A policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People

THE DIOCESE OF BLACKBURN

St Ambrose Church Leyland

Contents

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of us all 3

The Responsibilities of the Parish 4

Good Practice Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Young People 5

Creating a safer church 7

Recognising signs of abuse 9

Allegations made against members of staff or volunteers 11

Safe Recruitment 12

Implementation Checklist 13

St Ambrose Church Leyland

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of us all

St Ambrose recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the legal framework of the Children Act 1989. Anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child/young person.

It is sometimes difficult to acknowledge that abuse can happen within a church, however any group or organisation working with children needs to be alert to the possibility of abuse occurring. It is the responsibility of us all to put the welfare of children and young people first and to recognize and respond to behaviours that can put children at risk.

We are aware that many children and young people are the victims of different kinds of abuse and that they can be subjected to social factors that have an adverse impact upon their lives, such as domestic abuse or substance misuse.

We aim to create a safe and respectful environment within which children and young people can thrive and churches can operate with the help and security of clear guidance.

These guidelines are for the use of all clergy, volunteers paid staff and visitors. The guidelines can be shared with the parents and carers of the children and young people to whom we offer a service.

We are committed to:

- ✓ The care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children and young people.
- ✓ The safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults where they are vulnerable.
- ✓ The establishment of safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.

(Protecting All God's Children 2010)

The Responsibilities of the Parish

○ We will adopt and implement a Safeguarding Children Policy, accepting as a minimum the House of Bishop's policy on Safeguarding Children. This will be supported by the additional diocesan procedures and recommended good practice, while being responsive to local parish requirements.
○ We will appoint at least one coordinator to work with the incumbent and the PCC, whose role will be to implement safeguarding policies and procedures. The coordinator will ensure that any concerns about a child/young person or the behavior of an adult are referred to the diocesan safeguarding adviser. The coordinator will either be an appointed member of the PCC or have the right to attend meetings, and will report at least annually on the implementation of the safeguarding policy in the parish. This position will not be held by the incumbent or their spouse.
The Parish Safeguarding officer (PSO) is Mrs. Anne B. Woodcock (Ollie)
○ We will consider appointing someone, different from the coordinator, to be a children's/young person's advocate.
○ We will display in our church premises where children's/young people's activities take place, the contact details of the coordinator or advocate, along with the telephone numbers for Childline and Parentline Plus.
○ We will ensure that all those authorized to work with children and young people are suitably recruited in accordance with safer recruitment practice, and are appropriately trained and supported in their role.
○ We will ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and young people undertaken in the name of the parish.
○ We will review the implementation of the Safeguarding Children and Young People policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually.
Annual reviews take place each November.
○ If working with Local Ecumenical Partnerships [LEPs], agree which denomination or organisation's safeguarding children policy to follow, including where to seek advice in urgent situations. This decision should be ratified by the Bishop and other appropriate church leaders in the partnership. In the event of a specific safeguarding concern, ensure that all the LEP partners are notified.

Good Practice Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Young People

On site
Everyone is responsible for children while on these premises and must make sure that health and safety guidelines are adhered to.
Everyone working with children should be encouraged to attend basic child protection training.
Wherever possible, steps should be taken that a worker is not left alone with a child.
Under no circumstances should visitors be allowed to wander around the premises unaccompanied when children and young people are present.
Appropriate adult: child ratios should be observed at all times. The following ratios of adults to children should be adhered to for all church groups. 0 to 2 years - 1 adult to 3 children. 2 to 3 years - 1 adult to 4 children. 3 to 8 years - 1 adult to 8 children. 8 years + - 1 adult to 10 children.
People working with children should be alert to strangers frequently waiting outside a venue with no apparent purpose.
Children should not be collected by people other than their parents unless notification has been received.
If a child is not collected after a session it is reasonable to wait approximately half an hour for a parent or carer to arrive. If the parent or carer cannot be contacted, Social Services or the police should be contacted and asked to assist.
Careful consideration will need to be given to ensure the safety of children as they leave the premises.
Visits and trips
Appropriate Health and safety guidelines must be adhered to for all visits and trips.
All activities must be risk assessed and properly insured.
All vehicles hired for outings must be insured, roadworthy and fitted with seatbelts.

All drivers should travel with at least one escort. Drivers and escorts should have up to date CRB checks and have been subject to appropriate recruitment procedures. All drivers and escorts should agree to abide by these guidelines.

A roll call will be taken at the start of the journey and again before commencing the return journey. If travelling in more than one vehicle, children will be encouraged to travel in the same vehicle there and back.

The leaders of trips will carry the contact numbers for the home organisation and emergency services in the event of an alert being necessary.

If a child goes missing on a trip, staff should instigate an immediate search. If the child cannot be found within half an hour, the appropriate security staff and police should be notified. If, having notified the security staff and police, the child cannot be found, the parents/carers will be notified immediately.

If a child is missing, the care of the remaining children is paramount. It is imperative that they return to the home site as quickly as possible, while a senior leader remains at the visit to coordinate contact between security staff and the child's parents/carers.

Use of premises by other organisations

In the event that a room or rooms on the premises are used by other organisations, the letting agreement should ensure that the hiring organisation works to approved child protection procedures and/or that they read and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Creating a safer church

Protecting children and young people checklist for Parishes

St Ambrose

ITEM	ACTION
We have a Parish Safeguarding Policy that is annually reviewed. *(November PCC meeting)*	There are model policies on the diocesan website; www.blackburn.anglican.org
We have a Parish Safeguarding Officer. *(Mrs. Anne B. Woodcock (Ollie)*	Sometimes it is appropriate to also have an additional independent person. Details of what is expected of that person can be found on the website; www.blackburn.anglican.org
Information about our Parish Safeguarding Officer and additional independent person including contact numbers, and the Childline number is displayed in our church buildings.	A suitable poster format can be downloaded from the diocesan website; www.blackburn.anglican.org
At the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting there was a Safeguarding Report. *(Included in addition to the PCC report)*	
All activities for children and young people are authorised by the PCC.	This is usually a requirement of your Insurance cover.
All our leaders and volunteers have completed the appropriate application forms, declarations and disclosures. Appropriate references have been obtained.	Appropriate disclosures may include DBS, Vetting & Barring, and Self Declarations.
All confidential documents are stored appropriately.	**There is a central record retained by the PSO in digital format.**
All new workers and volunteers have been through an induction process and are aware of how to adhere to all parish policies *(from April 2014 – retrospective)*	
All our workers and volunteers have undertaken child	The Diocese runs courses regularly.

protection training in the last two years.	Details can be found on the website; www.blackburn.anglican.org
All leaders and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities to keep children and young people safe.	
We have an up to date record of all those who have completed DBS checks for parish work.	**Central record c/o the PSO**
All activities involving children and young people have the correct ratio of leaders to children.	Information on this subject can be found at; www.blackburn.anglican.org
Children and young people with special needs are welcome and we are appropriately prepared to meet their needs.	
We welcome children and young people from different ethnic and social backgrounds.	
There is an acceptable First Aid Kit available at each activity.	Information on this subject is available from the Health and Safety Executive.
There is a qualified First Aider at, or easily accessible for each activity.	
We know and meet the training needs of our leaders and volunteers.	
All our work with children and young people is appropriately insured.	Contact Ecclesiastical Insurance: 01452 528533 www.ecclesiastical.com
We have an up to date Risk Assessment for all our buildings and activities.	Information on this subject is at; www.blackburn.anglican.org
We have an accident book.	
We have adequate Fire Equipment and Evacuation Procedures are in place.	

Recognising signs of abuse

It can often be difficult to recognise abuse. The signs listed in these guidelines are only indicators and many can have reasonable explanations. Children may behave strangely or seem unhappy for many reasons as they move through the stages of childhood, or their families experience changes. It is nevertheless important to be familiar with things that can indicate that abuse is taking place and know when there is a need to seek further consultation.

Someone can abuse a child by actively inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place within a family, in an institutional or community setting, by telephone or on the Internet. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to a child or by a complete stranger.

If you are worried about a child it is important that you keep a written record of any physical or behavioral signs and symptoms which suggest they may be a victim of abuse. In doing this you can monitor whether or not a pattern emerges and provide evidence to assist any investigation if required.

Examples and definitions of the different type of abuse are enclosed in Appendix A.

What to do with your concerns

In the event that a child makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse by an adult or another child or young person, it is important that you:

Listen to them and/or closely observe their presentation and behavior.
Let them know that you take what they are saying seriously.
Do not attempt to question or interview them yourself.
Let them know that you will need to tell someone else in order to help them. Do not promise to keep what they tell you secret.
Inform your designated child protection officer and/or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser as soon as possible.
Make a written record of the incident or events. (See Appendix C)

Sometimes you may just feel concerned about a child but do not know whether to share your concerns or not. In this situation you should always raise your concerns with your designated Child Protection Officer or the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, who will advise on what to do next.

Who to contact

The responsibility for investigating allegations of abuse, whether they result from a disclosure from a child or the concerns of an adult, lies with social workers and the police. It is normally the responsibility of your designated child protection officer to make a referral to these agencies, but if you judge the situation to be an emergency and/or you require advice in the absence of the designated officer, you must report your concerns directly, using the contacts listed at the back of these guidelines.

Social Services will advise you when or whether to inform the child's parents or carers about any concerns. If they decide to pursue a child protection investigation, you should:

Work closely and collaboratively with all professionals involved in the investigation, in order to keep the child safe.
Attend a child protection conference if you are invited. You will be asked to provide information about your involvement with the child, which is why it is important to keep records of your concerns.
Attend any subsequent child protection review conferences.

Child Protection Procedures

All child protection concerns should be acted upon immediately. If you are concerned that a child might be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you should tell the designated child protection officer within your church. You may also wish to speak to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Your designated officer is: Mrs. Anne B. Woodcock (Ollie)

Telephone number: 01772 456557 and 07725 812093

The Diocesan Safeguarding Officer is Sharon Hassall 01254 503070

In an emergency situation, contact Social Services or the police directly.

Please insert the relevant telephone numbers for your church on the list below:

Children's Social Services: 0845 053 0009

Police: 01772 433561 or 999 in an emergency

Please note these contact numbers may be subject to change by the Local Authorities at any time and should be checked and updated regularly by your Parish Safeguarding Representative.

Allegations made against members of staff or volunteers

Organisations that work, or come into contact with children and young people, need to be aware of the possibility that allegations of abuse will be made against members of their staff or volunteers. Allegations can be made by children, young people or parents and they can also be made by other concerned adults. Allegations can be made for a variety of reasons. Some of the most common are:

- Abuse has actually taken place.
- Children can misinterpret your language or your actions because they are reminded of something else.

All allegations should be brought to the notice of (*designated Child Protection Officer*) immediately. In cases where the allegation is made against this person, the complainant should approach a more senior official or take the following action him or herself:

Make sure that the child in question is safe and away from the person alleged to have abused a child.
Contact social services in the team relevant to where the child lives.
Contact the parents or carers of the child if advised to do so by the social worker/officer in charge of allegations.
Irrespective of any investigation by Social Service or the police, you should follow the appropriate disciplinary procedure. Consideration must be given as to whether the member of staff or volunteer should be suspended from duty while the investigation is carried out.
Consider whether the person has access to children anywhere else and whether those organisations or groups need to be informed.
Act upon the decisions made in any strategy meeting.

All incidents should be investigated within the organisation after any external investigation has finished, reviewing practice and putting in place any additional measures based on lessons learned.

Support

It is important that you also develop support systems for the person who faces an allegation. If your place of worship/learning has a management committee, it could be that a member is nominated to fulfill this role. As well as providing support through listening and through prayer, this person could advise on appropriate outside help, such as counseling or legal services.

Safe Recruitment

The application of rigorous procedures for the recruitment of any staff or volunteers who come into contact with children and young people, both directly and indirectly, can reduce the likelihood of allegations of abuse being made that are founded. As an absolute minimum, the following standards should be followed:

All prospective workers (paid and unpaid) should complete an application form which asks for details of their previous employment and for the names of two referees.
All prospective workers (paid and unpaid) should have a new Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) disclosure before they start employment with you – anyone who refused to adhere to this should not be employed.
All prospective workers (paid and unpaid) should be interviewed to establish previous experience of working in an environment where there is contact with children, and perceptions of acceptable behavior.
Nobody should start work before references have been received. Referees should be reminded that references should not misrepresent the candidate or omit to say things that might be relevant to their employment.
All appointments to work with children should be subject to an agreed probationary period.
New members of staff should be clear about their responsibilities and wherever possible, work to an agreed job description.
These guidelines should be available to everyone and fully discussed as part of an induction process.

Please note:

Until April 2014, the above safer recruitment guidelines had been undertaken at a very informal level (other than full CRB/DBS checks being made and renewed every 3 years.

From May 2014, the above guidelines will be used when a new volunteer or employee is recruited. Retrospective procedures will be carried out informally with those volunteers already in post in order to maintain necessary records.

The Vicar Rev Duncan Clarke and the PSO have undertaken Safer Recruitment training, renewed in December 2017.

Implementation Checklist

These child protection procedures will only be effective if all staff and volunteers in your place of worship own and understand them. This checklist is designed to help you to go through that process:

Identify designated Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) Yes	☐
Add PSO's name and contact details to the policy. Yes	☐
Ensure the PSO attends training on child protection and safeguarding, and updates that training regularly. Yes	☐
Ensure all staff and volunteers have a copy of child protection procedures. Yes	☐
Ensure all existing staff and volunteers who have contact with children have DB Disclosures before they start work. Yes	☐
Ensure that the premises conform to health and safety guidelines. Yes	☐
Ensure that the premises and activities are risk assessed and adequately insured. Yes	☐
Ensure that any letting arrangements are bound by contracts that include an agreement to adhere to the host organisation's child protection procedures. Yes	☐
Ensure that the parish child protection policy is endorsed by the PCC and is reviewed annually. Yes: every November meeting	☐

[Signed on behalf of the PCC] Anne B. Woodcock . Date 26.1.12……

Reviewed at PCC meeting held 28th November 2013

To be discussed at PCC meeting 29th May 2014: amendments accepted (in red)

Updated in full review November 2017 with reference to changes in designation terms etc.

Next review due: November meeting each year.