

Protecting Children
in the
Diocese of Oxford

Diocesan handbook to supplement
Protecting All God's Children

Diocese of Oxford

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A message from the Bishop of Oxford



Many children and young people are involved in the life of the Church, in worship and in various activities, under the guidance of a dedicated group of leaders and helpers. Many of these adults are volunteers, giving their time freely and generously so that our children can grow in the faith of Jesus Christ. We the bishops, clergy and people of the Diocese are committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of all the children and young people in our care. We are responsible for providing a safe and secure environment for minors and the adults who work with them.

The Diocese is committed to the implementation of the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy *Protecting All God's Children* and the relevant statutory legislation and guidance for the welfare of children and young people. The provision of this handbook is part of this. We also offer training on the procedures and good practice to all clergy and to those lay people working with minors. The Diocese will monitor the implementation of the policy, for example through archdeacons' Articles of Enquiry which are completed from time to time by churchwardens.

The procedures outlined may seem unduly strict and elaborate to some Christians, but experience has shown that they are needed. We welcome large numbers of children into our churches and other parish activities and need to be able to reassure them, their parents, children's workers, parish officers, clergy and others that we are taking reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure their safety, and to develop a culture of vigilance.

But as a Christian community we want to be inclusive and welcoming to all people, including those who have committed offences. We do not usually know or need to know about offences people may have committed, but where they consider becoming involved in work with children and young people we seek this information and take any necessary action. In a small number of cases this may involve imposing certain conditions or restrictions. We also provide support to offenders for their rehabilitation by close working with Circles of Support & Accountability and other statutory and voluntary organizations in the diocese.

We are also concerned for survivors of abuse, whether adults or children, and, where they seek our help, will put them in touch with sources of help and support.

We might well wish that we lived in a world where it was not necessary to produce a document of this kind; indeed such a handbook would have seemed extraordinary at the time I grew up, in the 1950s. But we must now accept a certain loss of innocence and move forward with our eyes open, so that we can continue the Church's valuable work with children and young people, continuing to offer a loving welcome while accepting the need for protection and support.

June 2005

Introduction

The Bishop expects that everyone responsible for congregations and organisations in the Diocese should make themselves familiar with the House of Bishops policy *Protecting All God's Children: The Child Protection Policy for the Church of England* (2004). This handbook provides information, checklists, forms and other material to help implement the policy. Some material from *Protecting All God's Children* is repeated for convenience. Failure to implement the policy could invalidate any third-party liability insurance or leave a PCC open to the possibility of being sued for negligence should a child or young person come to harm while its responsibility. For the purposes of these procedures a child is defined as someone under the age of 18, in accordance with the Children Act 1989.

The main purpose in recognising and reporting suspected abuse is not to be punitive but to prevent further harm to that child or another child. The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.

This handbook is intended to assist the implementation of the House of Bishops' policy by the cathedral, parishes and church organisations in the Diocese. However, no document of this kind can cover every situation or replace informed judgement. If anyone finds these procedures unhelpful in a particular situation they should seek advice. A list of local contacts is provided at the end.

The detailed procedure on Applying for Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures, which is subject to frequent changes in detail, is in a separate Annex. This will be reissued as required. Please ensure you have the latest version.

A *Child Protection Guide for Church Workers with Children and Young People* which covers the essentials needed by those working directly with children, is at the back. All children's workers should have their own copies. These can be supplied from Diocesan Church House, or parishes can make their own copies.

If parishes wish to develop their own more detailed procedures on matters of particular concern to them, they are asked to consult the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser to ensure consistency with national and diocesan policy.

Further copies of all this material are available from Diocesan Church House. It is also all on the diocesan website (www.oxford.anglican.org/index.php) which should be consulted for updates and new information. There is a list of the diocesan advisors with responsibilities in this field at the back of this handbook.

The previous procedures titled *Better Safe than Sorry* and issued in three parts (2000 and 2002) are now (2005) withdrawn.

Those new to these responsibilities are invited to turn to the section Getting Started.

GETTING STARTED

1 Getting Started

The PCC and incumbent should:

- appoint a local Child Protection Representative, an Approved Parish Representative, and if possible a Children's Advocate, and decide who should serve on Appointing Bodies for children's appointments; one of these should be the Appointing Body Nominee; see Roles and Responsibilities on page 15 for explanations of their responsibilities;
- obtain a copy of the House of Bishops' child protection policy *Protecting All God's Children* and a copy of *Protecting Children in the Diocese of Oxford* (this document)¹; both are needed; page references are to this document unless otherwise specified;
- discuss, and record that they have discussed, the Principles of the House of Bishops' policy set out at the beginning of *Protecting All God's Children* and repeated here on page 7;
- note the responsibilities of the Church of England, the diocese and the parish as set out in section 3, pages 6-9 of *Protecting All God's Children*;
- adopt the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy in their parish; a model parish policy is set out on page 61;
- adopt a PCC Policy on Recruitment and CRB Disclosures; a model policy is set out on page 62;
- note and adopt the Diocesan Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders, set out pages 8-9;
- adopt the Parish Agreement with Diocese for the processing of CRB disclosure applications; a copy is set out on page 63;
- adopt a programme for their work to fulfil their responsibilities; a suggested work programme is set out on page 16 of this handbook;
- set dates for reporting back on progress and for annual review;
- complete the archdeacon's monitoring form annually; a copy is on page 64.

The incumbent and churchwardens should sign the PCC Child Protection Policy and agree a date to review the policy on an annual basis. One copy of this policy should be placed on the church notice board, and one copy should be sent to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser for compliance records.

¹ *Protecting All God's Children* is available from Diocesan Church House or from Church House Publishing, Westminster; it is also on the diocesan website. Further copies of *Protecting Children in the Diocese of Oxford* are available from Diocesan Church House. A charge is made for these publications.

POLICY

General statements of principle and intent
that apply to all parishes and church
organizations in the diocese

1 Principles of the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy

- We are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children within our church community.
- We will carefully select and train ordained and lay ministers, volunteers and paid workers with children and young people, using the Criminal Records Bureau, to check the background of each person.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that a child or young person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.
- We will fully cooperate with statutory agencies during any investigation they make into allegations concerning a member of the church community.
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse.
- We will care for and supervise any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.

2 PCC Policy on Child Protection

It is the legal responsibility of each PCC to fulfil their duty of care towards children during worship and in all church-sponsored activities. The PCC must implement the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy and provide a safe environment for children, young people and volunteers. Every year the PCC should agree the Child Protection Policy Statement as their general statement of intent. They should also agree any local implementation details in addition to the Diocesan Policy, using the procedure on page 61 as a framework.

The Child Protection Policy Statement should be displayed in the church and a copy sent to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. A model is given on page 61.

The PCC must appoint a Parish Child Protection Representative, who will be responsible, on behalf of the incumbent and PCC for implementing the House of Bishops' policy and any local additions. See page 15 for a description of the representative's role. It would be helpful if the representative could be co-opted on to the PCC. Any change of Parish Child Protection Representative should be communicated to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

Other posts need to be filled as set out in Roles and Responsibilities on pages 15-16.

Some parishes may not be providing children's or mixed-age activities at the present time. In such cases the PCC should still pass a proposal accepting the Diocesan Policy and complete the Parish Policy Statement even though they have nothing to implement at the moment. This document should be sent to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser so that a full record of complying parishes can be kept.

In multi-parish benefices and team ministries where there is a Church Council with delegated powers, that body may take the decisions.

Any proposed changes to the recommended good practice must be discussed with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. The PCC should review both its Policy Statement and its implementation document every year. It is suggested that the Parish Child Protection

Representative should make a report at the Annual Parish General Meeting and that the policy is reviewed soon after this meeting so that new members of the PCC can become aware of their responsibilities.

Failure to follow the procedures and to ensure that good practice is followed could result in the parish's third-party liability insurance being invalid.

3 Parish Policy on Recruitment and CRB Disclosures

The PCC should adopt the Policy Statement on Recruitment and CRB Disclosures, which covers recruitment of volunteers and paid workers. A model policy is set out on page 62.

4 Parish agreement with Diocese on obtaining CRB Disclosures

The diocese as a registered umbrella body handles CRB disclosure applications on behalf of the Parish. A formal agreement between the diocese and the parish is needed, as they are distinct legal entities. A model agreement is set out on page 63. It should be signed by a churchwarden on behalf of the parish and returned with the first application for a disclosure to the CRB Countersignatory for Volunteers at Diocesan Church House.

5 Diocesan Policy on Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The Diocese has adopted a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders which is set out below for reference.

1. As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions involving working with children and young people, the Diocese of Oxford complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
2. The Diocese of Oxford is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff, volunteers and users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical or mental disability, or offending background.
3. This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders can be made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
4. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. In selecting people we assess their skills, qualifications and experience.

5. A CRB Disclosure is only requested for positions involving working with children and young people. For those positions where a CRB Disclosure is required, all application forms, job advertisements and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a CRB Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
6. Where a CRB Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to complete a Confidential Declaration at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within the Appointing Body and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
7. For positions involving working with children and young people we ask questions about your entire criminal record on the Confidential Declaration Form, as the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 provides that for this purpose no convictions are regarded as unspent. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
8. Appointing Bodies will be made fully aware of their duties under the provisions of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 prohibiting the employment of disqualified people from working in regulated positions and any other relevant requirements stipulated by law or by regulatory bodies.
9. At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. A risk assessment is undertaken, when offences are disclosed, which takes into account the circumstances of the offence and the position applied for.
10. We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
11. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a CRB Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
12. We have a procedure to deal with complaints relating to CRB Disclosures and the use of CRB Disclosure information.
13. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar someone from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.
14. It is Diocesan policy that no-one who has been convicted or who has accepted a caution for a sexual offence against a child will be permitted to work, in a paid or unpaid position, which brings them into regular direct contact with children, nor are they to be part of mixed-age activities (for example choir, servers, bell-ringers) run by the church.
15. A person convicted of or who has accepted a caution for any other offence against a child or for whom there are unresolved serious allegations outstanding will only be allowed to work with children or be part of mixed-age activities with the express agreement of the Bishop and incumbent following consultation with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

16. A person known to be convicted of, or to have accepted a caution for, an offence against a child will be subject to an individual agreement defining attendance a worship and other church activities.

6 Child Protection in the context of Bell Ringing

The Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers has adopted the following policy to ensure compliance with legislation and adopt good practice

Introduction

The involvement of young people has long been a feature of Church Bell ringing. The teaching of these young people and their acceptance and encouragement by adult ringers has made the world of ringing almost unique in the way in which the different age groups interact. Recent legislation and the publishing of various guidelines on the protection of children under the age of 18 have not really addressed the situation of young people in the context of ringing. This has resulted in a confused picture where reactions have ranged from complete disregard for the problem to deciding that young people should no longer be taught. The aim of this policy statement is to clarify the position as far as members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers are concerned and to provide a workable framework for the teaching, nurture and well-being of our young ringers.

The Diocese of Oxford requires all Parochial Church Councils to have an acceptable policy for work with young people in the Parish. All ringing related activities for young people at parish level will be subject to the requirements of the local PCC policy. However, there is a range of different ringing related activities in which young ringers may take part, not all of which will be addressed by a Parish policy. The following list indicates the range of activities but is not intended to be exhaustive:

1. Attendance at practice and Service ringing in their own tower.
2. Attendance at practice and Service ringing in other towers.
3. Participation in activities arranged by their own band e.g. outings, social events etc.
4. Attendance at Branch meeting or practices.
5. Participation in other Branch events e.g. outings etc.
6. Attendance at Guild meetings or events.
7. Attendance at Branch or Guild Training events.

Clearly items 1, 3, and some aspects of 4, 5, and 6 will be covered by the individual Parish policy. For the rest, and particularly in the area of training courses, the Guild Policy should demonstrate how the recommendations of the various guidelines have been addressed.

The policy also needs to clarify the responsibilities of Guild members and Tower officers as well as Branch and Guild tutors and officers.

Background

The background to this policy is provided by: *Children Act 1989*,

Home Office guidance *Safe from Harm* 1993

House of Bishops' policy *Protecting All God's Children* 2004

Oxford Diocesan procedure *Protecting Children in the Diocese of Oxford* 2005

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers guidelines *Protecting Young Ringers* 2004

The following policy statement was prepared in 2001 following consultation with the diocese, and was last revised in March 2005. It is designed to provide a realistic and reasonable set of good-practice guidelines to be followed to demonstrate compliance with the legislation and the Guild's commitment to the safety and well-being of young ringers.

Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers policy statement

1. All members, but particularly Tower Captains and others involved with teaching young ringers, should make themselves familiar with their parish policy and the diocesan procedure. (All PCCs have copies and the Guild has copies which may be consulted if necessary.)
2. All members involved in teaching young ringers should be familiar with, and apply the Central Council Guidelines, revised in 2004. These are available from the local guild, and from Diocesan Church House, and can also be found on the web site of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.
3. For individual bands, every effort should be made to comply with the parish policy. In particular:
 - (a) Where appropriate, PCC approval should be obtained for activities involving young people.
 - (b) An attendance register should be kept listing all such activities.
 - (c) Written parental consent and relevant medical information should be obtained for all ringing activities. Copies of these should be in the tower on every occasion the young people are present. (See sample Consent Form)
 - (d) If a parent or guardian is not to be involved in transportation etc., parental consent should be obtained for a young ringer to be taken to another tower.
4. The completion of the Confidential Declaration, and a check with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) are seen as positive ways to protect our young people and those who teach them. It is recommended that for each band:
 - (a) The Tower Captain should complete the Confidential Declaration and this will be retained on file in accordance with the practice agreed by individual parochial church councils, and also undergo a CRB check.
 - (b) Other members of each tower who are actively involved in the training of the young people in that tower should also complete the Confidential Declaration, and undergo a CRB check.
 - (c) Other adult ringers, if they wish or in order to comply with decisions of individual parochial church councils, may complete the Confidential Declaration, and undergo a CRB check.
 - (d) Each tower should aim to have at least one male and one female registered in accordance with the practice agreed by their parochial church council.
 - (e) Every effort should be made to ensure that First Aid help can be quickly obtained either from a member of the band or from someone living near the church and that rapid contact can be made with the emergency services e.g. having a mobile phone in the ringing chamber.
 - (f) Every effort should be made to ensure that Health and Safety matters are considered and reasonable steps taken to remedy any deficiencies. At a minimum there should be Emergency Lighting, Fire Extinguishers and a First Aid Kit available.
5. Branch Ringing Masters and all Tutors on Guild and Branch Courses involving Young People should complete National Declaration forms and undergo CRB checks. The Guild will appoint a Children's Officer who will be responsible for keeping an up to date list of those members involved and acting as a liaison between the Guild and the relevant Diocesan authorities.

6. For all Guild and Branch Courses and other activities involving Young People at least one member of the tutoring team should have basic first aid experience and parents should be given full details of the programme and the following obtained:
 - (a) Written parental consent for each child's participation to include agreement with any proposed transport arrangements. A model Child Registration form for bell ringers is on page 79.
 - (b) A completed medical form for each child. This is included in the Child Registration form.
 - (c) If necessary, approval of the host PCC for activities on their premises.
7. Where young people need transportation as part of the course e.g. between towers the following should apply:
 - (a) All adults who act as drivers or travel with the young people should be registered as in section 5 or be acting with the written permission of parents.
 - (b) All drivers should ensure that their car insurance covers the activity (this is rarely a problem).
 - (c) Every effort should be made to ensure that there are at least two young people in each car. (If at all possible it is also advisable that there should be at least two adults in each car.)

PROCEDURES

Guidance that should be followed
by parishes and other
church organizations

1 Roles and Responsibilities

The PCC should designate people to carry out the following roles. They do not all have to be carried out by different people, but with one exception, pointed out below, they can be combined. All these people should have a clear channel of communication with the PCC.

Parish Child Protection Representative

Each Church Council must appoint a Child Protection Representative to be responsible under them for implementing the Diocesan policy in the parish.

This should be a lay person, preferably with some professional interest in children, for example a teacher, health visitor, foster parent, social worker etc. Ideally, the representative should be someone who is not already an office holder or responsible for children or youth work in the parish, so that independence is maintained.

The representative will be responsible for:

- Implementing the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy in the parish;
- Possessing a copy of *Protecting All God's Children* and this handbook and being familiar with their contents;
- Making any extra recommendations required for the particular circumstances of a parish and having those agreed by the PCC;
- Receiving, with the incumbent, any concerns about children or adults in the parish and making sure that proper advice is sought and proper referrals made; concerns about the incumbent should be raised with the bishop;
- Overseeing the process for new appointments, sending out Confidential Declaration forms and reference letters (unless this is carried out by the Appointing Body Nominee);
- Being a member of the Appointing Body for any new appointments to represent child protection concerns;
- Being the link person between the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser and the parish.

The Representative may also be responsible for:

- Being the Children's Advocate (see below);
- Being the Appointing Body Nominee (see below);
- Supporting the children's and young people's workers through regular meetings and in other ways;
- Providing or arranging provision of training in child protection matters for all workers (both volunteers and paid staff).

The Parish Child Protection Representative should work closely with the incumbent and if possible be co-opted on to the PCC. He or she should make a report to the PCC at least once a year.

Children's Advocate

- This is a named independent person that children are encouraged to talk to if they have worries.
- This person should also be available for contact by people who are concerned about a child or young person or about the behaviour of an adult.
- Their name and contact details should be included with those of other parish officers on the church notice board and in the church hall or other church premises.

Appointing Body

Selection of people to undertake work with children and young people should be confirmed at an interview conducted by an Appointing Body. This should include at least two people, with the incumbent or a churchwarden and the Child Protection Representative being among them. One of them should be designated as Appointing Body Nominee. This person is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the formal processes are completed, and acting as a point of liaison between the parish and the diocese.
- Carrying out certain functions in relation to the CRB process – see Annex.

Approved Parish Representative

This person is responsible for verifying the identity of applicants as part of the CRB process. Note that this role cannot be fulfilled by someone on the Appointing Body for a post.

The incumbent is expected to retain the Confidential Declarations in a secure place, and to have access to the record of CRB disclosures.

2 Implementing the policy: a suggested work programme

The incumbent, Child Protection Representative and probably a small working party should compile a work programme showing how the policy is to be implemented in the parish. The document should cover the following areas:

- Decide who should fulfil the roles set out in section 1.
- Inform the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser of any people in the congregation who are known to have offended against children or young people; an agreement with that person must be worked out (see pages 27).
- Identify all outside groups using church premises; follow the procedure on page 29.
- Identify all children's and young people's activities and mixed-age activities that are the responsibility of the PCC and therefore come under these procedures.
- Check whether any of the under-8 groups need to be registered with OFSTED (see page 35).
- Identify all leaders, helpers and adults in mixed-age activities who will need to follow child protection procedures.
- Identify any adults in the congregation who have significant informal contact with children: verger, caretaker, mini-bus driver etc. These people will come under the child protection procedures.
- Arrange for all current paid employees, volunteers and adult members of mixed-age groups to sign the Confidential Declaration form (see page 20), have an interview, and complete a CRB Disclosure Application (see Annex) if that has not already been done.
- Decide how new workers will be appointed (see page 18).
- Make sure the Parish insurance policy covers all church activities on and off the premises and includes Legal Protection Insurance for employees and volunteers.

- Check that every group has enough helpers and that, if possible, a gender balance is maintained. See page 36 for recommended staffing levels.
- Inspect all premises used by children and young people to make sure they are physically safe and that any health and safety issues are addressed. (See page 36).
- Check that every group has a register of attendance and up to date registration and consent forms; (see pages 75-6).
- Check that every group possesses and uses parental consent forms for outside activities; (see page 77).
- The Parish Child Protection Representative should hold a loose-leaf folder where concerns or any unexpected incidents can be kept. (See notes on recording on page 28).
- Decide how the Child Protection Policy will be introduced to the congregation, volunteers, parents and children.
- Decide what training will be required and how on-going support will be given to children and young people's workers.
- Decide on a drink and drugs policy for the parish.
- Identify local support groups, counselling services and resources for adult survivors of child abuse.
- Put on the parish notice board, and in the place where children's groups take place, a copy of the PCC Child Protection Policy, the contact details of the Child Protection Representative or Children's Advocate and the details of the Childline telephone number (0800 1111) prominently displayed.

Bring the work programme to the PCC for ratification. If there have been areas of concern in the parish about aspects of the children and youth work use the opportunity of implementing the Child Protection Policy to make changes.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will be able to give advice or answer questions on any aspect of implementing the Diocesan Child Protection Policy.

3 Recruitment procedures for clergy and Diocesan staff

This section is based on Procedure 3, Safe Recruiting, in *Protecting All God's Children*, and the Home Office guidance *Safe from Harm*, which should be consulted if there are any doubts about implementation. The principle is that the same process should be followed whether or not the person is paid. This applies to all those aged 18 or over.

The bishops will ensure that clergy and lay people who hold the Bishop's Licence or Permission to Officiate are carefully recruited, sign the Confidential Declaration form and complete a CRB disclosure application. Normal references will also be taken up. Any information gained from the declaration or disclosure that involves possible harm to a child must be discussed with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. The same approach will be used for diocesan staff, paid or voluntary, whose posts involve responsibility for children. This process will be repeated if the person transfers to another post within the diocese.

4 Recruitment procedures for parishes and other church organizations

- As part of their implementation policy the PCC should agree which adults come under these procedures, that is, any adult looking after or responsible for any child or young person who is not their own. Do not forget staff who could have easy access to children, for example caretakers, vergers or mini-bus drivers.
- Decide on the process for existing volunteers, who were not recruited using these procedures. Normally this procedure should be applied retrospectively.
- Children or young people's leaders should inform the Parish Child Protection Representative when more helpers are needed so that the procedure can be started in good time. A progress chart is on page 70.
- The Appointing Body should agree: what the task or job is, experience required, level of responsibility, time commitment, and to whom they are responsible. They should prepare a job description.
- Seek possible workers. Distribute a notice or advertisement and do not rely simply on word of mouth, as people with the required skills may not be known to you. Normally one should not recruit people until they have been part of the congregation for at least 6 months, but this can be waived on occasion.
- Prospective appointees should be regarded as job applicants and have a defined role, which should be explained in the job description. You may wish to give them an information sheet on the church's recruitment practice; an example is on page 46.
- Ask applicants to complete the Application Form (see page 65).
- Send out pro-forma reference letters (see section 8 below and page 75).
- The Appointing Body should interview the applicants, in a manner suitable to the role and responsibilities.
- Ask successful applicants to fill in the Confidential Declaration form (see section 7 below and page 67) and return it in confidence to the incumbent.
- Ask successful applicants to complete the application form for the CRB disclosure. Blank application forms are available from the Diocesan Countersignatory for Volunteers at Diocesan Church House. These should then be processed by the Approved Parish Representative. For those who already hold CRB disclosures from other paid or voluntary work see section 12, Portability arrangements, page 22, and Annex 5.
- Give the worker a copy of the separate *Child Protection Guide for Church Workers with Children and Young People* and ask them to sign the contract on page 73, agreeing to follow the Child Protection Policy to the best of their ability
- Agree a probationary period with the worker and agree a time to review their work.
- Once a clear CRB Disclosure confirmation letter has been received, or a risk assessment recommendation has been received following a positive disclosure, it will be appropriate to confirm the appointment in writing.
- Commission new appointees to significant positions through a formal process, e.g. at a Sunday service, so that everyone knows their new role.
- Retiring appointees should also be formally thanked and an appropriate announcement made, for example at the Annual Church Meeting.

5 Helpers aged 16 or 17

Young people aged under 16 should not be asked to take formal responsibility for work with children. Helpers aged 16 or 17 should be interviewed and asked to complete a Confidential Declaration form and sign a contract agreeing to follow the Child Protection procedures and recommended good practice. They should not be asked to apply for a CRB disclosure. They should never be solely responsible for a group or a crèche. They should always be supervised and supported by an adult. Once they reach 18 they should be treated as adults and asked to apply for a CRB disclosure.

6 Choirs, bell ringing and other mixed age activities

Arrangements where people under 18 are involved in church music or bell ringing must comply with the PCC Child Protection Policy and any special implementation requirements of the parish. For bell ringing specifically, see the separate policy in the Policy section.

It is recommended that all adults involved in mixed-age activities which are the responsibility of the PCC should sign the Confidential Declaration form and agree to follow the recommended good practice including the Code of Behaviour. While recommended, this is not essential where there is no direct contact with young people. Adults who have been convicted of a sexual offence against a child or young person will not be able to take part in church activities involving children.

Adults taking part in mixed-age activities which also include children can be asked to apply for a CRB disclosure. If the duties involve supervising, training, caring or being in sole charge of children then this is obligatory. If they involve regular contact with children and working under the direction of a responsible person then it depends whether they could be in a position to have unsupervised contact with children. The PCC will need to take a decision as to who to include.

Organists, choir masters, tower captains and bell ringing trainers will be covered by this requirement if there are or are likely to be children for whom they are responsible. For other bell ringers, choir members, servers and others, a decision needs to be taken.

There must always be two adults present when children or young people are being taught or during rehearsals.

Parents must sign a registration form which sets out the arrangements for the activity e.g. arrangements for weddings, arrangements for dropping off and collecting, what, if any, physical contact will be needed during training.

A register of children and young people under 18 years must be kept by the leader of the activity. Consent forms must be signed by parents for any outings or holidays.

Safety must be the top priority in the bell tower or organ loft. Those responsible must be aware of the insurance requirements for the activity.

The leader of the activity should make sure that everyone knows what to do if child abuse is suspected, if a child discloses abuse or if the behaviour of an adult causes concern.

If private lessons take place away from church property, arrangements must be made separately with parents. It is wise to avoid isolated situations where no other adult is in the

vicinity. To protect children and the adults who work with them it is necessary to create an open environment where the possibility of abuse or a false allegation is unlikely to occur.

If a child or young person becomes attention-seeking or makes an adult feel uncomfortable in any way, ensure that the incumbent or Parish Child Protection Representative is informed immediately. Any concerns and conversations should be written down and agreement sought from the incumbent or Parish Child Protection Representative about how the situation should be managed.

The Royal College of Organists and The Royal School of Church Music also provide advice on child protection.

7 Private tuition on church premises

If church premises are used for individual tuition the PCC must be aware of and approve the arrangements. Another adult should be present or nearby and the child or young person should be made aware of the other person's presence. Additional guidance, for example from the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, the Incorporated Society of Musicians, or the Royal School of Church Music, should be obtained and followed as applicable.

8 Confidential declaration

The confidential declaration form is on page 67 and also on pages 46-7 of *Protecting All God's Children*. Note that this covers relevant civil as well as criminal matters. Guidance notes are on *Protecting All God's Children* page 48 and on page 69 below. If there are any matters regarding children disclosed, contact the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser to discuss the matter. The incumbent should ensure that their Parish Child Protection Representative knows that the Declaration has been completed satisfactorily. See section 26, page 28 regarding retention of records.

9 References

Two references must be sought, of which at least one should comment on the person's suitability to work with children. If the person currently holds a paid or voluntary position involving responsibility for children, they must be asked to give their manager or equivalent as a reference. Model forms for these are on pages 71-2. If the person has come from a different church, they should be asked to give the incumbent or equivalent as a reference. If the applicant has offered a portable CRB disclosure then ask them to sign a CRB Portability Consent Form. A copy of this and the CRB Portability Reference Request should accompany the main Reference Request. Model forms of words for these are in Annex 5.

10 Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is an executive agency of the Home Office which provides in one process a check of whether an individual has a criminal record, has been under police investigation, has been banned from working with children by the courts or by having their name placed on lists maintained by the Department for Education and Skills or the Department of Health.

The policy of the House of Bishops, as set out in the second of their six principles (see page 7), is that those applying for work with children should be asked to obtain an enhanced Disclosure from the CRB. This applies both to new and to existing children's workers. A discussion of the issues involved is on page 56 below.

The CRB provides two copies of each Disclosure: one to the applicant and one to the relevant Registered Body countersignatory, who is an officer of the diocese. Parishes will receive a letter confirming the absence of a concern or will be consulted where there is a concern. Such correspondence should be kept securely and retained indefinitely with the forms relating to the application. See section 26, page 28.

11 FAQs on CRB issues

These are FAQs that often arise in the context of parish activities. General FAQs on the CRB process and related issues are posted on the CRB and Disclosure websites.

Should under 16 helpers have CRB checks?

Those under 18 should be not asked to be take responsibility for a group of children or young people, so they will not need CRB disclosures. 16 and 17 year olds may be asked to complete Confidential Declarations. Those under 16 may help but not take responsibility for children or young people. See page 19.

Sometimes parents of Special Needs children accompany their children in church activities. Should they have CRB checks?

They do not need CRB checks if they care only for their own children or if they perform occasional care tasks for other children when the parents of those children are present. However, if they start regularly helping or being in sole charge of children other than their own, they should be considered helpers and be properly recruited.

Should churchwardens be asked to obtain CRB disclosures?

The duties of a churchwarden do not necessarily involve responsibility for children and young people. Where churchwardens take on such responsibilities this should be considered an extra volunteer role and not part of their normal responsibilities, and CRB disclosures applied for in this role. Note, however, that churchwardens are required to complete a declaration before putting themselves forward, and that spent convictions must be included in this. Those convicted of offences against children are not permitted to become or remain churchwardens.

Who checks identity if the Approved Parish Representative is an applicant?

The PCC should designate another person to fulfil the APR function. It would be reasonable for an appropriate member of the PCC, e.g. a churchwarden, to carry out the function when it is required. This should be reported to the PCC and recorded.

Should drivers have CRB checks?

Yes if they are going to be transporting children regularly on behalf of the church. If they respond to a request for a single trip, it would be sufficient to ask if they have appropriate insurance. See also advice on page 38.

Are motoring offences included in disclosure information?

Only offences which could have been dealt with by a prison sentence are included. Speeding and parking offences are not disclosed unless they were part of the same incident.

Can we obtain CRB checks for work with vulnerable adults?

CRB checks for those working with vulnerable adults are currently only available for those working in organizations directly providing health or social care. A vulnerable adult for the purposes of CRB is a person receiving such services. Churches which offer, e.g. visiting schemes, for older people or other adults, are not providing health or social care. If you wish to pursue this further, contact the adviser to the Board of Social Responsibility.

We are putting on a children's activity for which there will be a number of adults working together, mostly parents of the children. Do they need CRB checks?

It depends on the nature of the activity and the roles of the adults in relation to children other than their own. As a minimum the group leader should be properly recruited, including a CRB check. Consult the Child Protection Adviser.

We are setting up an all-age group (such as a choir or an orchestra) where adults and children will be taking part together. Do all the adults require CRB checks?

Yes.

12 Completing CRB application forms

As the procedure for completing CRB applications is liable to change, it is set out in the Annex. This will be updated and reissued as necessary. A copy of the latest version is also on the diocesan website.

13 Portability arrangements for those holding CRB disclosures

Those taking up paid work in the diocese with children and all clergy, whether stipendiary or voluntary, will be required to apply for a new CRB disclosure. However, volunteers, ordinands and some clergy who already hold a disclosure from other paid or voluntary work in the diocese can use this for church work provided certain criteria are satisfied. These are set out in *Protecting All God's Children*, page 51. Please refer to Annex 5 for practical guidance.

Information from any disclosure accepted under the portability guidelines, as specified in Annex 5, should be recorded on the Confidential Declaration.

14 People from other countries

The recruitment process should be followed as for UK residents. The CRB also has an international service. However, this does not function for all countries and its information is only as good as that held by those countries. References may need to be taken up by phone and confirmed in writing. If there is a plan for a group to come to a church from another country to work with children, allow enough time for the proposed activities to be agreed in writing, to take up references, and for confidential declarations and CRB checks to be completed before the group arrives.

15 CRB positive disclosures and risk assessments

A significant proportion of the population have convictions for offences. These may be old, minor and unrelated to the safety of children, or they may be more serious. The policy of the diocese is that for all positions where a CRB disclosure is recommended, receipt of a positive disclosure will lead to a risk assessment. As part of the assessment the Appointing Body Nominee will need to interview the applicant to clarify the issues arising from the disclosure, and to submit a report. The diocese will then appoint a risk assessment team, appropriate to the position applied for, to carry out the risk assessment, taking the report into account. The diocese then provides a recommendation to the Appointing Body as to whether a proposed appointment should be confirmed, confirmed subject to conditions, or not confirmed. The Appointing Body then makes its own decision in the light of the recommendation. The diocese also provides an appeals process against the recommendation, though not against the appointment decision. If a PCC is minded not to accept the recommendation, then the bishop must be informed. A fuller guidance note is available and is issued when a positive disclosure is received.

16 Reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse

As adults, responsible citizens and Christians, we are all responsible for trying to ensure the safety of children and young people. The Church does not investigate allegations of child abuse itself but reports them to the statutory bodies and cooperates with them.

Any suspicion, allegation or disclosure that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, must be referred to the local Social Services.

Information on definitions of child abuse and significant harm together with the duties of local authorities can be found on pages 48-9. Advice on listening to children can be found on pages 42-3.

There are several ways in which concerns about a child can become apparent:

- By an allegation made by the child directly.
- By reports or allegations made by a parent or another person.
- By observing signs and symptoms of abuse.
- By the admission from someone who says they are harming a child.

Each PCC, as part of their implementation document, must make clear who in the parish should be told about concerns regarding children and young people. Their name and contact details should be put on the parish notice board. This will normally be the Children's Advocate, or the Parish Child Protection Representative if the roles are combined, with the support of the incumbent and perhaps a churchwarden. The Parish Child Protection Representative should make sure that all people working with children are aware of their responsibilities in the event of any child protection concern and what to do.

Social Services is the lead agency in matters of child protection and co-ordinates any response. The police can be contacted in an emergency. As local Social Service offices operate in different ways, and are sometimes part of larger groupings with different names, it would be wise for each parish to be aware of local practice and know how to make contact. Details of local offices can be found on page 84.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser must be informed, as soon as possible, of all incidents concerning the church and of any referrals made or being considered. If an allegation concerns a member of the clergy, the area Bishop must be informed as well as the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

It is the responsibility of the Parish Child Protection Representative or other named person to make sure that appropriate referrals are made to the local Social Services. They should make clear that the referral is concerned with a matter of Child Protection. See below about making a referral.

If any individual is unhappy about the church's response, there is a delay, or for some reason they do not wish to go through the church procedures, they have a personal responsibility to make the referral in writing to Social Services themselves.

In the case of serious allegations or if it is possible that a criminal offence has been committed; for example a physical or sexual assault, care should be taken not to inform the alleged offender so that any investigation is not compromised. An agreement should be made with the police and Social Services Department about who should be given information and when that information should be given.

During some child protection investigations it may be necessary for the alleged offender to be withdrawn from any contact with children or young people. Consult the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

All actions regarding a child protection concern must be recorded, signed and dated (see advice about recording on page 28).

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser is available to discuss concerns about children and young people or the behaviour of adults. It is also possible to seek advice from the local Social Services Department without giving identifying details. Childline (phone 0800 1111) will also give confidential advice; see pages 85 for information on resources. The seeking of advice should not delay a referral. Delay can prevent a conclusive investigation from being carried out.

17 Making a child protection referral to Social Services

When making the referral give the appropriate person as much detail as possible, describing the event or disclosure¹ given, as well as information about the child and family. Distinguish between fact and opinion, what is first hand knowledge and what has been heard from others. Make it clear if you do not wish to be named as the informant. The referral must be followed up with a letter, a copy of which must be sent to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. Social Services may send a form to be completed.

The person directly involved with a disclosure or observation should:

- Give as much detail as possible.
- Be prepared to have further discussions with Social Services and police.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser is available to assist with the formal process. The Department of Health booklet *What to do if you are worried a child is being abused* (2003) explains it in detail. Copies are available from Diocesan Church House and on the websites of the diocese and of the Department of Health.

¹ The term disclosure is here used for an allegation, admission or claim that a child has been abused, as distinct from first-hand witness of possibly abusive actions. It must be distinguished from the CRB disclosure, which is a formal record of a person's offences, if any, or a statement that none are recorded.

18 Investigating an allegation

All allegations should be taken seriously and dealt with in conjunction with the statutory authorities. The highest degree of confidentiality must be maintained during an investigation.

Support will be needed by the various parties involved with an allegation. In accordance with the House of Bishops' policy, and police advice, those supporting the alleged offender and those supporting the alleged victim or victim's family should not discuss the situation with each other. This is to avoid any possible contamination of evidence.

Following an incident the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will advise the parish or organisation concerned on any changes necessary to prevent, if possible, a recurrence.

Following the outcome of an investigation appropriate disciplinary procedures will apply. The result of an investigation may be inconclusive, there may or may not be a prosecution, or it may be decided that a person's behaviour has been ill-advised and foolish rather than criminal. After taking advice, the Bishop or employer may need to put restrictions on a person's future employment, or require them to undertake a risk assessment, counselling, training, supervision or spiritual direction. There are no formal disciplinary procedures for volunteers; normal good practice will apply.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, in conjunction with the Bishop as necessary, will be responsible for informing the Department for Education List 99 or the Department of Health consultancy service of any information that needs to go on their registers of people banned from working with children. The Bishop will be responsible for informing the Lambeth and Bishopthorpe Register in relation to clergy. Allegations may be shown to be unfounded or malicious. In these cases the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will advise on appropriate means to make clear that the person has been exonerated.

19 Reports from parents or others

Parents, other adults or a teenager may report abuse but be reluctant to inform the relevant authorities in such circumstances. They should be encouraged to discuss the matter with Social Services or with another trusted professional with child protection training. In any case it is the responsibility of the church to inform Social Services of the allegation so that the child or young person and other children are protected.

20 Disclosures from abusers

People who abuse children rarely admit to what they have done. It is however possible that admissions may be made to clergy and pastoral counsellors.

While there is a general presumption in favour of confidentiality and indeed the secrecy of pastoral conversations of all kinds, this cannot apply in the case of admission of the abuse of children. Thus while a person's right to confidentiality is of great importance, it is not absolute. If a person hearing an admission considers that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm (in accordance with the definition on page 48) he or she must follow the procedures set out in this handbook. The Children Act 1989 states that if there is a conflict between the needs of a child and an adult "the welfare of the child is paramount".

It is also possible that abuse may be admitted in the particular and privileged context of confession. The “seal of the confessional” should be regarded as absolute. Nevertheless, a priest should not only urge the person to report his or her behaviour to the police or Social Services, but may indeed either make this a condition of absolution or withhold absolution until this evidence of repentance has been demonstrated. See the discussion in *Protecting All God’s Children*, pages 19-21.

It is in everyone’s interest to recognise the difference between what is heard in confession (however this might take place) “for the quieting of conscience” and leading to absolution, and disclosures made in other kinds of pastoral conversation. For this reason it is helpful if confessions are normally heard at advertised times or otherwise by arrangement.

Note should also be taken of the advice on confidentiality when listening to children given on page 28 and page 42.

Anyone concerned about matters of confidentiality should consult the Bishop, Archdeacon or Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

Those who admit to offences against children should be assured that, within the constraints of the law and subject to the obligation to safeguard the welfare of children, they will continue to receive pastoral care from the Church.

21 Survivors of abuse

The church will be involved with survivors of abuse in many ways:

- abused children may come to the Church for help
- adult abuse survivors may turn to the Church for help
- some clergy were sexually abused as children, and may need the support of colleagues, congregations and colleagues
- children may be abused by Christian family members
- children may be abused by clergy or church workers

Each parish should consider the fact that they almost certainly have survivors within their community and should think about ways of responding in a sympathetic and practical way. This means creating a loving environment within which healing can happen, and may require providing access to factual information and sources of professional help. The Board of Social Responsibility may be able to help, and there are specialist Christian counsellors available.

22 Disclosures of historical abuse

In the course of their work, many ministers and those offering pastoral support in the Church, will find themselves hearing disclosures from adults of abuse that happened to them when they were children.

There is no single, correct procedure for dealing with a disclosure of historical abuse by an adult. The wishes of the person disclosing abuse will be very important. For some adults, just being able to talk to a trusted person about their experiences can be a powerful healing event. The pastoral care of the person who has been abused should be a priority. A referral to the police will not always be necessary unless the individual wishes to report the offence; however, they should be encouraged and supported to do so. Adults do need to be made aware, however, that if the alleged abuser is still working with or caring for children a

referral to Social Services will be made by the person hearing the complaint or the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, who must in any case be informed. People who have committed sexual abuse against someone years ago could well be abusing children today.

23 Ex-offenders against children and known former abusers

Whenever help and support is offered to an ex-offender against children, the protection of the children in the church must come first. Remember that abusers of children are usually people who get on well with children and whom children like.

Present research suggests that sexual offending can be a kind of addiction that cannot be cured, is very hard to control, and can only be managed. This must be borne in mind when welcoming an ex-offender into the community.

Many ex-offenders will seek God's forgiveness for their crimes. Genuine repentance implies that the person concerned will accept that further help is required to prevent a recurrence of the offence and to deal with the human and social effects of the sin. As well as professional therapy, this may require continuing supervision and discipline within the church as part of the ministry to the offender. An ex-offender will need to accept that no further contact or work with children or young people can be permitted, and that a continuing pastoral role may be impossible. Sensitive care of the offender is needed in these circumstances.

Incumbents who discover that they have a person convicted of sexual abuse against a child within their church community must inform the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser and follow procedure 2 in *Protecting All God's Children*: 'Ministering to people who might pose a risk to children'. People with such convictions are also disqualified from serving as churchwardens.

24 Untrue allegations

Occasionally an untrue allegation may be made. It is important not to make judgements and allow any allegation to be carefully investigated to try to ascertain the truth. Untrue allegations can be the result of some other concern or unhappiness in a child's life. It is very important that clergy or people working with children do not put themselves in vulnerable situations. Those who have been exonerated may need particular support.

25 Action by the Bishop

Where allegations or suspicions are received concerning clergy, church leaders, others holding the bishop's licence, or church officers, the bishop needs to be involved. The approach is set out in *Protecting All God's Children* pages 35-8, and, for clergy discipline issues, pages 24-25. Note also:

- The Bishop will ensure that any necessary arrangements are made for the emotional and spiritual support of the child and his or her family, the accused person and his or her family, and the parish community.
- The Bishop will inform the Diocesan Director of Communications who will handle media relations. All media contacts must go through the Director of Communications.

- The Bishop will make sure that the Diocesan Registrar and the parish's insurance company have been informed.
- During child protection investigations it is normal practice for the accused or suspected person to be withdrawn from any contact with children or young people.
- If the person is involved with a church school, the Director of Education must be informed.
- Depending on the outcome of the investigation, further action will be needed.
- Records of unsubstantiated allegations need to be retained, in case subsequent allegations establish a pattern of worrying behaviour.

26 Recording, confidentiality and data protection

All forms and relevant correspondence relating to appointments should be kept retained while the person is in post. Once the person relinquishes the post, the date of their departure should be noted and the papers retained, as this information may be needed later. The forms should be passed to the incumbent for safe keeping in a locked filing cabinet. In an interregnum they should be held by the churchwardens, or equally safe arrangements made. If you have any concerns about keeping a particular record please consult your Data Controller or the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

It is important to keep accurate records of any child protection concerns, disclosures or allegations. Facts observed or disclosed should be accurately recorded, signed and dated. Opinions should not be included. If any records are to be kept without the subject of the record's knowledge, it should be made clear why this is so, for instance if there appears to be a worrying pattern of behaviour which needs to be monitored. Try to be consistent about what is kept so that it can be justified if necessary. Actions taken and decisions made should all be noted. It should be recorded who knows about the information, for example, the subject of the record, the child's parents etc.

The Data Protection principles enshrined in the Data Protection Act 1998 are included for information.

Personal data should be:

- fairly and lawfully processed;
- processed for limited purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate;
- not kept for longer than is necessary;
- processed in line with your rights;
- secure; and,
- not transferred to countries without adequate protection.

The Human Rights Act 1998 includes both the right to privacy in family life and also the right to life and the right not to be tortured. It is expected that the courts will uphold the need to pass on information for the purposes of protecting a child. The highest degree of confidentiality consistent with this should be maintained and only information necessary for the safeguarding of children passed on.

27 Communications with the media

In the event of an incident all communications both within and outside the Diocese will be handled by the Diocesan Director of Communications who will consult with the Bishop, the parish and the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. Particular care should be taken regarding any public statements or public prayer.

28 Insurance

The PCC should make sure that they have adequate insurance, including Public Liability Insurance to cover all their activities both on and off site. The Council should also make sure that the policy includes Legal Protection Insurance to cover legal costs resulting from allegations made against its employees or volunteers.

The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group has issued a document on child protection which states that “Ecclesiastical considers that the implementation of the House of Bishops’ Policy document by all church organisations is essential for the maintenance of liability insurance in relation to the issues it addresses”. The insurance company also expects that good practice as laid down by House of Bishops will be followed as closely as possible.

The insurance company must be notified of any allegations of abuse which are likely to affect the insurance held by the parish. This notification should be directed to the Claims Manager of the insurance company, marked Strictly Private and Confidential. Failure to notify the insurers could prejudice the cover under the insurance policy.

For further guidance on insurance issues see *Protecting All God’s Children* Appendix 7 (page 30) and ‘Insurance Advice’ (page 36).

29 Hire of church premises

Every PCC must decide which groups and which activities are their responsibility. Either the group or activity is run on behalf of the PCC, or it is an outside booking. Although other groups and functions that involve children on church premises are not the PCC’s direct responsibility, there is a duty of care and a responsibility for health and safety which means ensuring that outside groups follow an appropriate procedure.

1 All bookings

The following clause should be incorporated in any booking form for church premises for which the Church Council is responsible, both for one-off bookings and regular bookings: **You are required to ensure that children are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any injury, loss, damage or harm.**

2 One-off bookings

Give the organiser a copy of the *Child Protection Guide for Church Workers with Children and Young People*. Advise the organiser of the numbers of helpers required for the numbers of children expected (see page 36). Helpers will not need to fill in the declaration forms.

3 Regular bookings

Some groups will be registered with OFSTED, in which case ask to see their registration certificate and record the date on which it was seen. Registered organisations and some others (Guides, Scouts, playgroups etc.) will already have their own Child Protection procedures which they must follow. Other groups must follow the recommendations in *Safe from Harm*, the Home Office Code of Practice for safeguarding the welfare of children

in voluntary organisations (1993) (see page 46 for summary). They should be advised to adhere to the church's child protection procedures and recommended good practice. Hiring premises could be made contingent on implementing the policy.

Minimum requirements are:

- Signed declaration forms from all paid and voluntary workers.
- At least two workers for every group whatever the size, preferably keeping a gender balance.
- If a child or young person is alone with a worker for any reason, there must always be another adult nearby and the child must be informed where that person is.
- No person under 18 should be left in charge of a group.
- A register must be kept of children attending the group which includes name, address, date of birth and next of kin.

A form for agreements is included in the Forms section of this procedure.

30 Archdeacon's monitoring form

The church's policy and its implementation in parishes will be monitored by the archdeacons when they send out their articles of enquiry. The relevant form is in the Forms section, on page 64.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

This section provides advice on good practice which is the main way that children and young people are protected. The advice should be followed as closely as possible. If changes are made for practical purposes these should be equally safe and follow advice from the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser

1 Child Protection Guide for Church Workers with Children and Young People

This is supplied as a booklet at the end of this handbook. This should be copied and distributed so that all workers with children and young people have an individual copy.

2 Support and training

Children and young people are best protected when the people who are working with them do not feel isolated. The PCC should make sure that workers have the opportunity to meet together regularly, and for the Parish Child Protection Representative to attend. An atmosphere should be encouraged where people can discuss any concerns and receive support and be helped to review their work. Leaders should be encouraged to observe helpers in action.

The PCC should encourage workers and clergy to attend suitable training. Training is available through the diocese. Safeguarding Children Committees in each Local Authority area also have a duty to provide multi-agency training in child protection. Church workers should apply to attend these courses which will also help develop local networks. First Aid training should be made available to group leaders.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser provides training for clergy, PCCs, Parish Child Protection Representatives and parish volunteers. Contact the Adviser for details. The Diocese also provides comprehensive training on all aspects of youth and children's work; contact the Diocesan Children's Adviser or Youth Adviser for details of courses.

3 Code of Behaviour

All clergy, paid employees and volunteers should:

- Treat all children and young people with the respect and dignity befitting their age.
- Watch their own language, tone of voice and body language.
- Learn to control and discipline children without physical punishment. This is illegal for children's workers.
- Ensure that another adult is informed if a worker needs to take a child to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- If known in advance, seek a parent's permission if a child or young person is to be seen on his or her own; another adult must be nearby and the child or young person must know this.
- Ensure that each group includes a female helper.
- Ensure that children and young people know that they can speak to an independent person (the Child Protection Representative or Children's Advocate) in the parish, or contact Childline if they need to talk to someone. Display that name and contact details and the Childline telephone number (0800 1111) in a prominent place where children can see them.

Clergy, paid employees and volunteers should not:

- Invade a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting.
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child or young person even in fun.

- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person.
- Show favouritism to any one child, young person or group.
- Allow a child or young person to involve the worker in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature (see page 35).
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own. If this is unavoidable ask the child or young person to sit in the back of the vehicle.
- Share sleeping accommodation with young people.
- Invite a young person to the worker's home alone.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.
- Allow strangers to give children lifts.

4 Touch

Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse.

One of the aims of the policy is for church groups to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

- If any activity, for example bell-ringing, requires physical contact make sure that the young person and their parents are aware of this and its nature.
- There must be no physical punishment of any kind nor should any sanction ridicule or humiliate a child.
- Avoid physically rough games.
- Avoid unnecessary informal touching.
- Avoid taking young children to the toilet, but when unavoidable make sure another adult is informed or organise a toilet break for the whole group.
- Young children may sometimes need comforting; make sure they are responded to warmly but with other adults around.
- First Aid should be administered with others around.
- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Parish Child Protection Representative.

All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

5 Unaccompanied children

Sometimes children may attend worship or children's groups apparently without the knowledge of their parents. No hard and fast guidelines can be given, but the following points may assist:

- Establish whether the child attends with their parents' knowledge, or at least without their parents' objections. (The child may be of a different denomination or religion.)
- Establish their address and contact details. Include these on the register. Provide information about the group to the child to take to their parent.
- Seek to secure parental consent to the child's involvement, preferably by direct contact with the parent rather than by using the child as an intermediary.
- Bear in mind that the child may have some personal or family difficulty, which they may not be willing to disclose, and which needs sensitive handling. The child may also have some special educational or health need.
- Do not include the child on trips away from the normal place of meeting without explicit parental consent.
- If the child does not attend after having attended frequently, it may be appropriate to undertake some outreach, but this should be done with care.

6 Inappropriate behaviour by children towards adults

Children or young people can sometimes make suggestive approaches to an adult. They may have a crush or may act inappropriately following previous abusive experiences. The behaviour may be a "cry for help".

If an adult feels uncomfortable about a child or young person's behaviour he or she must:

- Make it clear to the child or young person, with sensitivity, that their language or behaviour is inappropriate.
- Tell another adult – a clergy colleague, the parish priest or the Parish Child Protection Representative. Agree with the colleague what measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence.
- Record the incident in case accusations are made in the future. Sign and date the record and hand it to the Parish Child Protection Representative.

7 Registration of Children's groups

Any group that includes children who are under 8 years old and that meets regularly for more than two hours in any one day, e.g. a youth group, or for more than six days a year, e.g. a holiday club, must register their group with OFSTED. Please contact the local branch of OFSTED for advice. Registration includes standards for workers as well as premises, and tries to ensure that children do not come into contact with unsuitable people who may also be using the premises. A registration fee is payable annually, and inspections are made.

Most church groups will not need to register; nevertheless, it is advisable to adhere to the standards as closely as possible. These are set out below in sections 8 and 9.

A Register should be kept of all children's groups that meet regularly. For one-off events a list of the children attending should be kept. These lists should be retained.

8 Recommended staffing levels

The minimum required staffing levels for children's groups are given below. More help may be required if children are being taken out or undertaking physical activities.

0-2 years	1 person for every 3 children	1:3
2-3 years	1 person for every 4 children	1:4
3-8 years	1 person for every 8 children	1:8
Over 8 years	1 person for the first 8 children and then one extra person for every extra 12 children	

Each group should have at least two adults and it is recommended that a gender balance be maintained.

If groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with doors open one person per group is allowed.

Young people aged 16 and 17 may help with groups but should be supervised by an adult helper who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and the child protection procedures are followed. See page 19. Young people under 16 may help with other things but should not have responsibility for children.

Adults asked to help on a very occasional basis may be seen as visitors but must be accountable to an appointed worker. If they become part of a regular rota they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.

9 Health and Safety

These are the recommended standards.

Premises

Meeting places should be warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter. Electric sockets should be covered.

Toilets and hand basins should be easily available. Hygienic drying facilities should be provided.

There should be enough space available for the intended activity.

If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by the Environmental Health Officer and a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate acquired. Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.

Special needs

Welcome children and young people with special needs to the group. Try to make the premises, toilets and access suitable for people with disabilities. Ask the parent about how best to meet the child's special needs, and do not see this as the responsibility only of the child's parent. If premises are being designed or refurbished, it is now a legal requirement to make reasonable adjustments to meet the possible special needs of future children and adults; advice is available.

Health and safety

Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.

Adults should be aware of the fire procedures. A fire drill should be carried out regularly. Those responsible for the premises should ensure that fire extinguishers are checked regularly and that smoke detectors are fitted throughout the building.

No smoking should be permitted in the areas where there are children.

Alcohol must not be used by those who have children and young people in their care or at a time when their use could affect their care.

Unaccompanied children and young people should not walk to or from your premises along dark or badly lit paths. It should be quite clear who is responsible for their safety on the journey to and from the group.

A First Aid kit and accident book should be available on the premises. Workers should be encouraged to attend First Aid training. A list of first aiders in the parish should be compiled and kept available. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book.

Complete the checklist set out on page 74.

10 First Aid Box

All premises used by children should have a First Aid kit. Its contents should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals. All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge and the parish should encourage access to First Aid training.

A suggested minimum for a First Aid kit

- 2 x small wound dressings
- 1 x large wound dressing
- 1 x eye pad
- 4 x triangular bandages
- 2 x non-stick dressings 5 cm x 5 cm
- 2 x non-stick dressings 10 cm x 10 cm
- 1 reel of low allergy adhesive tape
- 4 x safety pins
- 5 x pairs of disposable latex gloves
- 2 x conforming bandages 6 cm
- 1 x resuscitation shield
- 20 x wrapped adhesive dressings (plasters)
- 2 x crepe bandages 5 cm
- 1 x disposable apron
- 1 x sealed eye wash
- 1 x emergency aid card
- 4 x individually wrapped cleaning wipes (non-alcoholic)
- An accident report book

HIV/AIDS

Since workers may not know that a child may have HIV or AIDS it is good practice always to take the necessary precautions. Good hygiene should always be practised. Disposable latex gloves and a disposable apron should always be used when dealing with broken skin, body fluids and faeces. Confidentiality regarding a child's HIV status should always be maintained.

11 Transporting children by private car

Children and young people should not be taken out with transport without the prior consent of the parents. This also applies to giving lifts to and from a church activity.

All those who drive children on church-organised activities should be over 25 and should have held a full driving licence for over two years.

All cars that carry children should be comprehensively insured. The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts during church activities.

All cars that carry children should be clean and in a roadworthy condition.

All children must wear suitable seat belts. If there are no seat belts children should not be transported.

At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number. There must be a seat belt for every passenger, and it must be used.

If a child is known to have a disability or special need, consideration should be given whether to have a non-driving adult in the car. This adult should sit in the back, behind the driver, with the child in the seat beside him or her.

Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the Parish Child Protection Representative.

Any driver who has an “unspent” conviction for a drink driving offence or for Dangerous Driving or Racing on the Highway should not transport children.

There should be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car.

To ensure that these guidelines are adhered to it would be appropriate to obtain a signed undertaking, covering the above issues, from those people who are prepared to transport children in their cars.

Drivers who are not children’s workers should be recruited for the task through the normal recruitment process including obtaining a CRB disclosure.

12 Transporting children by mini-bus

A mini-bus with seat belts must be used.

All children must have a proper seat.

An escort must always be taken.

13 Taking young people out

No child under the age of 8 can be taken away on residential activities without being accompanied by his or her parent or guardian.

Information for parents

It is important that parents should have full information before giving consent. This should include:

- Aims and objectives of the event or activity.
- Date of the event and its duration.
- Details of venue including arrangements for accommodation and supervision.
- Travel arrangements.
- Name of group leader and contact numbers.
- Information about financial, medical and insurance arrangements.
- It may be helpful to hold a briefing session for parents before the event.

Link person

If the trip is to a distant place, a link person in the home area should be designated.

The link person should:

- hold a copy of the group itinerary and programme.
- hold a copy of the list of children involved.
- hold copies of the parental consent forms with their contact details.
- be in touch with the group leader.
- inform parents in the event of an unforeseen delay or emergency.

Parental consent

Each child or young person under the age of 18 (unless they are over 16 and living away from home or married) must have the written consent of his or her parent or guardian; this gives authority to the person named as responsible for the activity to take the young person away and to act as a careful parent would. It does not transfer parental responsibility.

Parental consent forms should clearly set out the activities, risks and safety measures that will be adopted.

In an emergency, while every attempt should be made to contact a parent. This should not delay seeking medical treatment.

The group leader should take the consent forms with them on the trip.

Insurance

Make sure that insurance is adequate for the activities planned, especially any hazardous activities.

Premises

Insurance, First Aid kit and fire precautions should be checked. Carry out the Health and Safety checklist on page 74.

Accommodation

Boys and girls must have separate sleeping and washing facilities which are private to them. Mixed groups must have adults of both sexes involved. Adults should have separate accommodation but in close proximity to the young people.

Any other arrangements should be carefully explained to parents beforehand and their consent obtained in writing for the arrangements. For sleepovers see page 41.

Supervision

One person must be designated overall group leader. Ratios of helpers to young people should be strictly followed.

- For over 8's there must be at least one helper for the first 8 children and then one helper for every additional 12 children.
- Every group must be led by at least two adults.
- When physical activities are planned staffing levels should be increased accordingly. Swimming requires one adult in the water with every three children under the age of eight.
- Adults should avoid being alone with children or young people.
- Each adult should have a list of all children.
- Children must return with the adult they came with if travelling in groups.
- Ground rules about behaviour and expectations should be made explicit.
- Parents should be informed beforehand if it is intended to allow groups of young people to go off unsupervised e.g. for shopping.

- If instructors are engaged for specific activities, check that they have the appropriate certificates. Organisations should be registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority and have the appropriate insurance. Risk assessments will be needed.
- Make sure children have appropriate clothing and kit needed for activities.

Recruitment of volunteers to take children away

All volunteer helpers must sign or have signed the Confidential Declaration form, obtain a CRB Disclosure, and should agree to follow the Code of Behaviour (see page 1). They should also complete health information details.

All volunteer helpers should be clear about their responsibilities e.g. finances, First Aid, transport, specific activities, catering, and they should know who to go to if they have a concern about a child or have any other worries. The person responsible for catering may need to have a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

Hold a briefing session for volunteers on a separate day before the event begins. Ensure they understand any special needs, dietary requirements and health issues.

Permission for the event

A detailed description of the event should be presented to the PCC so that permission may be given and the event covered by the parish insurance. If there are to be any potentially hazardous activities undertaken this description must include an assessment of the risks involved.

14 Holiday clubs and missions

These are situations when there are likely to be extra helpers for part or all of the activity.

- Plan the activity carefully. If in the course of one year several events for under 8 year olds extend over more than 6 days there is a requirement for the activity to be registered with OFSTED.
- Ensure that all the usual health and safety recommendations are in place. Make sure there are enough helpers for all the activities.
- If there are many new or one-off helpers divide them into teams ensuring that there is a known, properly appointed leader responsible for each team. Every helper should go through the proper recruitment process.
- If using volunteers from other churches make sure they have complied with that church's child protection procedures by contacting that church's Child Protection Representative personally.
- Give all helpers a copy of the *Child Protection Guide for Church Workers with Children and Young People*
- Ask the children's parents to fill in a consent form to cover all the activities.

Sometimes an outside organisation is used for a youth event, or a mission. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that the organisation is in good standing, has its own child protection procedures, has recruited its workers properly and is properly accountable. Contact the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser or Youth Adviser for information or advice.

15 Sleeping on church premises

This procedure is concerned with the safety of people who sleep on Church premises, for example during a weekend celebration or short break. Only ground floor accommodation is considered suitable for sleeping accommodation.

- There should be at least two separate routes leading from the sleeping accommodation and out of the building. A room with two exit doors leading into a corridor from which the only exit could be impeded with smoke and fire could not be considered acceptable.
- External doors should be left unlocked. If for security purposes this is impracticable, the fastening should be a simple tower bolt type. Check exit doors for ease of opening.
- Exit routes and doors should be clearly indicated.
- In order to minimise the spread of smoke and fire should an outbreak occur, all doors should be kept closed, particularly during the night hours.
- Portable heating appliances should be sited in positions in which they would not impede exit doors and routes should they catch fire. Always turn them off during sleeping hours.
- An outbreak of fire often causes a power failure. It is therefore necessary for Supervisory Staff to have hand lamps.
- Smoking should be forbidden in the sleeping accommodation.
- A Nominal Roll of occupants should be prepared and hung just within the main exit door. Occupants should be instructed to meet at a pre-determined assembly point in the event of an outbreak of fire and a roll call should be taken.
- Anyone discovering a fire should raise the alarm by shouting FIRE.
- The Supervisory Staff should be aware of the nearest telephone, or it is recommended that a mobile telephone be available. The Fire Service should be called to all fires, using the 999 facility.
- Do not park cars where they would obstruct exit routes or access for fire appliances.
- Supervisory Staff should know the exact location of the fire fighting equipment and how to operate it. Only carry out Fire Fighting when it is obvious that it is safe to do so.

16 Seeing young people on their own

Code of practice

- Be part of a team with a trained adviser who gives supervision.
- Always meet in an open area where others are around but not too close.
- In exceptional circumstances, if a person is distressed and more privacy is needed, use a separate room after telling another adult about the arrangements. Make sure that the young person knows where the nearest adult is.
- Preferably women should advise females, and men advise males.
- Keep a record of who is spoken to (not the content unless agreed with the person) in case follow up is needed. Sign, date and time the notes and hand them to the supervisor.

- If a young person is distressed they should be entrusted to another adult at the end of the session.
- If a situation is encountered where the listener feels uncomfortable they should speak to the adviser as soon as possible.

Guidelines

- Be open and available.
- Be relaxed.
- Listen before you speak.
- Avoid putting any pressure on the person.
- Remember none of us have all the answers.
- Help the person decide what they want to do.
- Use other members of the team to explore general issues further.
- Remember you are not on your own.

Confidentiality

At the first meeting, explain that the conversation will be confidential unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the person is being harmed themselves, if they are harming others or if they know that a child or young person is being harmed, the information will have to be passed on. The person will be told what will be done and how they will be supported if they need to talk to someone else. In these circumstances always make a written record, sign date and time, and follow the child protection procedures; see page 24 for making a referral.

No one should see a child or young person on their own on a regular basis unless they are professionally trained counsellors, properly recruited and receiving professional supervision.

17 Hearing a child abuse disclosure

Church workers may get to know the children and young people in their groups very well. A child or young person may feel enough trust to be able to talk about unhappy things that are happening – at home, at school or at church. This is both a privilege and a responsibility. Remember that the child may want the abuse to stop but still love the abuser. The child may think that it is possible to stop the abuse without anything else happening.

If a child asks to talk in confidence always tell them that that will depend on the circumstances. It will be necessary to get other people to help if they are being harmed.

If it is possible, try to have another adult present while the child speaks, but do not prevent the child from speaking if this is not a possibility.

- Listen to the child attentively.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Allow the child to talk, but don't press for information.
- Tell the child that they are not to blame for anything that has happened.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell.
- Let the child know that other people will have to be told so that the abuse can stop.
- Try to explain what will happen next in a way that the child can understand.
- Reassure the child that he or she will continue to be supported during the difficult time to come.

Seek advice from the Parish Child Protection Representative, or incumbent; if no one is immediately available contact your local Social Services directly.

As soon as practicable write down as carefully as possible everything that was said, what the child said, how they said it and how they appeared emotionally. Add any other relevant information, carefully distinguishing fact from opinion. Sign, date and time the notes. Make sure a copy is given to the Parish Child Protection Representative. If a referral is made to Social Services, send them a copy of your notes.

Do not talk to the alleged abuser. If the child has made allegations about an adult who is not part of the church community but known to be part of another organisation, such as a teacher, or a scout leader, then the relevant organisation as well as Social Services should be informed.

Further guidance on making referrals is on page 24.

18 Making and publishing images of children

Making and publishing images of children is usually enjoyed by children and parents and can bring useful publicity, but there are some important issues to note.

The issues are the same for still photographs, digital images or films, and regardless of the particular technology used. For convenience they are all referred to as images.

Images count as personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998, and therefore the eight principles of the Act (given on page 28) apply. It is important that the consent of the children and their parents is obtained for the making and use of images of children.

Those taking photographs need to bear in mind that parents and carers may have good reasons for refusing consent, for example:

- some children may have been involved in legal disputes, local authority care, or adoption, and their whereabouts should not be too widely known; parents and carers of the affected children will know this and will appropriately withhold consent without necessarily giving the reason;
- if individual children are identified, it would be possible for potential abusers to use them to target prospective victims;
- images made using digital cameras can be manipulated for child pornography, which is a growing problem on the internet; this is particularly relevant if children are scantily dressed.

Good practice is therefore as follows:

- Obtain consent from parents and children before making images. Consent need not be in writing if it is not proposed to publish the pictures in any way, but if they are going to be posted up, used in a newspaper including the diocesan newspaper *The Door*, or put on the internet, then a specific consent should be obtained. Images are usually made in the context of a specific activity. If the event is a church service, nativity play or similar, then an oral notice can be given out at the beginning for the leader of the service or event, asking that any parent or carer who objects to images being made of their child should either remove their child from view of the camera or approach the leader afterwards to ensure that any image they object to is not used. Alternatively, if the event is one for which specific parental consent is sought, add a suitable wording to the parental consent form, such as:
 - I consent to images and video recordings being made of my child and for these to be used in printed publications such as the diocesan newspaper *The Door* and on our website (adapt and delete as necessary).

- Where possible, each child should be part of a group.
- If the photograph is to be published, avoid naming the child. If a name needs to be used, it should be only a first name.
- If the child is named in full, avoid using their image.
- If children are scantily dressed, e.g. for swimming, then:
 - Focus on the activity rather than a particular child;
 - Avoid full face and body shots
- Be clear about whether the image is to be retained for further use.
- Store the image securely and dispose of it when it is no longer required.

Schools, including church schools, will have their own policies, which apply to children on school premises or engaged in school-sponsored activities. The Department for Education and Skills also publishes advice on this issue, available on their website.

Newspapers and other print media are bound by the Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice, of which the latest version was issued 1 June 2004. Legitimate journalism is a 'special purpose' under the Data Protection Act, which exempts it from the requirement of security, but there are numerous restrictions on photographing children. These are not likely to be relevant to church use, but advice is available from the diocese if needed.

INFORMATION

1 Safe from Harm: Home Office guidance for all voluntary organisations

These recommendations form the basis of the procedures and recommendations for good practice. The following is a summary.

- Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
- Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
- Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.
- Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.
- Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
- Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
- Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.
- Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children.
- Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
- Find out whether an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children.
- Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
- Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure of abuse.
- Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers in the recognition and prevention of child abuse.

2 Information for those applying to work with children

The Church takes its responsibilities for the care and protection of children very seriously. We believe that we should provide our children with the highest standard of care and that the experience of growing up within the church community should be enriching.

You have been asked to take part in this nurture which is a responsible but very fulfilling job and the parish will support you and train you as appropriate for your task.

To ensure that our children are looked after as well as possible and that you are not put in a vulnerable position, the Diocese has drawn up procedures and recommended good practice to be followed. You are asked to read the Diocesan booklet *Child Protection Guide for Church Workers with Children and Young People* and abide by the contents together with any special requirements from the parish. You will be asked to sign that you agree to do your best to follow good practice.

In accordance with the House of Bishops' Policy on Child Protection you are asked to sign a Confidential Declaration form stating whether you have been convicted of a criminal offence or certain other matters. Notes helping you to complete the form are on page 69. If for any reason you have difficulty making the declaration please discuss this with your parish priest who together with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, will decide what will be done. It will be the case that people with convictions of sexual abuse against

children will not be able to work with children or have contact with them in mixed-age church activities. For people with other convictions or concerns a confidential risk assessment will normally be undertaken. The completed form will be kept indefinitely but securely by the incumbent.

Two references will be taken up for everyone and you will be asked to obtain an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. If you already have a recent one you will be asked instead to sign your consent to our consulting its provider. This applies to those in paid employment, those who hold the Bishop's Licence or Permission To Officiate, and those volunteers who have substantial or possibly unsupervised contact with children.

As part of the recruitment process you will be told what your responsibilities will be and your experience of working with children will be explored. The Church is keen to use everybody's talent. The following criteria are a guide:

- Previous experience of looking after or working with children or young people.
- A willingness to accept the background and culture of different children.
- A commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern.
- Reasonable physical health, mental stability, integrity and flexibility.

3 Responding to allegations or suspicions of child abuse

Duties of the Local Authority

The Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the Local Authority:

- To take reasonable steps to prevent children suffering ill treatment or neglect.
- To share information about any child within the area who is likely to suffer harm.
- To investigate where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need and their families by the provision of services.

Recognition of suspected or actual child abuse is the responsibility not only of the statutory agencies (police, Social Services, health services, schools etc.) but also the community.

After a referral has been made, the Social Services Department will decide whether what they have heard appears to constitute child abuse, and/or whether they need to offer advice and support under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 for a child in need. They may also decide not to do anything.

If they decide to investigate, they will normally do this jointly with specially trained police officers.

- They will gather information from people who know the child: for example teachers and GP.
- They will interview the child's parents.
- They will interview the child and perhaps other children in the family. This may be in the form of a video interview if it is considered that court proceedings might be a possible outcome. The child is always interviewed by specially trained staff.
- If the investigation concludes that the child or young person has suffered or is likely to continue to suffer significant harm a multi-agency Child Protection Case Conference will decide whether the child needs protection and how that can be

achieved. The child's name may be placed on the Child Protection Register. Services may be offered to the child or family.

- The police will decide, together with the Crown Prosecution Service, whether a criminal act has been committed and whether a person should be cautioned or charged with an offence and taken to court.
- If the case is taken to court the child will probably have to be a witness, unless the person pleads guilty; there are special provisions to help a child through this process.

4 Attending a Child Protection Case Conference

A Case Conference is a multi-agency meeting which includes the parents and the child, if old enough, to consider whether a child has suffered and is at risk of suffering in the future any form of significant harm. The Conference decides whether to place the child on the Child Protection Register and what plans are required to protect the child and support the family.

A case conference cannot decide to remove a child from his or her parents, although it could recommend that this course of action be considered by Social Services. **Only a court can order the removal of a child, although a child can be placed away from home by Social Services with the parents' agreement.**

Church workers may be invited to a Case Conference because:

- they have first-hand evidence of abuse
- the child has told them about abuse
- they know the child or the parents well and can give background information
- they are a family friend and are offering them support

They should prepare by writing down:

- a pen picture of the child or young person
- anything they have heard or seen that concerned them and why
- the positive aspects of the child's life

These notes should be destroyed after the Conference.

They should be prepared to:

- speak briefly using the notes
- offer an opinion after hearing all the information
- be part of a group offering support and help to the family and child

If the child is placed on the Child Protection Register the Case Conference will re-convene after three months to review the situation. The worker may be invited if he or she is still involved.

5 Significant harm

This concept was introduced by the Children Act 1989 as the threshold for intervention in family life for the protection of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely-consideration is given to the severity of ill-treatment; the degree and extent of physical harm; the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect; the extent of

pre-meditation; the degree of threat and coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements in child sexual abuse. Significant harm can be caused by one traumatic event or a compilation of events that interrupt, change or damage the child's physical or psychological development. In each case it is necessary also to consider the family's strengths and supports.

The definition of abuse has been widened by section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2004. It extends the legal definition of harm by adding 'impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another'. The purpose of this is to cover situations where domestic violence impacts directly on the adult partner but children are affected even if not directly ill-treated.

6 Definitions of child abuse

These are taken from the statutory guidance document *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (1999 edition).

Someone 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.

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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve 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 ill-treatment 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, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

7 Common signs and symptoms of child abuse

It is recommended that workers attend training events provided by their local Social Services or by the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. This summary gives a brief outline of some of the signs and symptoms you may see which may be causes for concern.

Physical abuse

The first evidence of abuse may not be an obvious severe injury.

Bruises

- In or around the mouth
- Fingertip bruising on arms, chest or face indicating tight gripping or shaking
- Bruises of different colours indicating injuries of different ages
- Two simultaneous black eyes without bruising to the forehead
- Bruising showing the marks of a belt or implement or a hand print
- Bruising or tears around the earlobes
- Bruising to the head or soft tissue areas of the body

Bites

Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped and can leave a clear impression of teeth.

Burns and scalds

- Burns with a clear outline are suspicious
- Circular burns from cigarettes
- Linear burns from hot metal rods or electric elements
- Burns of a uniform depth over a large area
- Friction burns from being pulled across a floor
- Scalds producing a water line from immersion or pouring of hot liquid
- Splash marks around the main burn area caused by hot liquid being thrown
- Old scars indicating previous burns

Fractures

- Any fracture in a child under 1 year old is suspicious
- Any skull fracture in the first 3 years is suspicious

Female circumcision

This is illegal except for rare health reasons.

Neglect

Often difficult to identify, neglect leads to the physical and emotional harm of a child.

The signs and symptoms include:

- Failure of a parent to provide adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, medical care or supervision.
- Failure of a child to grow within the normally expected pattern; they may show pallor, weight loss and signs of poor nutrition.
- Failure of a parent to provide adequate love and affection in a stimulating environment, a child may look listless, apathetic or unresponsive with no apparent medical cause.
- A child may be observed thriving when away from the home environment.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can also be difficult to identify. It is the result of ill treatment in the form of coldness, hostility and rejection; constant denigration or seriously distorted emotional demands; extreme inconsistency of parenting. Some of the signs and symptoms are:

- low self-esteem
- apathy
- being fearful and withdrawn or displaying “frozen watchfulness”
- unduly aggressive behaviour
- excessive clinging or attention seeking behaviour
- constantly seeking to please
- over-readiness to relate to anyone, even strangers

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse can be suspected based on physical signs, the child’s behaviour or following a direct statement by the child. It is often investigated because of a combination of these signs.

Physical signs

These will normally be identified by a medical practitioner. Others can be more generally observed:

- recurrent abdominal pain
- unexplained pregnancy
- difficulty walking and sitting
- faecal soiling or retention
- recurrent urinary tract infections

Behavioural signs

- knowledge unusual for the age of the child
- sexually provocative relationships with adults
- sexualised play with other children
- hints of sexual activity through play, drawing or conversation
- requests for contraceptive advice
- lack of trust or marked fear of familiar adults
- sudden onset of soiling or wetting
- severe sleep disturbance
- change of eating habits
- social isolation and withdrawal
- role reversal in the home e.g. a daughter taking over the mothering role
- inappropriate displays of physical contact between adult and child
- learning difficulties, poor concentration
- inability to make friends
- using school as a haven, arriving early and seeming reluctant to leave
- reluctance to take part in physical activity
- truancy, running away from home
- self harm, mutilation or suicide attempts
- dependence on drugs or alcohol
- anti-social behaviour including promiscuity and prostitution

Organised abuse

Organised abuse refers to any abusive practice which is planned or exercised by two or more perpetrators, or where more than one child is abused by the same person. This type of abuse does occur and needs very careful investigation. Good communication between everyone involved is essential.

This type of abuse can include the production and dissemination of child pornography by various methods including the internet.

8 Children and the internet

People in the Church need to be aware of technological advances, and, in particular, of the proliferation of child pornography on the internet and its use to feed the fantasies of abusers or to normalise abuse to children.

- Children may meet unsuitable people through chat rooms and message boards; they should be warned not to give out identifying information.
- Children could be targeted through parish websites; care should be taken not to identify children in this way.

Further guidance is available on request.

9 The behaviour of sexual abusers

Who sexually abuses children and young people?

Approximately 90% of convicted abusers are male. Whilst women do perpetrate sexual abuse and there is probably some under reporting of females, evidence at present shows it is predominantly an offence committed by males.

Children can be sexually abused by adults or by other young people. In the UK young people under the age of 21 account for approximately a third of all cautions and convictions for sexual offences.

What are the implications of this?

Many adult sexual offenders report that they began their behaviour around the age of 13 or sometimes younger. This means that when they are finally discovered they may have been sexually abusing others for many years and their behaviour will have become compulsive and hard to break. It also means that if a young person engages in inappropriate sexual behaviour it would be dangerous simply to view it as teenage “experimentation” out of which they will grow.

Why do people abuse?

The reasons why adults abuse are very complex. Sometimes they will have been abused themselves or be responding to past hurts or unmet needs. Sexual abuse of vulnerable children may meet a need for power and control or for self-gratification.

Are sexual abusers likely to abuse a particular type of child?

Sexual abusers will be attracted to children of different ages and characteristics. Some will abuse only pre-pubescent children, others will approach older children. Some will abuse boys, others girls and some children of both sexes.

If an abuser is having a sexual relationship with another adult, this does not mean that they are not a risk to children.

Some abusing adults may operate alone whilst others may be linked into an organised network.

Can we recognise a sexual abuser?

It is not possible to easily identify someone who will sexually abuse children because they are found in all walks of life and sections of the community, within all professional groups and from all social classes and racial and cultural backgrounds.

Does sexual abuse just happen?

A sexual abuser may claim that they did not know why the behaviour happened or that it was a result of stress, sexual frustration or misuse of drugs or alcohol. There is no evidence that this is the case. Sexual abuse is usually carefully and meticulously planned, often over a long period of time. Abusers may choose friendships or relationships with adults who already have children or careers where they will have positions of responsibility over children.

Can an adult who sexually abuses a child stop by themselves?

All the available evidence suggests that over a period of time an abuser will have developed powerful sexual urges, fuelled by fantasy, towards children and will find it very difficult to control these impulses. Once discovered, an adult sexual abuser will need to have controls placed on their behaviour to ensure that they do not have opportunities to abuse other children.

How can sexual abusers live with themselves?

Unless the sexual abuser is a sadistic offender who thrives on the pain of others, he or she will have to develop thought patterns that deny or minimise the harm caused to others. This allows them to live with themselves. Some of the ways an abuser tries to justify such actions include claims like:

- The child wanted the sexual experience
- Children are seductive and provocative
- It won't harm them
- They liked the sexual experience
- It was a "one-off" and it won't happen again

The distorted thinking of a sexual abuser can be fed in a number of different ways including pornographic literature, seeking out other like-minded adults, or by misrepresenting children as sexual beings. In attempting to deny or minimise the effects of their abusive behaviour, a sexual abuser may appear very plausible. This can draw other people into their way of thinking.

One of the ways an offender can deny responsibility or seek to avoid having to address their behaviour through treatment is by claiming a religious conversion. When this is the case, it would be important to know whether faith in God has really led to true repentance, taking full responsibility for the abuse, seeking to repair its damage and seeking to prevent a relapse by receiving the support of others.

Can a sexual offender be cured?

There is no evidence that a sexual abuser can be cured of an attraction to children. This is because the behaviour will have developed over many years and will be so entrenched that it will have become an integral part of a person's character. The best way to stop is for them to develop an insight into their pattern or cycle of behaviour and by keeping away from situations where child abuse could occur. To ensure that there is no further offending the abuser is likely to require a long-term specialist programme and long term supervision so that they cannot develop or reinforce their distorted thinking.

How do adults target particular children for abuse?

Adult sexual abusers are extremely good at relating to children and gaining their confidence and trust and are often well known to the child or their family particularly if they are seen as a safe and trusted person.

The “grooming” process

The process by which adults introduce the child into a sexually abusive relationship is known as “grooming”. Often this involves getting to know the child and showing them special attention before slowly progressing into sexual abuse. Alcohol and pornography are often used in the process. If undiscovered, this behaviour is likely to become increasingly intrusive, and an adult sexual abuser can regularly abuse the same child over many years. The abuse of other children at the same time is also possible depending on the level of access and opportunity.

In addition to “grooming” the child, an abuser will also “groom” other people around them to create the impression that they would not be capable of such an action. If they are discovered, the people around them may find it difficult to believe the allegations and may defend the abuser rather than think about the needs of the child. In such situations the child will feel very distressed that they are not believed and may be under pressure to retract their allegations.

Are certain children more vulnerable than others?

All children are potentially at risk from a sexual abuser. However, children may be especially vulnerable if they are:

- Left alone for long periods of time without proper supervision
- In care or away from home, at school or on holiday
- Emotionally deprived and particularly looking for love, affection or seeking attention
- Lonely or bored
- In need of high levels of intimate care or have communication difficulties because they suffer from a disability
- Open to manipulation because they have a special enthusiasm such as sport or music and are dependent upon a group leader or coach to succeed

Why don't children tell?

- Children are put under immense pressure by their abuser to keep areas of their relationship secret and not to tell anyone. Some of the main ways that this is done include:
 - Offering children gifts or other treats.
 - The abuser may threaten the child, their family, friends or pets.
 - The abuser may entrap the child into thinking they have a special relationship or secret.
 - The child may be told that no one will believe an allegation.
 - The abuser may place the responsibility for the abuse onto the child so that there is a feeling of guilt.
 - The child may feel that if a disclosure is made the family will be split up.
 - The abuser may isolate the child and discourage the child from making relationships with others who could be told.
 - The child may be emotionally dependent upon the abuser and may fear losing them.

How does a sexual abuser gain access to children?

Adults wishing to abuse children can gain access to them in many different ways. Any organisation that works with children has the potential to be targeted by a sexual abuser. This is why it is vital that churches develop safe practices in their work with children.

10 Rehabilitation of offenders

The aim of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 is to help offenders to reintegrate into society by ensuring that, in certain circumstances, their criminal conviction should, in effect, be expunged.

The basic principle of the Act is that, following a certain period of time, all convictions (except those resulting in prison sentences of over 30 months) are regarded as “spent” and the offender is a “rehabilitated person”. This period of time depends on the sentence imposed and may be extended by subsequent convictions. A rehabilitated person is treated largely as though they had not committed, been charged with, prosecuted for, convicted of or sentenced for the offence. The convicted person does not have to reveal the conviction or admit its existence in most circumstances. Moreover, an employer is not allowed to refuse to employ someone or to dismiss them because they have a spent conviction.

The Act spells out specific immunities and privileges. A rehabilitated person is entitled to ignore spent convictions in reply to questions about his past, whether put to him in court or out of court. The existence of a spent conviction should not prejudice him in getting or keeping a job. There are civil and criminal sanctions against the unlawful dissemination of information about spent convictions. A malicious reference to a spent conviction can give rise to an action for damages. It is a criminal offence to disclose a spent conviction from official records other than in the course of official duties. It is also an offence corruptly to obtain details of a spent conviction.

However, the legislation recognises that there are certain circumstances where the wider public interest outweighs the interests of the individual and justifies some exceptions to these rules. In particular, the Act provides a power for the Secretary of State (the Home Secretary) to make an order exempting certain professions, occupations and activities. The existing exceptions order covers those working in specified circumstances where matters such as national security, the care of the young and vulnerable, the administration of justice and issues of financial probity are concerned. The effect of the exceptions order is to limit the protection afforded to those convicted of offences. For example, a person may be questioned about his spent convictions in order to assess his suitability for specified offices or occupations or for admission to specified professions. A spent conviction may be relied on as a ground of dismissal of such persons from office or employment, or for dismissal or exclusion from their profession. Examples of the professions and occupations so affected include the legal, medical, accountancy and teaching professions, the police, judges, probation officers and others concerned with the administration of justice.

There are some situations in which people will be expected to declare their convictions, even if they are spent. These include appointment to any post providing accommodation, care, leisure and recreational facilities, schooling, social services, supervision or training to people aged under 18. Such posts include teachers, school caretakers, youth and social workers, child minders. They also include volunteers in such positions.

A caution should not be treated as if it were a lesser offence: a caution is a penalty for an offence which has been admitted. It therefore carries the same weight as a conviction for the same offence, and needs to be treated in the same way.

11 Justification for CRB checks

Introduction

People often ask the reasons for the church asking volunteers and paid staff to undergo Criminal Records bureau (CRB) checks.

The explanation comes in three parts: first, it is the policy of the Church of the England and of the diocese; secondly, it is consistent with guidance issued by the relevant government departments; thirdly, experience has shown that it is necessary. It also brings benefits. These are discussed in turn.

The Church's policy

The House of Bishops' child protection policy *Protecting all God's Children* states as the second of its six principles:

We will carefully select and train ordained and lay ministers; volunteers and paid workers with children and young people using the Criminal Records Bureau, amongst other tools, to check the background of each person

Appendix 7 to the main policy is a statement from Ecclesiastical Insurance, who insure most PCC and similar groups. This contains the following statement:

Policies of insurance require the insured to take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring. Failure to take such precautions may prejudice the insurance arrangements in force. A duty therefore exists upon the insured to research and adopt best practice based upon current and ongoing guidelines.

The main policy statement is also backed by a number of authorized procedures. Procedure 3 deals with Safe recruiting and lists the range of people who should complete Confidential Declarations, on a prescribed form, and have CRB checks.

Government guidance

Relevant government guidance includes *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, whose most recent revision is dated 1999, and *Safe from Harm*, dated 1993. The first of these governs the formal arrangements for investigations, child protection registers and so on, and is primarily intended for the statutory sector, although it also encourages the voluntary sector, which includes the church, to have clear guidance and procedures in place and to train staff. The second of these is specifically addressed to the voluntary sector, and its recommendations include that all paid staff and volunteers should go through a formal recruitment process which includes drawing up a job description, taking up references, carrying out an interview, and asking applicants to complete a Confidential Declaration.

When *Safe from Harm* was issued, police checks were only available to statutory and some voluntary organisations, and this was before the introduction of the CRB. Police checks have now been replaced by the CRB, which provides, in one process, a check not only of criminal records as held on the police national computer, but also of two government lists, List 99 maintained by the Department for Education and Skills, and the consultancy index maintained by the Department of Health. These are lists of people who have been dismissed from work with children and who are banned from working with them. It is an offence knowingly to offer people on these lists work with children.

Offenders

The lesson of experience is that the church is vulnerable to sex offenders, in particular, who may see involvement in church life as an opportunity to make contact with young people. There is a large number of offenders on the Sex Offenders Register, and research undertaken by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation suggests that a significant proportion of sex offenders seek involvement in church life. Some will, of course, wish to try to maintain a

law-abiding life, and there is a particular challenge for the Christian community in working out ways to help them do so without running an unacceptable risk. *Protecting All God's Children* has a section on this. There will also be others who see the church as a potential soft target for their activities. It is therefore important that the church, like other voluntary organisations working with children, adopts the same standards as the statutory sector when recruiting staff and volunteers. Indeed, it would be very vulnerable if it did not.

The CRB process, by its nature, produces a record of all offences, however old, minor, and unrelated to children. The diocese has therefore taken considerable care to devise a process that safeguards confidentiality and to provide a risk assessment process when offences are disclosed. It does not wish to discourage people who may have old and unrelated offences from coming forward to make their contribution, and it does not wish to embarrass them by handling this information in a way that facilitates casual dissemination. It also, as part of its agreement with the CRB, asks parishes to accept a policy on the rehabilitation of offenders.

Summary of the legal position

The government guidance is not binding on voluntary organisations, such as the church, and the CRB itself is not in a position to require organisations to use its services. Nor is the House of Bishops in a position to compel the dioceses, or the dioceses to compel the parishes, to follow its policy or the government guidance. However, a parish which did not do so, and which subsequently found itself in difficulties, might well be open to criticism if it could be shown not to have followed the clear policy.

Benefits of the policy

An important purpose of the policy is to provide reassurance to parents and to children's workers, whether paid or voluntary. To summarize:

- It is known that the church applies this process and this has a deterrent value for offenders wishing to infiltrate children's work.
- It provides reassurance to parents that the church takes proper safeguards.
- It provides reassurance to children's workers that they have all been through a proper recruitment process.
- It sends out a message that the church is not dilatory in following recognized good practice which is normal in the secular world.
- It provides protection for parishes and the diocese, as Ecclesiastical Insurance expect insured parties to take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring, and to follow good practice.

Conclusion

A significant proportion of volunteers for work with children in the church are themselves, in their day jobs, professionals in related fields. They are well used to these safeguards. Our policies allow the portability of CRB checks obtained through such work into church life. Others may at first be surprised by the requirement, but it is usually found that, on explaining it, it is accepted. Not only does it help to safeguard children, but it also provides some protection for the workers themselves and also for the church, when operated, as it should be, as part of a proper recruitment and selection process.

12 Offences against children

Offences against children fall into several groups:

- Offences which are similar in respect to children and adults, such as assault;
- Offences for which there are specific provisions affecting children, such as abandonment and cruelty;
- Sexual offences against children; these offences are listed in Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, Schedule 4 paragraph 1, and in Sexual Offences Act 2003; these lists replace that in Children and Young Persons Act 1933, Schedule 1;
- Abuse of a position of trust; this covers sexual activity with a consenting 16 or 17 year old by an adult in a position of trust; this includes a teacher or youth worker;
- Offences under the various provisions for disqualifying people from working with children.

These offences are never “spent” under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and must always be declared if a worker or volunteer is to have contact with children.

It is an offence knowingly to employ a disqualified person in a position involving working with children, whether or not the person is paid.

FORMS

Diocese of Oxford Parish Child Protection Policy Statement

Parish of

The following policy was agreed at the PCC meeting held on

1. We are committed to implementing the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy *Protecting All God's Children*, and the diocesan procedures, which are based on the Children Act 1989, and the Home Office Guidance *Safe from Harm*.
2. We are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children within our church community.
3. We will carefully select and train ordained and lay ministers; volunteers and paid workers with children and young people using the Criminal Records Bureau, to check the background of each person.
4. We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that a child or young person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.
5. We will fully cooperate with statutory agencies during any investigation they make into allegations concerning a member of the church community.
6. We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse.
7. We will care for and supervise any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.
8. We will review this policy annually, and, as part of this, check that all our procedures, including the CRB Annex, are up to date.

Our Child Protection Representative is

Name

Address

Telephone

Signed Parish Priest/Incumbent

 Churchwarden

 Churchwarden

Date

Diocese of Oxford Parish Policy Statement on Recruitment and CRB Disclosures

Parish of

1. This Parish is committed to the recognition of each person's skills, experience and qualifications. We shall attempt to ensure that these are fully considered in the recruitment and appointment of paid staff and volunteers.
2. We shall assess all positions (whether for paid staff or volunteers) in order to determine whether a Disclosure is required from the Criminal Records Bureau and, if so, at what level. For those positions requiring a Disclosure, we shall indicate in any advertisement (or other information about the position) the level of Disclosure and make clear that any offer of position will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory Disclosure information.
3. Where a position involves a Disclosure, we shall encourage all applicants invited to an interview to provide details of any criminal record before the interview.
4. We shall obtain Disclosures through the Diocese, following Diocesan procedures.
5. If the Diocese advises that a Disclosure contains information relevant to the position, we shall work with Diocesan staff to assess the risks and agree a course of action.
6. We shall follow Diocesan guidance on the re-submission of applications for Disclosure.
7. We shall ensure that Disclosure information is passed only to those entitled to receive it.
8. We are committed to the fair and sensitive use of Disclosure information. We shall refer to the Diocese any complaints about the Disclosure process or the accuracy of Disclosure information so that appropriate action can be taken; this may involve the use of the formal complaints procedure.
9. In dealing with all matters relating to Disclosure, we shall comply with the Criminal Records Bureau's Code of Practice. We shall also comply with Diocesan policies and follow Diocesan procedures and guidance.

Diocese of Oxford

Parish Agreement with Diocese of Oxford on Obtaining CRB Disclosures

Parish of

1. The Diocese of Oxford has registered with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) as an Umbrella Body. It will provide a service to parishes so that they can obtain Standard and Enhanced Disclosures when recruiting to positions – for both volunteers and paid staff – where a Disclosure is required.
2. The Diocese will operate in compliance with the CRB's Code of Practice and other guidance; it has the requisite policies in place. It will provide for the parish procedures, guidance and a policy which the parish will need to adopt.
3. The Diocese will countersign applications for Disclosure, submit them to the CRB and advise the parish of the outcome.
4. The Diocese will assess the relevance of any Disclosure information and if necessary carry out a risk assessment. It will assist the parish in dealing with any situation where the Disclosure information could affect appointment.
5. Currently the Diocese will make an administration charge for all volunteer appointments. However, Parishes will also need to reimburse the Diocese for the charge made by the Criminal Records Bureau for Disclosures relating to paid staff.
6. The parish will comply with the CRB's Code of Practice. It will also operate in compliance with Diocesan policies, procedures and guidance.
7. The parish will assess positions for both paid staff and volunteers and determine if a Disclosure is required and, if so, at what level.
8. The parish will check the person's identity before submitting a Disclosure application form, as set out in Diocesan procedures.
9. The parish will protect Disclosure information as required by law.
10. The parish will refer to the Diocese any complaints regarding the Disclosure process, or the accuracy of Disclosure information, so that appropriate action can be taken.

Signed

Date

Following discussion and adoption by the PCC, this Agreement should be signed by a Churchwarden and returned with the first application for a Disclosure to:

CRB Countersignatory for Volunteers, Diocesan Church House,
North Hinksey, Oxford OX2 0NB

Monitoring the Diocesan Child Protection Policy

This form is to be completed by the churchwardens in respect of each congregation. A copy will be sent by the Archdeacon to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser for the compliance records.

1. Does the Parish have a copy of *Protecting All God's Children* and the Diocesan handbook *Protecting Children in the Diocese of Oxford* Yes/No

2. On what date did the Church Council adopt or last review their Child Protection Policy and agree how the procedures and recommended good practice guidelines are to be implemented in the parish? Date

3. Does your parish have children's, youth or mixed-age activities at present? Yes/No

If not the Church Council still needs to accept the Diocesan policy even if there is nothing to implement at present.

4. Who is the designated Parish Child Protection Representative?

Name

Address

..... Telephone

email address

5. Has the parish fully implemented the Diocesan Policy? Yes/No

(If not please give reasons so that advice can be offered)

6. Have the incumbent and Parish Child Protection Representative attended a Diocesan Child Protection training event?

Yes/No Date of attendance

Parish of

Signatures of churchwardens /

Date

Application Form for Paid and Voluntary Workers with Children and Young People

1 PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name

Maiden or former name

Address

.....

Any previous address in the last 5 years

.....

Previous church in the past 5 years

Telephone (home) Telephone (work)

May we phone you at work if necessary? Yes/No

2 GROUP WITH WHICH YOU INTEND TO WORK

Name of group

Where and when they meet

How often Age range

What will your responsibilities be?

Whom do you report to?

3 YOUR EXPERIENCE

The following factors are normally considered in deciding whether someone is fit to work with children and young people:

- Previous experience of looking after or working with children or young people
- Willingness to undertake training if necessary
- Ability to provide warm and consistent care
- Willingness to respect the background and culture of children in their care
- Commitment to treat all children and young people as individuals and with equal concern
- Physical health, mental stability, integrity and flexibility

You are therefore asked to complete the following:

Have you previous experience of looking after or working with children or young people? (If so, please give details)

Have you a relevant qualification or undertaken appropriate training?
(If so, please give details)

Do you already hold an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure from your current employer? (If so, you will be asked to sign a separate consent to the parish contacting the organization which obtained it.)

4 REFERENCES

Names and addresses of two referees who know you well, but who are not related to you, one of which can comment on your abilities and attitudes to children and young people.

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

I agree to complete a Confidential Declaration form and to apply for an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure if requested to do so.

Signed..... Date

Confidential Declaration Form

For beneficed clergy, those who hold the Bishop's Licence or Permission to Officiate, employees, ordinands and volunteers who are likely to be in regular and direct contact with children and young people under 18 years of age.

This form is strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of law, will be seen only by those responsible for the appointment and when appropriate the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. All forms will be kept securely under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. If you answer "Yes" to any question, please give details, on a separate sheet if necessary.

1a Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence (including any 'spent convictions' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)¹.

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

1b Have you ever been cautioned by the Police, given a reprimand or warning or bound over to keep the peace? Are you at present under investigation?

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

1c Have you ever been found by a court exercising civil jurisdiction (including Matrimonial or family jurisdiction) to have caused significant harm² to a child or young person under the age of eighteen years, or has any such court made an order against you on the basis of any finding or allegation that any child or young person was at risk of significant harm from you?

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

2a Has your conduct ever caused or been likely to cause significant harm to a child or young person under the age of eighteen, or put a child or young person at risk of significant harm.

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

2b To your knowledge, has it ever been alleged that your conduct has resulted in any of those things?

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

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

¹ All previous convictions, with the exception of technical motoring offences leading only to a fine, should be disclosed.

² Significant harm involves serious ill-treatment of any kind including neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, impairment of physical or mental health development, including impairment suffered from seeing the ill-treatment of another.

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

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

4 Have you any health problem(s) which might affect your work with children or young people under the age of eighteen?

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

5 Have you, since the age of eighteen, ever been known by any name other than that given below?

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

6 Have you, during the past five years, had any home address other than that given below?

PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE YES NO

DECLARATION

I declare that the above information (and that on the attached sheets¹) is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signed

Date Date of Birth

Full Name

Address

.....

.....

.....

Please return completed form to

Before an appointment can be confirmed applicants must provide an Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. Consult with your Bishop's Office, Incumbent, or Child Protection Representative for details of the process.

¹ Delete if not applicable

Notes for the Confidential Declaration Form

Question 1a and b

Declare all convictions, cautions, warnings or reprimands or whether you are at present under investigation by the police. Posts where the person is working or coming into contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 so that all spent convictions must be declared.

Relevant provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974:

Offences involving a child are never spent.

Prison sentences of over 30 months are never spent.

Prison sentences of between 6 and 30 months are spent after 10 years.

Prison sentences of under 6 months are spent after 7 years.

Other non-custodial sentences are spent after 5 years.

These amounts are halved for people under 18 when convicted.

Any technical motoring offences dealt with by fine do not need to be declared.

Question 1c

Declare if you are at present under investigation by the police, social services or an employer.

Question 1d

You must declare any finding of fact by a civil court that your actions have significantly harmed a child. Declare any court orders made on this basis.

Question 2a

Make any statement you wish regarding any incident you wish to declare

Question 2b

Declare any allegations made against you, however long ago, that you have significantly harmed a child or young person. Any allegation must be declared which has been investigated by the police, social services, employer or voluntary body. Checks will be made with the relevant authorities.

Question 3

All these matters will be checked with the relevant authorities.

Question 4

Please declare in confidence any health problems that may affect your ability to work with children. This question is primarily intended to help you if you subsequently need to withdraw from work with children e.g. because of a recurring health problem.

Some of the information requested on the form will be checked with the Criminal Records Bureau. All information received will be carefully assessed to decide whether it is relevant to the post applied for and will only be used for the purpose of protecting children or vulnerable adults.

Reference Request

Parish

.....

Date

Dear

[Name] has volunteered to help with our children's or youth work, and in response to our Child Protection Policy has provided your name as a referee who can vouch for his or her suitability to work with children. I would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire provided and return it to me at the above address. Any information given will be treated in confidence and only disclosed in order to protect a child, or to the applicant with your foreknowledge.

[Name] will be working mainly with [age group] as [give brief description of task]

In completing the questionnaire please bear in mind that it is the duty of the church to protect the children for whom it is responsible from harm whether of a physical, emotional or sexual nature. Each volunteer signs a declaration to this end and agrees to abide by the Diocesan Child Protection Policy.

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely

[Name and role]

Reference

Private and confidential

Name of volunteer Date of birth

What is your relationship to the volunteer, and how long and how well have you known them?

.....

How long have you known the volunteer?

What do you consider to be the applicant's strengths and gifts in working with children?

.....

From your own knowledge and experience of the volunteer please comment on his or her honesty and reliability, health, experience of working with children (this need not be in a paid capacity) and attitudes to children.

.....

.....

Do you know of any reason why it would be unwise to ask the volunteer to work with children or young people?

.....

.....

Do you have any other comments to make about the volunteer?

.....

.....

Signed Date

If you want us to treat what you say as confidential, and not to share it with the applicant, please tick here

Keeping Children Safe in the Church: a contract agreement for volunteers working with children and young people

Parish

Volunteer

Group

I will work within the Diocesan Policy and Procedures for Child Protection and the parish implementation guidelines.

I will accept training in children's or young people's work and child protection when offered.

I will do my best to follow the Code of Behaviour as set out in the Diocesan booklet and will always endeavour to treat children and young people with respect.

I will discuss any concerns about children or adults with the Parish Child Protection Representative.....or the incumbent.

I confirm that I have received a copy of *Child Protection Guide for Church Workers with Children and Young People*

If at any time I do not feel able to comply with the Diocesan and Parish policy on Child Protection I will withdraw from children's or youth work in the parish.

Signed Date

Health and Safety Checklist

Many churches already have ways of making sure that children and young people are safe. The check list below may be of help to you:

	Yes	No
A. First Aid		
Is there a designated First Aider with up to date training available during all activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there an up-to-date First Aid Kit available both on the premises and for activities away from the premises?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all accidents recorded?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How? Please state		
 B. Fire safety		
Do regular fire drills take place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are fire notices displayed informing people what to do in case of fire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are fire appliances suitable and serviced regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the local Fire Prevention Officer visited the premises?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 C. Disabled access		
Is there suitable access and provision made for disabled people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 D. Register and consents		
Is a register kept of all those in attendance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Registration Form been completed for each child/young person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are Parental Consent Forms obtained for day trips and residential activities)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 E. Staffing and security		
Are adult/child ratios appropriate for the group and for the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the places where children or young people meet safe and secure from unwelcome people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is it possible for children or young people to slip outside without leaders noticing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 F. Review		
Is this check list reviewed annually?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 G. Records		
Has a copy of this checklist been filed with the parish office?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Registration Record

To be completed annually for all children and young people attending church groups

Child's details

Full name

Address

.....

.....

Telephone e-mail

Date of birth

School School year group

Church group

This group meets between and on

for the following activities

.....

.....

While your child is in our care it would be helpful for us to know whether he or she suffers from any allergies or phobias or is on any medication. Is there any thing else you would like us to know?

.....

.....

Family doctor's name, address and telephone number

.....

Any special instructions?

.....

Parent or Guardian's Details and Consent

Name

Name and telephone number of a friend in case of emergencies

My child will be brought and collected from the group Yes/No

My child has my permission to travel to and from the group without me Yes/No

I agree to my child attending the above group and taking part in the specified activities.

Signed Date

Parental Consent Form

To be completed for any activity not specified in the Registration form

Child's details

Name of child

Address of child

Name of group

Activity or event (give details here or on a separate sheet)
.....
.....

Departure date and time

Return date and time

Name of leader

Name and contact details in the parish during the event

Consent

I give consent to my child taking part in this event as detailed above or on a separate information sheet.

I agree to photographs of activities including my child to be taken for use within the church community and for possible publication including newspaper or internet (delete as applicable)

I agree to any emergency medical treatment to be given as considered necessary by the medical authorities if I cannot be contacted.

NB The medical profession takes the view that a parent's consent to medical treatment cannot be delegated. Medical consent forms have no legal status and a doctor has the right to insist on parental consent before treating a child. We have found, however, that medical staff find this type of general consent helpful.

Signed Date

Parent's or guardian's details

Parent's or guardian's name and contact details during the event
.....
.....

If not available please contact

.....
.....

Details of any medical condition, allergies, phobias or disabilities which your child may have.

.....
.....

Details of any medication (please ensure an adequate supply is brought to the event)

.....
.....

Date of last tetanus injection

Details of any dietary requirements

.....
.....

Family doctor's name, address and telephone number

.....
.....

Any other information you think the organisers should know

.....
.....

Signed Date

[Insert name of church]

Child Registration Record for Bell Ringers [Insert year]

<p>NAME <i>Please underline the first name the child is called by</i></p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>National curriculum year group</p> <p>School</p>
<p>ADDRESS</p>
<p>TELEPHONE CONTACT</p> <p><i>Parent/Guardian's home</i></p> <p><i>Parent/Guardian's work</i></p> <p><i>Parent/Guardian's mobile</i></p> <p><i>Of another close relative/friend for use in an emergency. (Please give their name and relationship)</i></p>

<p>Whilst in our care it is important we know whether your child -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Suffers from any phobias, disability or known allergies?● Is on any medication?● Has been immunised against Tetanus within the last ten years?● Has any health condition we should know about?● Has any special dietary requirements? <p>Please also tell us of any particular likes, dislikes or fears your child has.</p> <p>Registered GP (name, address and telephone number)</p>
<p>YOUR DETAILS</p> <p>Parent/Guardian <i>name</i></p> <p>Address</p> <p>Signed Date</p>

I understand that to assist in the keeping of a register to comply with the Child Protection Policy it is necessary to keep details on the database belonging to [Church name]. I understand that the database is only used by the [PCC and Church name] and that data will not be passed to a third party, except in the case of an emergency where my child may be at risk.

I understand that the original copy of this form will be retained by the Tower Captain and only passed to his/her deputy in the event of him/her being absent from a bellringing session.

I give my permission for the child named over this page to attend bellringing and to take part in any organised activity such as outings to other towers. (All ringing activities, including travelling to and from ringing, are covered by the insurance policy of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers for members of the Guild, and learners are covered whilst they are ringing under the instruction of a Guild member. All activities have been approved by the PCC, and all activities at [church name] are covered by the [Ecclesiastical Insurance Group or other insurer].)

I accept that I am responsible for transporting my child to and from the church for bellringing, and that the group leaders are not responsible when my child leaves the church.

List any special instructions that we should be aware of:

.....
.....

Please confirm your consent by signing below.

Signed Date

If it becomes necessary for my child to be given urgent medical treatment and I cannot be contacted by telephone or any other means to authorise this, I hereby give my general consent to any medical treatment judged to be necessary and urgent by a medical practitioner and I authorise the leader in charge to sign any document required by hospital or other authorities.

Signed Date

Additional permission for other ringing activities.

I also understand that when my child has reached a sufficient standard of proficiency in bellringing, he/she might find it beneficial to attend ringing events in other towers which are not part of the organised activities of the ringers at [church name]. I give my permission for [child's name] to make such visits and I accept that I am responsible for transporting my child to and from the venues for these activities, and that the group leaders at these events are not responsible when my child leaves the tower.

Signed Date

(N.B. The young person when attending these other events should carry a copy of this permission form together with the list of contact numbers and any relevant medical information.)

Agreement with Outside Groups

(a) For those groups with no child protection policy of their own

The Parochial Church Council of has a child protection policy and procedures, a copy of which is attached. Your booking agreement is conditional upon your working within the terms and conditions of this policy. Any concerns or allegations which arise about children in the course of your activities should be communicated to our Child Protection Representative.

Name Telephone

I have received and agree to abide by the child protection policy and procedures of Church, and I will show evidence of this to Parish Child Protection Representative if required.

I understand that my booking agreement may be terminated in the event of my failing to comply with these procedures.

Signed Designation

Organisation Date

Please sign two copies of the document, one to be retained by the church and one by the organisation.

(b) For organisations with their own child protection policy

We (organisation) follow our own child protection procedures based on the Home Office recommendations "*Safe from Harm*".

We understand that this booking agreement is conditional on us keeping to these procedures and that the agreement can be terminated if we fail to comply with them. We will show evidence of our compliance to the Parish Child Protection

Representative if requested.

We will inform the Parish Child Protection Representative if there are any concerns or allegations arising about children in the course of our activities.

Name Telephone

Signed Designation

Organisation Date

Please sign two copies of the document, one to be retained by the church and one by the organisation.

RESOURCES

1 Government documents

Department of Health: *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 1999. The current official guide to the child protection system.

Home Office: *Safe from Harm: A Code of Practice for Safeguarding the Welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales*, 1993. Official guidance on safe recruitment practices. Issued before the CRB and not yet updated.

Home Office: *Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable: Guidance for preventing abuse of trust*, 1999. Guidance on preventing inappropriate relationships between workers and 16 or 17 year olds.

Department of Health: *What To Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused*, 2003. Guide to the statutory process for practitioners in statutory agencies. Available in both full and summary form. There is also a one page flowchart.

2 Church documents

House of Bishops: *Protecting All God's Children: The Child Protection Policy for the Church of England*. Church House Publishing 2004

Time for Action: A Report of Sexual Abuse Issues. Church House Publishing, 2002.

3 Statutory agencies

Social Services in the Thames Valley

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Office hours: 01344 351582

Out of hours: 01344 786543

Buckinghamshire County Council

Office hours: 01296 395000

Out of hours: 01494 817750

Milton Keynes Council

Office hours: 01908 691691

Out of hours: 01908 253773

Oxfordshire County Council

Office hours: 01865 375515

Out of hours: 0800 833 408

Reading Borough Council

Office hours: 0118 955 3600

Out of hours: 01344 786543

Slough Borough Council

Office hours: 01753 690814

Out of hours: 01344 355273

West Berkshire Borough Council

Office hours: 01635 464545

Out of hours: 01344 786543

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Maidenhead: 01628 798888

Out of hours: 01344 786543

Windsor: 01753 810525

Out of hours: 01344 786543

Wokingham District Council

Office hours: 0118 944 5300

Out of hours: 01344 786543

Thames Valley Police

999 for emergencies

0845 8 505 505 for all non-emergency enquiries

Thames Valley Probation Area

01869 255300

National Health Service

999 for emergencies

0845 4647 for NHS Direct nurse advice (24 hours)

4 Voluntary organisations

Oxford Christian Institute for Counselling	01865 308889
Federation of Christian Caring and Counselling for list of counsellors	01865 208214
ChildLine (helpline for children)	0800 1111 9
CARE (helpline for adults)	0208 559 1133
Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (helpline)	0845 120 4551
NAPAC (adult survivors of child abuse)	0800 085 330
NSPCC (24 hour helpline)	0800 800 500
National Domestic Violence Helpline (24 Hour)	0808 200 0247
Parentline Plus (helpline for parents)	0808 800 2222
Parents and Children Together (PACT) (practical support and drop-in centres)	0118 938 7600
Stop It Now (helpline on sexual abuse)	0808 1000 900
Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility (lists of local organisations and initiatives)	01865 208214

5 Publications

There is a booklist at the end of *Protecting All God's Children*. Many government departments and voluntary organizations issue useful publications, which may often be downloaded or purchased from websites. The following may also be useful:

Browne, Kevin D. and others: *Early Prediction and Prevention of Child Abuse: A Handbook*. Chichester: Wiley 2002

Chevous, Jane: *From Silence to Sanctuary: A Guide to understanding, preventing and responding to abuse*. London: SPCK 2004

Marshall, Kathleen and Paul Parvis: *Honouring Children: The human rights of the child in Christian perspective*. Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press 2004

Williams, Fiona: *Rethinking Families*. London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation 2004

6 Websites

All government documents are now issued on the web on the day of publication. All statutory and most voluntary organisations also have their own websites.

Department for Education and Skills: www.dfes.gov.uk/index.htm

Department of Health: www.dh.gov.uk/Home/fs/en

Home Office: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/

Criminal Records Bureau www.crb.gov.uk/

Disclosure (information on CRB disclosure applications): www.disclosure.gov.uk/

Church of England: www.cofe.anglican.org

Diocese of Oxford: www.oxford.anglican.org/index.php

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers: www.cccb.org.uk/

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk/html/home/home.htm

Child Protection Steering Group

Keith Lamdin: Director, STEM (Chair)

Bishop Alan Wilson

Jenny Hyson: Children's Adviser

Ian Macdonald: Youth Adviser

Ruth Reavley: CRB Countersignatory for volunteers

Yvette Gayford: Chief Executive, PACT

Stephen Barber: Child Protection Adviser

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Contacts in the diocese

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Ian Macdonald (Youth Adviser) 01865 208253
Ian.macdonald@oxford.anglican.org

Hilarie Rogers
(Children's Officer, Oxford Guild of Church Bell Ringers) 01865 890163
hilarie@5rogers.fsnet.co.uk

Out of office hours the bishops and archdeacons hold the contact details for the Child Protection Adviser.