

# **St Andrew's, Chorleywood: Children's Safeguarding Framework**

November 2023

## **1. Statement of Responsibilities**

### **1.1. Children's Pastors/Workers are responsible for:**

- administering the application process for team members;
- ensuring that good working practice is adhered to at all times;
- ensuring that all team members know, understand and adhere to the Safeguarding Policy and Operational Framework, including emergency procedures;
- ensuring that the Operational Framework is implemented by all children's and youth groups and that a qualified first aider, nurse or doctor are available;
- carrying out risk assessments of all activities for which they are responsible, sending copies to the Church Manager and highlighting specific concerns with the Safeguarding Committee;
- advising the Parish Safeguarding Officer of any incident as soon as possible.

### **1.2. Children's Ministry Team Members are responsible for:**

- being familiar with the Parish Safeguarding Policy;
- understanding and following the Operational Framework for their Team;
- reporting any abuse discovered or suspected, preventing further abuse when it has been observed and keeping records of any incidents;
- undertaking all necessary Safeguarding Training;
- understanding the contents of their Job Descriptions;
- completing any documentation required under the Policy;
- helping create a stimulating and safe environment for the children and young people in their care.

## **2. Those Authorised to Work with Children & Young People**

### **2.1. Unsupervised Contact**

Those authorised to work with children and young people in circumstances where opportunity for unsupervised contact with children may occur:

- Clergy;
- Children's Pastor and Children's Department staff;
- Youth Pastor and Youth Department staff;
- Children's and Youth Ministry Team Members;
- Others cleared by the Parish Safeguarding Officer

### **2.2. Supervised Contact**

The following may be involved in work with children and young people but are not permitted to have unsupervised contact:

- Children's and Youth Ministry Teenage Helpers;
- Additional helpers for special events;
- Emergency and Relief helpers for regular groups

## **3. Appointment Procedures**

- 3.1. Application and Self Certification forms should be completed and an informal interview conducted by the Children's and Family Pastor or designated deputy. A

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Job Description and a copy of the Children's Ministry Team Welcome Pack should be handed over and the contents discussed. Suitable references will be obtained. The volunteer will then be advised that: "Appointment to this position is subject to satisfactory enhanced disclosure via a DBS check".

- 3.2. All regular workers above 16 years of age must also complete a DBS Disclosure
- 3.3. Parental consent forms are required for those under 18.
- 3.4. Once the applicant has received a copy of the Disclosure it should be brought to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or nominated staff member for review.
- 3.5. In the event of a Disclosure "with convictions and/or other disqualifying behaviour" the Parish Safeguarding Officer will be contacted by the Diocese, which will have decided by special committee whether the appointment can be made. The Parish Safeguarding Officer would then inform the vicar. A joint decision will then be taken whether to make the appointment or not, or whether restrictions should be imposed.
- 3.6. The Parish Safeguarding Officer will receive the result of the disclosure and inform the Children's or Youth Pastor whether they are free to confirm the appointment or whether conditions must first be imposed.

## **4. Good Working Practice**

- 4.1. Treat all children with dignity and respect;
- 4.2. Respect personal privacy and be sensitive to the needs of others;
- 4.3. Follow Group Policy set by Children's Pastor regarding physical contact;
- 4.4. Avoid inappropriate activities and language;
- 4.5. Challenge and remedy unacceptable behaviour. Expect to be respected;
- 4.6. Always work within the line of sight of another adult, preferably a Team member;
- 4.7. Report all allegations/suspicions of abuse using the Responding to Abuse – Team Member's Action Sheet in Appendix A.

## **5. Safety Issues**

- 5.1. The Children's and Family Pastor is responsible for ensuring that someone trained in first aid and with access to a first aid kit is available during the activity. All incidents should be reported using the Accident Report Book.
- 5.2. Procedures at Beginning & End of Children's Ministry Sessions
  - Any child who arrives on their own should be given a parental consent form along with a covering letter. An attempt should be made to make contact with the parents.
  - All children will be registered with details of date of birth, year at school, contact number, address, etc.
  - In the event that the agreed minimum adult to child ratio cannot be met, additional children must be turned away unless an additional adult remains in the group. At least one adult present must be an approved Children's Ministry Team member.
  - Parents of visiting children should complete a shortened parental consent form.
  - If an adult brings a child not their own they should complete a visiting child form on behalf on the parents with as much information as is available.
- 5.3. Children should be cared for in a safe and secure room. The Children's and Family Pastor will ensure that each venue is inspected by an appropriate person, confirm

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that it is appropriate for children's ministry and a written risk assessment has been completed. Each venue will be reviewed annually for safety, the date recorded and signed off by the Church Manager. Any specific concerns should also be reported to the Safeguarding Committee.

- 5.4. Ensure that entrances/exits to the venue are securely monitored at all times.
- 5.5. Children should not have unsupervised access to stairs or open windows.
- 5.6. All Team Members must be informed of the fire regulations, evacuation procedures and assembly points for the venue where they minister.
- 5.7. Check the room for safety e.g. sharp edges, hot radiators, suitability of floor surfaces, stacked furniture, electrical sockets and appliances.
- 5.8. Ensure the venue is clean both before and after the session.
- 5.9. Ensure that a register of all children and workers attending the session is kept.
- 5.10. Ensure that medical conditions of children are known. This is particularly important for those with nut allergies if you intend to give any food or sweets.
- 5.11. No adult that has not been through the volunteer recruitment process, including an enhanced DBS Disclosure, should be left alone with children.
- 5.12. Safety related to equipment:
  - Ensure that any items including toys used during the session are safe and age appropriate.
  - Toys should be age specific (e.g. small toys like Lego or toys with detachable parts should not be given to babies).
  - Toys should be checked to avoid broken pieces and rough edges.
  - Toys should be cleaned regularly particularly for babies. Soft toys should be avoided, as they are difficult to clean.
  - Scissors and other craft materials used by older children should be kept away from under threes.
  - Ensure that hot drinks are not taken into the children's venue.
  - Ensure that plastic bags and similar potentially risky items are not left unattended.

### **6. Transportation of Children**

- 6.1. It is best practice for all drivers to have gone through the Church recruitment procedures process for Children's Team Members.
- 6.2. Parental consent should be given.
- 6.3. All drivers should hold a full driving licence (for at least 6 months), have adequate insurance and a road-worthy vehicle. They should also disclose any driving convictions.
- 6.4. Always check that children are wearing seatbelts before commencing a journey.
- 6.5. It is reasonable to expect that a driver may be alone with a child for short periods. In these circumstances it is best practice for the child to be seated in the back of the car.
- 6.6. When travelling in groups with more than one car, it is best practice to insist that children stay in the same groups on the outgoing and return journeys.
- 6.7. At collection points or dropping off points do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that children are collected by an appropriate adult.

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- 6.8. It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular child e.g. where there has been a disagreement or where a child has a 'crush' on a driver.
- 6.9. Additional procedures where a minibus is used:
  - Ensure that all minibuses used to transport children have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance, and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.

### **7. External Events**

- 7.1. A risk assessment is required for any new activity.
- 7.2. A risk assessment is to be carried out on any new venue that is being proposed to be used.
- 7.3. The Team member leading an external activity should ensure that they have contact details for parents/guardians when on an external activity.

### **8. Minimum Adult to Child Ratios**

There should be a minimum of 2 adults present for any activity. St Andrew's will follow OFSTED advice that the minimum ratios for Children's Ministry Groups.

Group Minimum Ratio

0-2 years. 1:3

3 years 1:4

4-11 years 1:8 (for outdoor activities 1:5)

Under 18's are not counted as adults and should not be left in sole charge of children. They can be very capable helpers but cannot be counted towards the minimum adult to children ratios.

### **9. Procedures Regarding Use of Toilets during Children's Ministry Sessions**

- 9.1. School years 3 to 6  
Allow children to go to the toilet unsupervised, but if they do not return in a reasonable time, ensure that all is well.
- 9.2. School years Reception through year 2  
Allow children to go into the toilet on their own but a teenage or adult helper should monitor from outside door to ensure they return to their group
- 9.3. Ages 2-3 years approx  
Accompany children into toilet but except in exceptional circumstances, no physical help should be given. Inform another Team member where you are going and on return inform him/her of any help that you needed to give.
- 9.4. Ages 0-2 years approx  
If it is necessary to change a nappy, it should be done in the main room with another member of the Team present. Parents should be asked if they are happy for the child's nappy to be changed in their absence, or if they wish to be called.

### **10. Prayer Ministry**

- 10.1. Someone trained by the St Andrew's Ministry Team should be present.
- 10.2. Those regularly involved in children's work should follow the St Andrew's Prayer Ministry Guidelines and be encouraged to undergo the appropriate prayer ministry training.
- 10.3. At least two adults should be present.

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- 10.4. Permission must be asked of and given by the child before physical contact considered appropriate occurs.
- 10.5. Ministry should be appropriate for children, using clear age appropriate language which avoids negative or frightening imagery.
- 10.6. If deeper individual or ongoing prayer ministry is considered necessary, it should be arranged at a separate time by the Children's and Family Pastor, must only occur with the explicit agreement of parents/guardians and under the supervision of the Ministry Team Leadership or Vicar.
- 10.7. Allow children to minister to each other with appropriate adult supervision.

### **11. Procedures to follow regarding possible child abuse**

- 11.1. Responding to a child
  - Listen and keep on listening.
  - Don't ask leading questions.
  - Don't promise confidentiality.
  - Accept what you hear without passing comment or judgement.
  - Tell the child what you are going to do.
- 11.2. Response to Concerns or Allegations.
  - Immediately, or as soon as appropriate, depending on the severity of the disclosure, contact the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Deputy to obtain guidance. In their absence contact the Children's and Family Pastor unless he/she is implicated in the allegation.
  - Make careful notes on the Responding to Abuse – Team Member's Action Sheet (see Appendix A) as soon as possible. The notes should contain:
    - a description of the circumstances;
    - what the child said; in their own words as far as it is possible;
    - what you said;
    - dates and times both of the incident and when the notes were written.
  - The Responding to Abuse - Team Member's Action Sheet should be given to the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Deputy as soon as possible as it may be required as evidence.
  - Do NOT tell the parents unless advised to do so by the Parish Safeguarding Officer or Deputy.
  - Don't talk to others about the incident
- 11.3. Response of Parish Safeguarding Officer or Deputy
  - Advise the Team Member on next course of action.
  - Inform the vicar or designated deputy.
  - Make a joint decision as to the next course of action.
  - For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), which do not place the child at risk of further injury, the matter should be discussed with the parent who should be encouraged to seek help. If appropriate this can be delegated to the Team Member who reported the incident.

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- For more serious concerns such as:
  - suspected sexual abuse;
  - deliberate injury;
  - suspected physical/emotional/spiritual abuse or neglect;
  - concern about a child's safety;
  - a child is afraid to return home.

Contact social services/police/thirtyone:eight (31:8) or the diocesan safeguarding officer, as appropriate.

- Ensure medical help is obtained if needed urgently, informing doctor of any suspicions.
- Do NOT tell the parents.
- Ensure the incident is recorded in the Incident Book

### **12. Use of Photographic Images**

- 12.1. Photos and videos etc of children will only be used where appropriate permission has been obtained from parents.
- 12.2. Children's team members should not take photos, including mobile phone photos without the permission of the Children's Pastor. The photos should be forwarded to the Children's Pastor and then deleted.

### **13. Communications**

- 13.1. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between team members and children.
- 13.2. All contact should be with parents\carers unless by previous arrangement.
- 13.3. Children are underage for most social media.
- 13.4. Team members should not accept or send "friendship" or "follow" requests from children or Team members under 18 years of age. However, Team members that are under 18 years may send or accept requests from each other.
- 13.5. Ensure that this policy is explained to the children, including procedures in the event of suspicion or disclosure of abuse.

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**Appendix A**

**Responding to Abuse: Team Member's Action Sheet**

**Confidential**

Name of child / young person:

(If the person is not registered on St Andrew's database please record their, address, telephone number and date of birth)

Name of person reporting the incident:

(If the person is not registered on St Andrew's database please record their, address, telephone number and date of birth)

Date and Time of the incident:

Sequence of events / Actual words used / Observations:

(use skin maps where appropriate, but do not undress the child!)

Action taken (including person(s) contacted):

Notes:

Signed:

Date:

**Return this form to the St Andrew's Parish Safeguarding Officer immediately**

**For use by Parish Safeguarding Officer or Deputy:**

Form seen:

Signed:

Date:

Print name:

Action taken (including dates and times):