emergency medical attention parent/guardians must give their consent to this.

For children and young people from 5 years old (First Year of School)

- Parent/guardian consent is that children will take themselves to the activity taking place in the normal building and will return unaccompanied by staff. Children will be supervised by group leaders when using the stairs. (Unless specific arrangements have been agreed by the group leader.)

For children under 5 (Little Sparks/creche)

- Children will be taken to and collected from their group by their parent/carer.

## **Responsibilities of ChristChurch workers for sessions**

### **Responsibility for children up to and including Yr 6 (11yrs old)**

The leader's formal responsibility for sessions will be from when the child arrives until they leave.

The leader's formal responsibility will be for the time the child is in the session. The expectation is that when meeting with parents present in the building the child/young person will attend and leave unsupervised the group. Where the meeting is outside of this the parents will satisfy themselves that the means by which young people arrive at the activity and return home are known and considered safe. The leader of the group will take all reasonable steps to ensure that young people are safe when attending the activity and notify the parents if there are any concerns.

### **For children and young people Yr6 and over (11 yrs and over)**

The leader's formal responsibility will be for the time the child/young person is in the session. The expectation is that parents will satisfy themselves that the means by which young people arrive at the activity and return home are known and considered safe. The leader of the group will take all reasonable steps to ensure that young people are safe when attending the activity and notify the parents if there are any concerns.

### **Peer Group Activities:**

All peer-group activities should be overseen by named adults who have been selected in accordance with agreed recruitment procedures and have the backing of the leadership of the organisation.

Before setting up a peer-led activity the following should be taken into consideration:

- The appropriateness of the venue for the activity
- Any medical issues, dietary needs and allergies will be appropriately managed.
- Emergency contact numbers are to hand for all members under the age of 18 years.
- If the provision of food is part of the activity, leaders must ensure that food is prepared in accordance with Basic Food Hygiene standards.

Whilst there may be a valid argument for groups of age 16+ being led and run by their peers, adult leaders should always be in the vicinity and should contribute to any programme reviews and planning. Peer-group leaders must be trained and supported by at least one adult worker.

The following should also be followed:

- If there are children/young people under 16yrs at an activity, adult workers should be

present or within earshot.

- No person under the age of 16 should be left with the sole responsibility of caring for or supervising other children or vulnerable adults.
- Young people (over 16) who assist with caring for other children/young people should be subjected to the same recruitment process as adults and have undertaken safeguarding training.
- Peer-group leaders should be aware of safeguarding procedures, including reporting concerns (e.g. abuse, bullying) to their supervising adult and that sensitive information should not be shared openly in the group.
- Parents/carers must always be kept informed about what peer-group activities are for, who the leaders are, how they are run, where they meet and what parents can do to support them.

### **Oversight of Workers:**

Each group will have a group leader who will maintain regular contact with workers to plan and review activities.

Group leaders will be the first point of contact for workers while the church leaders, having overall oversight, are also available to discuss any matters relating to children's safety and wellbeing.

If a worker is thought to be unsuitable or a complaint is made, this will be investigated by the Safeguarding Officers. Any allegations will be dealt with according to the church's safeguarding procedure. The Elders will then comply with the decisions reached in any formal investigation. If an internal review takes place, the Elders will subsequently decide whether the worker should continue working with children.

### **Session Leader Responsibilities**

The session leader will be the person that has lead responsibility for that session. All those working in that session should know who this is and follow the direction and guidance given. The tasks required of the session leader include:

- Ensuring that both the access to and physical environment of the building are safe and well lit.
- Risk Assessments should be carried out wherever an activity is to take place, including outings and residential trips.
- Ensure there is sufficient children/young people's workers present to meet the standard set out in this document.
- Being fully aware of the fire drill procedures in the building and their role in an emergency.
- Checking equipment regularly and ensuring that all activities are properly supervised.
- Identifying any hazards present in a session and taking action to minimise the effects of these. Examples include physical objects that may cause a trip or collision, uncovered electrical sockets and unsecured exits.
- Challenging other people who join the session and ensuring that all visitors have a valid reason to be present and are supervised.
- Where food is provided basic health and hygiene standards should be maintained. Food and drink should be stored correctly. Clean drinking water should be available.
- Workers should know where the first aid kit can be found, and who is trained and able to administer first aid if required.

## **Session Workers Responsibilities**

- As far as possible a worker should not be alone with a child where their activity cannot be seen. This may mean leaving doors open.
- Workers should not agree to keep secrets or make promises which they cannot keep to young people/children.
- No-one under 16 should be left in charge of a group.
- An adult will always be present at Youth Life Group meetings held in homes, if necessary in an adjoining room with the door open.

## **Conduct of all Workers**

Workers should:

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age and cultural background.
- Watch language, tone of voice, attitude, actions and any physical contact.
- Set clear boundaries in relation to behaviour by the children and the right to involve parents if this is unacceptable.

Workers should NEVER:

- Invade the privacy of children when they are showering or using the toilet.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person, even in fun.
- Inappropriately or intrusively touch a child. Any physical contact should be public, age appropriate, and related only to the needs of the young person, never the adult's.
- Scapegoat, reduce or reject a child or young person.
- Let young people involve you in excessive attention seeking that is of a sexual or physical nature.
- Invite a child or young person to their home on their own. It is appropriate to invite a group as a planned activity but only with sufficient supervision.

## **Online Sessions**

Online sessions present different issues. We cannot control the environments of attendees. There are measures we can use to reduce risk. These include:

- Meeting invitations should be sent to parents to ensure they know the meeting is happening. Invitations should have a password and be sent by email rather than advertised online. Enable the Waiting Room so that we can check the right people are wanting to enter the meeting. In the event of young people attempting to join without recognisable usernames, the host can put the group into a breakout room while they verify the identity of the person in the waiting room.
- As part of the invitation, or at regular intervals, remind children/young people of some basic expectations to protect themselves, everyone else in the meeting, and their own families. For example they should be mindful of anything in the background that might cause embarrassment or loss of privacy to themselves/family members, or that reveals personal information they would not usually share. Users can obviously add their own background, but again ask that this is something appropriate and not offensive. They should be dressed appropriately, and not intrude on their household's right to privacy. They should not take screenshots of the group online, and these cannot be shared.
- Sessions should not be recorded without parents' knowledge or without a clearly stated purpose of intent, e.g. we're recording the session to send to those who missed it, it will be shared by email. In general sessions should not be recorded.

- Meeting hosts need to be able to end the meeting quickly if someone is sharing something inappropriate. They should also set the meeting up to minimise disruption. E.g. preventing screen sharing. The host should have agreed rules that can lead to them removing a young person from the meeting should it be needed.
- Before sharing your own screen check that any tabs you have open are appropriate for children/young people and that you are not accidentally sharing private information.
- Online sessions are not designed to intrude on children or young people, but our duty of care is still binding. If we notice that one of the children appears unkempt, or has injuries, we should follow up our concerns in the usual ways.
- Just as we would never be alone with young people, we need to consider online meetings in a similar light. Two leaders should be present in the meetings with young people to keep everyone safe. While parents or other family members may be in the house, there is no guarantee that they can hear or see anything of the meeting and cannot be considered a safeguard. Where a married couple are both leaders, another leader should be present to maintain accountability.

### **Transportation:**

From time to time it may be necessary to transport children/young people to an activity. Driving should be restricted to those who have gone through the organisation's recruitment procedures for workers, and be DBS checked. A full checklist for consideration is included below.

- Parents / carers should be asked to sign a Transportation Consent Form (or include it in the General Information and Consent Form).
- Having checked drivers, it is reasonable to expect that they may be alone with a child for short periods. Consideration should therefore be given to dropping off the least vulnerable last and plan routes accordingly. Two workers in a vehicle does not in itself guarantee safety -there have been incidents where workers have acted abusively together.
- Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in the vehicle with someone they are transporting. If, for example, a child wants to talk to a driver about something and has waited until other children have been dropped off, the driver should explain that it isn't convenient to talk there and then, arrange to meet them at a location where there are other adults around with the knowledge of the group leader. (Remember they may want to talk to the driver about an abusive situation).
- When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle it is good practice to insist those being transported stay in the same groups on the out-going and return journey. This will avoid anyone, at worst, being left behind.
- At collection or dropping off points no child or young person should be on their own and the driver should make sure they are collected by an appropriate adult. This may also apply to an adult with care and support needs, depending on the nature of their vulnerability and/or disability.
- It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular individual e.g. where there has been a disagreement or they have romantic feelings for a driver.
- If parents or carers do some transporting, ensure they are made aware that such arrangements are their own responsibility and not the organisation's.

### **Transporting children in a car - Checklist**

- Drivers hold a current full driving licence
- Drivers are DBS checked and read and agree to abide to safeguarding policy.
- Vehicle is fully insured (domestic, pleasure and business) and road worthy
- Parental agreement obtained.



- Pick-up and drop-off times arranged.
- Agreement as to how many adults in the car.
- Agreement as to where children are seated – (front or rear of car, only transport for the recommended number of passengers.)
- Seatbelts used at all times.
- Risk assessment completed if journey is part of an organised trip.
- **Correct child seat restraints used for under 12s or children under the height of 135cm.**

## **Running Effective Sessions/ Maintaining Control**

The purpose of any session is for children to learn in an enjoyable atmosphere. This can only be achieved if effective boundaries have been established that encourage positive interaction. Maintaining this requires that workers make clear the expectations of acceptable behaviour.

Sessions should be run in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy.

## **Good Practice with Colleagues**

If you see another worker acting in ways that might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to your group co-ordinator about your concerns. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

Ongoing liaison with the group leader will give opportunity for workers to review procedures, ensure a common approach, share concerns and identify matters which need clarification or guidance.

There will be encouragement to report any necessary departure from the guidelines which will provide protection for the individual and informs the leadership of shortcomings and problem areas. These measures are also designed to protect workers from an unfounded accusation.

Any concerns should be reported to the Safeguarding Officers, and where necessary by completing a concern form (stored in wall mounted folder upon entrance to church office).

## **Use of the toilet**

During sessions there will be occasions when children will need to use the toilet. Workers should request that parents of smaller children ensure this takes place before they attend the session.

Children in the Generator group needing the toilet during sessions will be accompanied down the stairs by an adult who will remain in view at the foot of the stairs. Children will use the accessible toilet to ensure their privacy. Where children in the Little Sparks need to be escorted to a toilet, we recommend that this should be performed by a female.

Workers should always provide as much privacy as possible for the child, whilst ensuring they are appropriately supervised especially in public conveniences. Children should be encouraged to be as self-managing as possible and liaison with parents should make it clear what support will be required.

We do not provide a nappy changing service, so parents of very young children will be required to change their own child. If a child requires support due to wetting or soiling, the worker should seek the assistance of the parent if available, or another worker if not, and record this in the log. The parent should be informed as soon as possible.

During Youth work or children's activities, all workers should use the Accessible Toilet. This will help protect workers and children.

### **Residential Activity with Children**

Residential activities will need to be authorised by the Safeguarding Officer who will ensure that supervision levels are satisfactory and parents are satisfied with the arrangements. A risk assessment must be completed and signed by the Safeguarding Officer before the activity commences.

Workers must ensure a medical Information sheet/consent form will be completed by the parents of each child attending any residential activity. Prior to events the youth leader in charge will ensure that a paper copy of all emergency information is printed and brought along to all residentials, not relying solely on online records, in case of a lack of Wi-Fi or electronic devices during an emergency.

### **Food and Drink in Sessions**

Workers are required to check with parents and guardians whether a child can receive drinks and food during a session. This will normally be squash and biscuits but as part of the activity could include a range of foods. If a child is unable to consume or handle any of these, the information should be recorded in the register and all workers made aware. It would be preferable to change an activity rather than single out or exclude a child.

### **First Aid**

We do not provide trained first aiders in any of our sessions. Exemptions will apply for some residential activities. If a risk assessment requires the presence of a trained first aider, the Elders will ensure that a suitably qualified person is available.

In our standard weekly sessions workers will ensure that parents/guardians are informed of any incidents, and medical assistance is called where this may be required.

### **Gifts/Rewards and Favouritism:**

The giving of gifts or rewards to children, young people and vulnerable adults can be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. In some situations, the giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of children, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual child or young person will be part of an agreed plan with the knowledge of a manager and the parent or carer.

Any gifts should be given openly and not be based on favouritism. Adults need to be aware however, that the giving of gifts can be seen as a gesture to bribe or groom a young person.

Adults should exercise care when selecting children and/or young people for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection should always be transparent and subject to scrutiny.

Care should also be taken to ensure that adults do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

**There are occasions when children, young people or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to workers, for example, on special occasions or as a thank-you, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.**

### **Filming/Photography:**

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, organisations must be careful if

they want to take photographs or film footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or that filming is prohibited, but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe.

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. In addition to this:

- It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.
- When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.
- **Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website**
- If a photo is taken of a child or young person on a personal device, it must be agreed in advance by the leader of that session and deleted as soon as is practically possible once transferred to the church for its intended use.

### **Tobacco/Alcohol:**

There is a smoking ban in all enclosed public spaces throughout the UK and a no-smoking policy should therefore be enforced within any buildings where the organisation operates. There are exemptions to this in places such as care homes. From October 2014, the ban on smoking has now been extended to smoking in a vehicle with children present (in England and Wales).

It is also illegal for anyone under the age of 18 in England and Wales to be sold cigarettes (or other products like roll-up tobacco and cigars) over the counter or at a vending machine. The organisation is able to impose a no-smoking policy, so it is important all those attending the activity are aware of and agree to abide by it.

There are also strict regulations on the sale and consumption of alcohol where children and young people are concerned. Workers do not have the right to confiscate alcohol found in a young person's possession but they can enforce a no-alcohol policy.

**There may be occasions where it is felt necessary to inform parents /carers that a child/young person has been drinking, particularly if they are under the influence of alcohol at the group or there are concerns for their health or safety. Obviously this may affect working relationships and there is a moral question that will need to be considered before any action is taken.**

### **Substance Misuse:**

Workers should be alert to possession and use of illegal substances.

If a worker becomes aware a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be misusing substances they should be encouraged to seek professional help from their doctor or a counsellor specialising in this area.

Having said this, it is a criminal offence to allow anyone attending an activity run by an organisation to supply illegal drugs or use them on the premises. It is important to adopt zero tolerance on all illegal substances and draw up a protocol with the local police for dealing with such situations should they arise. All those attending the activity should be made aware of this protocol which should be clearly displayed. For the individual involved:

- Ask them to stop, warning them of the consequences if they do not e.g. suspension or ban from the group.
- Inform parents/carers if the young person is under 16 years.
- Inform the parents/carers if the young person is over 16 years (with their permission).

- Discuss with the young person the proposed course of action, particularly if they re-offend (e.g. informing the police).
- Write down the content of any discussion with the young person, including the action taken and keep this in a secure place.
- Liaise with the police to devise a strategy for dealing with the use of illegal substances.

Sample Consent Forms – Appendix 3

## **Session 6: Managing Behaviour:**

ChristChurch strives to offer a high-quality programme of events and activities for children and young people. We aim to create an exciting, caring and safe atmosphere, in which to demonstrate the love of God to children. Our aim is to communicate the gospel in a way that is meaningful to young people, to help them to build a life-long relationships with God, and to encourage them to be active participants in church life. These aims can only be achieved in the context of good relationships, and with this in mind, this policy seeks to give clear guidance to support children's workers.

### **Children's Work:**

We recognise that children are all different and that they have different needs. Our sessions aim to be a safe environment where everyone is treated with respect, and the children are able to hear the good news of the bible, grow in their faith, ask questions and meet with God. In order to do this we:

- Foster good relationships between the children and the leaders. We recognise that children need to feel valued, noticed and cared for, and we understand that good relationships nurture good behaviour.
- Have clear expectations that we communicate to the children each week e.g. stay with your group, listen to the leaders, treat others with respect and kindness.
- Support all children to access the sessions, e.g. helpers come alongside children who struggle to focus and concentrate.
- Organise sessions to match the children's development – provide materials that the children can understand and activities that they can do. Provide plenty of opportunities for the children to move, talk and interact with others.
- Reward positive behaviour choices with sweets, stickers, points or prizes.
- If a child is distracting others, not engaged or becoming disruptive – we take a curious approach – asking why the child is behaving in this way, and considering what they might need to help them take part, e.g. do they struggle with reading? Do they need more movement? Offer extra support where needed.
- Maintain strong boundaries – if a child is behaving in a way that is disruptive, distracting or dangerous and offering them more support has not helped, then we may need to use other strategies to reinforce good choices, e.g. moving them away from their group for a while and giving them clear instructions about what is appropriate. If a child continues to make choices that are disruptive or dangerous, the leader may bring them back to their parents before the end of the session. If this happens, it should be done discreetly so as not to cause shame or embarrassment, parents should be told what happened so that you can discuss what will happen next week. We make every effort to prevent parents feeling judged or condemned if this happens, but ensure they know that we want the best for their child and we are keen to work together to help their child make the right choices. Communicate what has happened to the group leader so they can decide if there is anything we can do to ensure this doesn't happen again.

### **Children's and Youth workers will:**

- Ensure that there is an appropriate ratio of DBS checked staff to supervise the children/young people.
- Expect to be treated with respect, and for children/young people to comply with instructions given.
- Adopt a consistent approach to each session. All workers to maintain the same rules and rewards and adopt the same measures where behaviour is inappropriate.
- Ensure that the area is safe, and that any equipment is suitable for the children/young people to use.
- Ensure that everyone is aware of the "rules". That these rules are regularly discussed with the children/young people.

- Treat all children/young people with respect and kindness.
- Deal with situations calmly. If a worker feels that they are losing control, they should step back and ask another worker to take the lead.
- Ask for support if they are struggling to manage a situation or a child's behaviour.
- Be aware of the children's needs and strive to meet them, e.g. if they are sensitive to noise or struggle with change in routine.
- Create an atmosphere where children/young people are praised, encouraged, welcomed and rewarded for good behaviour.
- Make sure that the children/young people know what will happen if they are breaking the rules and be prepared to carry them out. For example, if you break a rule we will give you a warning. If it happens again, you will go back to sit with your parents/not be able to attend next week.
- Speak with care. Be careful what words are used, never labelling the children/young people or using negative language. Only warn of the consequences that will follow their actions, if the worker is able and prepared to carry them out. Repeated warnings without follow through, devalue the warning itself.
- Be well organised, avoiding keeping the children/young people waiting, in order to minimise opportunities for children to lose concentration.
- Endeavour to create a well-paced, interesting session which is accessible to all.
- Inform parents if their son/daughter has presented significant behaviour problems during a session.
- Discipline (give warnings, remove points, explain why behaviour is unacceptable, ask for behaviour to change etc), children/young people away from the rest of the group to avoid humiliation, but not in an isolated area.
- Reflect on difficult situations and consider different approaches, ask for training or help if necessary.

### **Strategies to deal with disruptive behaviour in children:**

- Give limited options in a non-confrontational style. "You can choose whether to come and join in with the activity, or sit quietly and draw." "I'm going to do X with the rest of the group. When you are ready to join in properly, then I would like you to come and join us".
- Encouragement, praise and rewards that are regularly given, that are relevant, but that have to be earned. Be quick to spot children who are getting it right.
- Remove a child from a situation that is triggering unacceptable behaviour. Separate children who are distracting each other. Children/young people may need to be escorted from a situation. However, all workers must remain consistent with the safeguarding policy, making sure that they are not alone with a child where they cannot be seen.
- Distraction, ask a non-compliant child to come and do another activity, help with a job, etc
- Tactical ignoring – For minor problems that appear to stem from attention seeking, ignore what the child is doing, and praise/reward a child who is doing the "right" thing, e.g. a child is rolling round the floor, begin praising, or giving points, to children who are sitting properly.

### **Strategies to deal with disruptive behaviour in young people:**

- Give simple instructions, if behaviour is becoming dangerous the instruction to stop needs to be communicated clearly.
- Speak calmly and clearly, standing to the side of the young person, not invading their personal space. Don't force eye-contact. Try to keep a neutral expression and avoid taking sides. Give a clear instruction that will help avoid conflict, e.g. I want you to come and sit over here.
- Be aware of additional needs and seek to offer support/reduce triggers where possible.
- Model calm body language and slower breathing as you engage with the young person, do not raise your voice or get drawn into an argument.
- Use distraction if possible.

- Listen to them and let them tell you what has upset them, don't interrupt but let them finish so you can establish what led to this behaviour.
- Give them options about what they can do next, using positive language, e.g. "you can do X or Y" rather than "stop doing Z".
- Once the situation has calmed down, seek to resolve the conflict in a way that is fair.
- If physical violence does occur, we are not allowed to restrain young people. We also have a duty to prevent harm. Seek help and contact police if necessary. Any unplanned physical intervention should be justifiable and proportionate to the situation, to be used minimally. The parents of the young people will be called and asked to collect their children. A full record of the event and any interventions will be made and signed by witnesses.
- Decide on the appropriate way forward, it might be necessary to issue a warning (or a strike on a Friday night), it might be right for a young person to miss a session or make apologies. Attempts should be made to restore relationships while maintaining the rules and boundaries of the group.

### **Restraining children and Young People:**

Children should not be physically restrained.

### **Bullying:**

Bullying can be a highly damaging form of abuse that children and young people struggle to communicate to others. There should be a known zero tolerance to bullying so if it does occur children and leaders are able to report the matter and it can be dealt with promptly and effectively. There can be an expectation that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will report it. Whilst the child being bullied needs protection, the person/people doing it need to address the reasons for their behaviour and be encouraged to relate to others in more positive ways. The organisation has a clear responsibility to respond appropriately to this issue. Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Children can bully each other, be bullied by adults and can sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour within any organisation. Some common forms of bullying can be:

- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing including via emails or text messaging
- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Sexual - sexually abusive comments or gestures
- Racial - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of racial differences
- Homophobic - any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation
- Unofficial activities such as initiation ceremonies and practical jokes which may cause children physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended
- Online bullying (or Cyber-Bullying) – e.g. sending threatening or upsetting messages, threatening to share images, shaming people, encouraging them to harm themselves.

Workers will seek to prevent bullying and will hear both sides of the story. They will work to restore relationships and ensure the session is safe for all young people. Where necessary parents will be involved in the resolution process.

### **Training:**

Workers can request training (in house) in behaviour management. Otherwise we can seek external training if required.

## **Working in Partnership**

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.



## **Appendix 1:**

### **Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

(Information taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024, for further information see Home Office guidance)

Both CCE and CSE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal or sexual activity. It may involve an exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CCE and CSE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

**Child criminal exploitation (CCE).** Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation, as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

**Child sexual exploitation (CSE).** CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet.

CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children do not realise they are being exploited and may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

### **CCE and CSE:**

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation. In some cases, the exploitation or abuse will

be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants (for example, money, gifts or affection), and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage, such as increased status, of the perpetrator or facilitator. Children can be exploited by adult males or females, as individuals or groups. They may also be exploited by other children, who themselves may be experiencing exploitation – where this is the case, it is important that the child perpetrator is also recognised as a victim. Whilst the age of the child may be a contributing factor for an imbalance of power, there are a range of other factors that could make a child more vulnerable to exploitation, including, sexual identity, cognitive ability, learning difficulties, communication ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources.

**Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:**

- appear with unexplained gifts, money or new possessions
- associate with other children involved in exploitation
- suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- misuse alcohol and other drugs
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help keep them in education.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Some additional specific indicators that may be present in CSE are children who:

- have older boyfriends or girlfriends; and
- suffer from sexually transmitted infections, display sexual behaviours beyond expected sexual development or become pregnant.

**County lines** is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK - no specified distance of travel is required. Children and vulnerable adults are exploited to move, store and sell drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including any type of schools (including special schools), further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, children’s homes and care homes. Children are also increasingly being targeted and recruited online using social media. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs can manufacture drug debts which need to be worked off or threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

A number of the indicators for CCE and CSE as detailed above may be applicable to where children are involved in county lines.

**Additional county lines indicators:**

- go missing (from school or home) and are subsequently found in areas away from their home
- have been the victim, perpetrator or alleged perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- are involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- are exposed to techniques such as 'plugging', where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection
- are found in accommodation that they have no connection with, often called a 'trap house or cuckooing' or hotel room where there is drug activity
- owe a 'debt bond' to their exploiters
- have their bank accounts used to facilitate drug dealing.

## **So called “Honour” based abuse including FGM and forced marriage:**

So-called ‘honour’-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. Abuse committed in the context of preserving ‘honour’ often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

### **Female Genital Mutilation (Home office guidance)**

#### ***Identifying Risk Factors for FGM***

- Older sisters or mothers who are known to have undergone FGM;
- Low socio-economic position of the family, and low level of integration into UK society;
- Withdrawal of the child from personal, social and health education where this is done to prevent a girl from becoming informed about her body and rights.

Risk factors or indications that a child or young woman is at imminent or more immediate risk of being subjected to FGM can include the following situations:

- Parents or guardians plan to take the girl child out of the country for a prolonged period, or a girl may talk about her parents’ plans to travel to her country of origin or another country where FGM is practised.
- In some cases, a girl child may express concern or anxiety about a “special procedure” or “ceremony” that is set to take place.
- A visit from a female family elder, in particular when visiting from an FGM practising country, could also be an indication that a girl is at risk of FGM as in many communities female elders carry out the practice.

The following factors may also indicate that FGM has already taken place:

- Difficulty in sitting, walking or standing;
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating;
- Spending long periods of the school day away from the classroom due to bladder or menstrual problems as well as prolonged absence or repeated absence from school or college;
- Noticeable behaviour changes such as depression and a withdrawn demeanour;
- Particular reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations;
- Confiding in a professional or asking for help without being explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

If we suspect that FGM has taken place, we will raise concerns with the safeguarding officer, who will then make a referral to the single point of advice.

## **Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of which can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

Domestic abuse The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse and recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children, as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support. and practical help to children.

Where there are concerns that a child may be suffering from the effects of domestic abuse in the home, these should be shared with the safeguarding lead or deputy who will take the appropriate next steps to support and safeguard the child.

## Appendix 2:

### **Prevent:**

Prevent is the name given to the multi-agency policy of preventing radicalisation of young people. We have a duty to be alert to changes in behaviour that might indicate a young person might be developing extremist views, or becoming radicalised. The following may make young people more vulnerable to being radicalised: family tensions, a sense of isolation, migration, distance from cultural heritage, experience of racism or discrimination, feeling of failure.

A young person or adult might start to dress or behave differently and express very narrow views about a particular religion or be very interested in certain aspects of a religion without a deeper understanding of it. Individuals might also become more isolated or spend time with different people with similar views. They may vocalise support for illegal/illicit groups, or be known to possess literature from such groups. There may be a pattern of regular travel to countries associated with terrorist activity. There may be reason to believe the young person is accessing the internet with the purpose of extremist activity. Concerns should be raised with the safeguarding officer, and then The Sussex Police Prevent Engagement Officer.

For more information the police website: <https://actearly.uk/>

### **Appendix 3:**

Sample Consent Form for ChristChurch Children/Young People Groups

Welcome statement

Description of the group

Age range in the Group

Main Activities in the Group

Food in Sessions (include craft/cooking activities)

*First Aid* (Standard Statement)

We do not provide First Aid but will inform you as soon as possible and request medical assistance where it may be required.

Getting To and From the Group Session

Using the standards in this document set out what the expectations are for children arriving and leaving the session.

The workers in this group, the church Elders, and Trustees are all committed to making this a great place for your child. If you have any concerns or questions then please speak to the Group Leader or one of the Elders. A copy of the safeguarding policy can be found on our website.

We would ask you the parent/guardian to complete the following information to assist us in supporting and safeguarding your child.

### **ChristChurch Children's/Young People Groups**

#### **General Information**

Name of Child

Age and Date of Birth

Address

Contact No's

#### **Medical Information**

Any medical conditions that the session leader will need to be aware of:

Any allergies/intolerances

Any medication they carry or require (It is our policy not to administer medication)

#### **Group Activities and Expectations**

Are you in agreement for your child to take part in the range of activities outlined and the stated arrangements for arriving and leaving the sessions.

Name of Parent/Guardian .....

Signature of Parent Guardian.....

From time to time photographs may be taken and used on the website or for church publicity.  
Do you agree to your child's photograph being used?  
Yes/No



## **Appendix 4:**

### **Code of Conduct for Children's and Youth Workers:**

The following points detail specific guidance in relation to activities and situations that are commonplace in the work Christchurch undertakes with young people. The items covered should not be viewed as exhaustive, but as the foundations for safer working practices. Please read the full Safe-guarding policy, Good practice policy and Behaviour policy annually. All adults who come into contact with children and young people in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare.

## Code of Conduct for Children's and Youth Workers at ChristChurch Hailsham

### I WILL:

Conduct myself in a way that is consistent with ChristChurch values, remembering that I am in a position of trust.

Treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness, and have proper regard for individuals' interests, rights, safety and welfare, listening carefully to children/young people in the group.

Work in a responsible, transparent and accountable way, seeking advice from those with more experience where necessary.

Make sure the activities, site and equipment are safe, and if off-site are risk assessed and checked in accordance with our policies.

Ensure physical contact with children/young people is limited, appropriate, public and cannot be misconstrued

Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as bullying or abusive (emotional, physical, spiritual or sexual) (including inappropriate physical contact such as rough play and inappropriate language or gestures)

Follow policies, procedures and guidelines and report all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions to the safeguarding co-ordinator quickly.

Work in an open environment – avoiding private or unobserved situations and making sure safe ratios of adults/young people are observed.

Follow the same rules, rewards and behaviour management structure as the other leaders of the group. Strive to be consistent and fair.

Record attendance, accidents or incidents and store the information according to our procedures.

### I WON'T

Offer confidentiality to a child/young person who discloses something that might lead to abuse or harm. Instead explain that information will be shared with Eloise or Jenni.

Take photos or videos of children/young people on personal equipment unless they are for a specific, sanctioned purpose and you have parental consent.

Contact children/young people unless I am following group protocol, e.g. messages about youth meetings/events that have parents copied in, or another youth leader.

Take un-necessary risks

Engage in inappropriate/romantic relationships with young people in the group. I will let the group leader know if a young person develops an infatuation with a leader so that we can manage it safely.

Show favouritism or exclude any children/young people. I won't give gifts/receive gifts without the group leader's knowledge as these can be misinterpreted.

Delay reporting any concerns regarding a child/young person.

## **Appendix 5:**

### **Working with offenders**

When someone attending the place of worship / organisation is known to have abused children or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep. Consultation will take place with the single point of advice, to ensure that appropriate boundaries can be set, for example, some offenders may not be able to attend services at which children are present. The leadership will draw up a contract with the offender, specifying what attendance is possible. Specific care will be taken to avoid any possibilities of offenders grooming young people, through relationships with their families.

## Appendix 6:

### Suicidal Thoughts

From time to time someone might disclose suicidal thoughts to you. Take all thoughts of suicide seriously and don't dismiss it as attention seeking. If you have a good relationship with the person, or they are keen to talk to you, then you may be the best person to help them, even if you feel unprepared. If you do not feel able to respond to the disclosure, please contact the safeguarding officer and make sure you pass on your concerns. Either way, record what has happened onto a safeguarding concern form and pass onto the safeguarding co-ordinator as soon as possible.

If someone discloses suicidal thoughts you can try to explore whether these thoughts are vague e.g. "What's the point of going on" or whether they have definite intentions. Those with definite intentions and a plan are at the highest risk of suicide, but drugs and alcohol can lead people into acting on impulse. If they have previously attempted suicide they are at a higher risk. Asking directly about suicidal thoughts won't make a person more likely to take their own life, they might find it a relief to talk about it. You could ask the following questions:

- 1) "Do you have a suicide plan?" to find out whether they have a specific plan in mind. If they do you could then ask:
- 2) "Do you have what you need to carry out your plan?" (e.g. pills, tools etc).
- 3) "Do you know when you would do it?"
- 4) Do you intend to take your own life? (Does their behaviour indicate this even if they deny it? E.g. have given away expensive or meaningful possessions, made unusual declarations of gratitude "thank you for all you have done for me", or made efforts to set relationships in order.)
- 5) "Have you been using drugs or alcohol?" This can increase the risk of impulsive decisions.

If the suicide attempt seems imminent contact the young person's parents/carers and ask them to dial 999 or take the person to A&E. Explain that you believe the person has a definite plan, the means and the intention to take their own life. Don't leave them alone.

If you don't feel that they are at immediate risk, you can still offer valuable support. People who feel alone are at greater risk. You can help them feel more connected by exploring the resources available to them. Unless there are very good reasons why not to (e.g. risk of further harm) always inform the young person that you will liaise with their parents/carers. They are best placed to help the young person seek further support. Questions you might explore with the young person and their parents/carers:

- 1) Have they told anyone else how they are feeling? Who can they turn to?
- 2) Have they received any treatment for mental health issues, or are they taking any medication? What professional support is available (e.g. do they have a mental health nurse?)
- 3) If they have not had treatment before, encourage them to speak to their GP about their feelings. Alternatively they might prefer to seek counselling to help cope with a specific issue that is causing the suicidal thoughts e.g. bereavement, bullying, abuse.
- 4) Have there been any big changes in their life recently? What practical support can they access to help with these?
- 5) Have they felt this way before? What helped then?
- 6) What distractions might help? Going for a walk? Painting? Reading? Spending time with a pet? Listening to music? Exercise?

- 7) Are there any situations or activities that make you feel worse? (e.g. drugs, alcohol)  
How can you avoid these?

If the person is part of the church encourage them to seek further support from their youth-group leaders or the elders. Feeling part of the church community will help reduce isolation and increase support.

### **How to listen to someone who is having suicidal thoughts:**

- Let them know that you care about them and that they aren't alone.
- Empathise with them. Be aware you don't know exactly how they feel. You could say something like, 'I can't imagine how painful this is for you, but I would like to try to understand'.
- Be non-judgemental by trying not to criticise or blame them.
- Repeat their words back to them in your own words. This shows that you are listening. Repeating information can also make sure that you have understood it properly.
- Ask about their reasons for living and dying and listen to their answers. Try to explore their reasons for living in more detail.
- Focus on people they care about, and who care about them. And who they might hurt by leaving them behind.
- Ask if they have felt like this before. If so, ask how their feelings changed last time.
- Reassure them that they won't feel this way forever, and that intensity of feelings can reduce in time.
- Encourage them to focus on getting through the day rather than focussing on the future.
- Ask them if they have a plan for ending their life and what it is.
- Encourage them to seek help that they are comfortable with. Such as help from a doctor or counsellor, or support through a charity such as the Samaritans.
- Follow up any commitments that you agree to.
- Make sure someone is with them if they're in immediate danger.
- Help them to get professional help.
- If appropriate. offer to pray for them and encourage them to pray regularly.
- Offer support from the church pastoral team and if they would like this, talk to the elders to help facilitate this.
- Get support for yourself. Hearing someone disclose suicidal thoughts will impact you.

## **Resources that might be useful for a person with suicidal thoughts:**

- 1) <https://www.stayalive.app/> This is an app which offers immediate support to someone at risk of suicide.
- 2) Premier is a confidential, free helpline giving emotional support from a Christian perspective. Telephone: 0300 111 0101 (9am – midnight)  
<https://www.premierlifeline.org.uk/>
- 3) The Samaritans: give people confidential emotional support. In some areas they have local branches where you can go for support. Telephone: 116 123 (UK) (24 hours) Address: PO Box RSRB-KKBY-CYJK, P.O. Box 90 90, Stirling FK8 2SA  
Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
- 4) POPYRUS (prevention of young suicide) Charity that offers emotional support to people under 35 who are suicidal. They can also support people who are concerned about someone under 35 who might be suicidal. Telephone: 0800 068 41 41 Text: 07786 209697 Email: [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org) Website: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)
- 5) CALM (The Campaign Against Living Miserably) CALM is leading a movement against suicide. They offer accredited confidential, anonymous and free support, information and signposting to people anywhere in the UK through their helpline and webchat service. Telephone: 0800 58 58 58 Webchat:  
[www.thecalmzone.net/help/webchat](http://www.thecalmzone.net/help/webchat) Website: [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

It might be appropriate for you to support someone by suggesting they create a crisis plan, a template is available.

## Crisis plan

<p>Who can help me and how?</p>	<p>Who can I call?:</p> <p>Friend</p> <p>Professional</p> <p>Helpline</p>	<p>What would I say to someone else in my situation?</p>
<p>Where can I go that I feel safe?</p>	<p>What have I done before that's worked?</p>	<p>If the suicidal feelings won't go away what should I do?</p> <p>Go to A&amp;E</p> <p>Call 999</p>
<p>What can I do to distract myself?</p>	<p>What things make me feel worse that I should avoid?</p>	<p>Any other helpful thoughts, ideas.</p>