

# Heworth Christ Church Policy for Safeguarding of Children

Reflecting the Church of England's statement supporting and nurturing children's faith, Heworth Christ Church recognises and values children and young people (anyone under the age of 18); believing that children and young people can follow Jesus and be full members of the church and that discipleship is possible at any age. They are integral to church. It is necessary to ensure there are no obstacles preventing them from being involved. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) takes seriously its obligations and responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of any child or young person entrusted to the church's care.

Therefore, in the church's provision and ministry, the PCC:

- Will assume all responsibility for the activities of the children's and youth groups operating under its auspices. These are:

*Babies and Toddlers Group*

*Sunday morning children's work*

- Will actively seek to protect and safeguard the physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of children and young people while in the care of the church by ensuring the recommended adult-to-child ratios are adhered to. These are:

*0-2 years = 1:3*

*2-3 years = 1:4*

*4-8 years = 1:6*

*9-12 years = 1:8*

*13-18 years = 1:10*

- Will have clear procedures for responding to suspicions or allegations about abuse, or inappropriate behaviours towards children and young people by any member of the church, and procedures for working with known offenders attending the church. See Safeguarding Flow Chart.
- Will ensure that employed and volunteer children's and youth workers and all other persons working within the church who may have contact with children or young people are properly and appropriately selected and appointed. Ensuring that all workers have a valid DBS, a signed 'confidential declaration' and two references, in addition to online training modules which are renewed every 3 years.
- Will ensure that all those working with children and young people are given appropriate support and training.
- Will ensure that all those involved undertake the basic awareness, foundation, and domestic abuse online training and that at least one person from each group attends any Diocesan Safeguarding Training specifically for children and young people
- Will annually both appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) and review the Parish Safeguarding Policy and procedures.
- Will maintain appropriate Third-Party Liability insurance for its work involving children and young people.

## **Commitment to Children and Young People**

In accepting the Safeguarding Policy Statement, the PCC is also committed

to the children and young people, by :

- listening to and valuing all children and young people
- relating to children and young people effectively and appropriately by seeking to use age-appropriate language and activities
- ensuring their protection and minimising risk of harm by their involvement in any activities by completing risk assessments at the normal meeting place and when away from the normal meeting place,
- providing safe, relevant, and engaging children's and youth work of the highest possible quality with appropriate resources

to workers, volunteers, and the Parish Safeguarding Officer, by:

- providing and/or enabling the delivery of basic, foundation and domestic abuse safeguarding training, which may include on-line training (see Appendix 1)
- providing clear systems and procedures for the recruitment and introduction of 'new' workers and volunteers (see Appendix 2)
- providing clear guidelines on what to do if a disclosure is made by a child (See Appendix 3)
- providing clear systems and procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations about abuse, as outlined in the Safeguarding Flow Chart, and maintaining healthy links with Diocesan and statutory childcare authorities as necessary.

### **Recruitment of Children and Youth Leaders, including DBS Disclosure:**

Care will always be exercised in the appointment of suitable workers and volunteers to the church's work with children and young people. Where access to children is regular, expected, or significant (i.e., a key part of their role even if they are not in regularly contact with children), the Diocesan policy and procedures will be strictly adhered to.

Anyone involved in the church's work with children and young people in this parish must:

- Provide proof of their identity and address from specified items.
- Provide 2 referees who have known the applicant for at least 3 years; preferably one from a church setting and the other not.
- Complete a 'Confidential Declaration Form' in accordance with The Children Act 1989 and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act **1974**.
- Obtain an up to date and satisfactory 'Enhanced Disclosure' check.

**Note:** There may be an occasion where a potential volunteer is deciding if this is an area that they feel called to. In this situation they must not be left on their own with a child and must always be observed. There may be a situation, (e.g., a supervised steward or helper at occasional events), when the volunteer only needs provide proof of identity, 2 referees and complete the Confidential Declaration Form. Any increased involvement will necessitate an Enhanced Disclosure to be carried out. Refer to the Diocese of York guide to DBS code of practice.

### **Child Protection — Definitions of Abuse**

The PCC recognises the following categories of abuse used by every local authority in England and Wales.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:  
provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home/abandonment)

- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- and may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Physical Abuse**

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

## **Sexual Abuse**

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether the child is aware of what is happening.
- Those activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g., rape, buggery, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.
- They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **Emotional Abuse**

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.
- It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

## **Organised Abuse**

- Organised abuse is defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of children
- The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

## **Note**

A child may suffer more than one category of abuse. Be aware that several forms of abuse may potentially take place if there is reason to believe that someone attending the church may pose a

risk to children, either because of a criminal conviction or for any other reason, the priority will necessarily be a full commitment to the protection of all children and young people.  
on-line.

### **People Who May Pose a Risk to Children**

Whilst extending appropriate pastoral care to an individual, the Incumbent and PSO will discuss with the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor (DSO) before meeting with the individual to discuss boundaries which must be. A written agreement will be appropriate in such cases. This will be held by the PSO and DSO will have a copy. The Church Warden will be informed of any boundaries required to ensure that the written agreement is adhered to.

### **Child Protection — Procedures for Referrals**

Church members, including children's and youth work leaders and volunteers, may have concerns about possible or actual inappropriate conduct or abuse within a church setting, or within another context but drawn to their attention in a church setting. In either event the following procedures should be observed:

- The role of a church member is not to investigate beyond establishing the basic facts so that a decision can be made about what further action, if any, needs to be taken.
- If a child is disclosing allow the child to speak but be careful not to say anything that may suggest or prompt a particular answer. Anything said by the child should be recorded immediately, using the actual words used by. It is crucial to record immediately, therefore it is acceptable to note things in any format, on anything available. Then within 24 hours the notes must be transferred to a more appropriate form with the original 'makeshift' notes attached.
- Reassure the child that you are listening carefully to them but refrain from promising to 'keep a secret'. Make it clear that there might be circumstances in which you may have to tell someone else who you trust who decisions of how to proceed, including rationale for those decisions and consultation with DSO for advice. If both are satisfied that the concerns are unfounded no further action is needed. The record MUST still be kept, and a copy should be forwarded to the DSO.
- If the concern is a childcare issue (i.e., not thought to be abuse related, but where the parents/carer or child may need support from relevant agencies), the PSO should make a referral to Social Services or ask the DSO for advice. This will require parental permission. If concerns remain the nominated PSO should contact Diocesan Safeguarding Team.
- If there are concerns that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm or is in immediate danger of harm, then a referral the Police or MASH should be made at once by the church member or the Safeguarding Officer. Clearly state that you are making a "Child Protection Referral". Identify yourself and the Church you are representing. You must also advise the DSO. See Safeguarding Flow Chart.
- Any concerns in relation to child protection issues should be recorded, logged and retained securely by the DSO.
- might be able to help to sort things out.
- Concerns or an allegation must be shared with the PSO as soon as possible, or in their absence, with the Incumbent. if the concern or allegation is about any of these people DO NOT share the concern with them. The concerns MUST be recorded, as must

**Additional role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer**

- The PSO should support any church member raising or reporting a concern or allegation and ensure that the above procedures have been carried out appropriately.
- The incumbent and DSO should be informed of any referral being made, unless it is inappropriate in view of the nature of the allegation. Do not discuss with anyone else.
- Careful consideration should also be given as to whether the parish's insurers should be contacted and advised of the incident or allegation
- If the PSO is unsure, or feels they need to take further advice, they should contact the DSO in the first instance.
- In the event of the DSO being unavailable within a reasonable time, another of the Diocesan Safeguarding team should be contacted.

**Data Protection**

Data Protection Act 2018 came into force in May 2018. It contains the principles governing the use of personal data; that the information is used fairly, lawfully, and transparently. There is nothing in Data Protection legislation that limits appropriate disclosure in order to protect a child, young person or adult who might be at risk. What matters is that information shared should be reasonable and proportionate

**Policy Adoption**

This policy is formally adopted by the Parochial Church Council, who also commit to reviewing it on an annual basis.

Signed: (Please note the original document is signed and held by the P.C.C secretary).

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Incumbent.....

Churchwardens.....

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**Useful Telephone numbers:**

Church Safeguarding Officer:  
 Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: Rob Marshall tel:01904 699524 and 07551 124951 email  
 safeguarding@yorkdiocese.org  
 Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 01904 551900

*OUTSIDE OFFICE HOURS OR PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 03001312131*

Local Police: 101

Ecclesiastical Insurance Group (NB: Contact with the FIG should only be undertaken following discussion with the Archdeacon or Diocesan Secretary if it is about a confidential child protection related complaint or concern)

Write to:

**The Managing Director  
Ecclesiastical Insurance Group  
Beaufort House  
Brunswick Road Gloucester  
Gil 1 JZ**

**MARKED "Strictly Private and Confidential"**

If it is an emergency, call 01452 528533

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

If up to date safeguarding training has not been completed, the volunteer will be asked for the reason and given a calendar month in which they will be expected to do so. If after that time they have chosen not to fulfil this basic obligation, we will have no option but to withhold from them permission to be a volunteer leader.

Photocopies of any evidence to support a claim that such training has been completed in a different setting will be accepted.

### **Appendix 2**

Although new people who express an interest or desire to help or lead in a group are to be encouraged the following must be adhered to:-

- The person overseeing the group will inform the Safeguarding Officer of the intention for someone to consider helping.
- They will be invited to observe to understand the organisation of the group without joining the team
- They will be informally 'interviewed', usually by the person overseeing the group, as to their suitability and sense of 'calling'
- They will be invited to help under the close supervision of an established leader, until all the appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out and completed.
- The PSO will inform the person who oversees the group as soon as all those checks have been successfully completed, when (if appropriate) any restrictions will be lifted.

### **Appendix 3**

It takes a lot of courage for a child to tell someone about abuse.  
These are some good guidelines for those in that position:

#### **Do**

- Remain calm, accessible, and receptive.
- Listen carefully, without interrupting.

- Acknowledge their courage and reassure them that they are right to tell. Let them know that you will do everything you can to help.
- Explain that you will need to share what they have told you, and what may happen as a result.
- Make a note of what was said using the child's actual words wherever possible.

### **Don't**

- Allow your shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Promise that "everything will be okay"
- Agree to keep the information secret Delay in getting emergency help if needed

Those in this situation, will need to begin the process outlined in the Safeguarding Flow Chart immediately after the initial conversation with the child or young person.

Ratified HCC PCC    Review date: **June 2024**