

Grace Church South Shields

Safeguarding Policy

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Section 1: Details of place of worship

Name of Organisation: Grace Church South Shields

Address: The Charles Young Centre, Talbot Road, South Shields NE34 0QJ

Postal Address: Ivy House North, South Shields NE33 3EG

General Email address: info@gracechurchsouthshields.org.uk

Senior Leader Name: David Profit

Senior Leader Contact:

Tel: 07835055355

email: leader@gracechurchsouthshields.org.uk

Safeguarding Co-Ordinator: Pamela Young

Safeguarding Co-Ordinator Contact:

Tel: 01915360945 :

email : safeguarding@gracechurchsouthshields.org.uk

Membership of Organisation: Grace Church is a pioneer member of the Anglican Mission in England

Organisation Safeguarding Officer: Vicki Bonnett

Tel: 07787553306

email: vicki@anglicanmissioninengland.org

Charity Number: 1214208

Company Number: N/A

Regulators: The Charity Commission

Insurance Company: Barriers of Durham

The following is a brief description of our place of worship and the type of work / activities we undertake with children /adults with care and support needs:

Grace Church South Shields is a pioneer church member of the *Anglican Mission in England*. We currently meet at the Charles Young Centre, Talbot Road, South Shields NE34 0QJ on Sundays for our morning service. We are a newly formed church with people of all ages and stages of life in the South Tyneside area. All are welcome to join us in worship on Sunday. Our aim is to glorify God in our worship and in our lives. We are committed to proclaiming His Word the Bible, depending on Him in prayer and seeking His guidance by the Holy Spirit to shape what we do as a church. We're starting to develop children's activities and work within the Sunday service to support parents in raising their children to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. As a new church we are working to

develop ways to reach out to the local community eg special services. At present we are involved in these regular activities:

- * every two weeks we meet for Bible study and prayer
- * meet monthly in Cafe Westoe for fellowship and outreach .
- * regularly run courses for those wanting to know more about Christianity (e.g.Alpha , Christianity Explored, 3-2-1)

As our church is open for all to attend it is possible that we will have adults with cares and support needs arriving to join us at our services on a Sunday. However, we do not run specific counselling or advice clinics for these individuals, we seek to refer them to professional assistance groups whenever possible and appropriate, We are committed to working with the statutory agencies as part of our policy including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub in South Tyneside.

Section 2:

Governance and leadership

Our commitment

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

A safeguarding statement can be found in the appendices.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten Safe and Secure safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

Governance

Grace Church South Shields board of trustees is appointed to have independent authority and legal responsibility. This includes having a critical role in decision making and compliance as well as setting the values, standards and behaviours of the organisation.

The standards and behaviours may be referred to as the culture of the organisation or “the way we do things around here”. Culture can be shaped in both negative and positive ways.

“The culture of a charity goes beyond mere compliance with legal and regulatory demands. Charity governance is most effective when it provides assurances not just that legal requirements are met, but that the behaviour of people working for the charity, and those who come into contact with it, is proper and ethical. Culture, alongside good governance, can be pivotal to whether a charity achieves its stated object” (IICSA The Governance Institute, 2017).

The board of trustees will have overarching responsibility for safeguarding within the organisation, including **Reporting Serious Incidents [RSI]** to the relevant charity regulator The Charity Commission, who register and regulate charities in England and Wales. (We are in the process of applying to register with the commission).

As a Pioneer church in the Anglican Mission in England serious allegations will also be reported to the AMiE safeguarding officer.

The following Safeguarding Policy and Statement aims, to not only meet the requirements of ensuring a safe environment for those accessing activities in our organisation but to also build an open culture where:

- those who lead do so by example,
- are committed to the safeguarding of all
- those that work or volunteer are safely recruited and trained for their roles.
- there are accountability structures
- with codes of conduct
- the values of the organisation are embedded in its day-to-day actions and behaviours of its people
- and there is open communication

Section 3

Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

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

For the purposes of this policy a child will be referred to as someone under 18 years old and an adult at risk of harm will be defined as in The Child Act 2014

- Needs care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

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

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

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

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

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

This policy is in line with the following legislation:

- The Children Act (1989 & 2004)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- The Care Act (2014)

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Mental Capacity Act (2005)

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included in the appendices of this policy

Positions of Trust

All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.

It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

As of April 2022, it is illegal in England and Wales and Northern Ireland for those in Positions of Trust in a faith setting to engage in sexual activity with a 16 or 17 year old under their care or supervision.

Safer Recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers (both paid staff and volunteers) will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that

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

Safeguarding training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate all staff/volunteers undertaking basic safeguarding training which will be renewed every three years.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate the Safeguarding Co-ordinator undertaking advance safeguarding training which will be renewed every two years. Where possible, the Leadership will provide or facilitate additional training for the requirements of the role.

The Leadership will provide or facilitate specialist safeguarding training for the governance board/board of trustees which will be renewed every three years

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Practice Guidelines

As an place of worship working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of potential harm or abuse and false or unfounded accusations.

A general code of conduct for workers both voluntary and paid is included in the appendices.

All volunteers and all paid leaders involved with children's groups are fully DBS checked. Furthermore, good working practice is that all leaders are encouraged not to be alone with children in the course of their duties in an area not visible to public view.

Management of Workers - Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers and volunteers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

All workers will be made aware of key people to whom they must report concerns and also the procedures for raising complaints regarding how safeguarding matters have been managed. They will be given clear expectations about what is expected of them both within their role and outside of their role. They will also receive further training as necessary.

The Code of Conduct can be found in the appendices(see page 46)

Section 4:

Partnership working

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults . This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding

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

Section 5:

Responding to allegations of abuse

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

- The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern by filling in the Safety Report Form or making an equivalent physical record. Copies are available in the Church File or from the Safeguarding Co-ordinator (for Safety Report Form see page 63)
- The person in receipt of disclosures, allegation or concern of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Pamela Young (hereafter the “Safeguarding Co-ordinator”)

Tel: 01915360945

Email: safeguarding@gracechurchsouthshields.org.uk

The above is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the disclosure, allegation or concern, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the concerns in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

Name: (hereafter the ‘Deputy’ not yet appointed)

Tel:

Email:

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the ‘Deputies’ then the report should be made in the first instance to:

Name: James Nicholson (hereafter the ‘Safeguarding Trustee’)

Tel: 07873832999

Email: sgtrustee@gracechurchsouthshields.org.uk

The worker or volunteer can also contact Thirtyone:eight to get further advice if required:
thirtyone:eight PO box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR* 7UQ

Tel: 0303 003 1111. Option 2

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police

If you or the person you are concerned about is in danger and immediate action is required, you should ring the emergency services on 999.

The worker or volunteer should record the disclosure, allegation or concern onto the cause for concern form and share this with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator /Deputy or

Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible. Please see a copy of the cause for concern form in the appendices.

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may first ring the Thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. Based on the concern they may then contact the relevant statutory services.

South Tyneside Local Authority (Under 18's) 0191 4245010

Adults 01914246000

Out of hours 0191 456 2093

The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern, such as:

- Chair of Trustees or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the Charity Commission to report a serious incident.
- Local Authority Designated Officer - LADO if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

Contact details for South Tyneside LADO: :0191 424 4701

Concerns must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

Whilst allegations or concerns of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to the statutory services, the police, or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.

The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:eight, although the Leadership hope that members of Grace Church will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

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

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse:

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

- If the child requires immediate medical attention, contact the relevant medical services, informing the Doctor of any concerns.
- Contact Children's Social Care (or Thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- If the disclosure, allegation or concern is directly about the parents, then do not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Care.
- For lower-level concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Care direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether to refer a case to Children's Social Care.

Allegations of sexual abuse:

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

- Contact the Children's Social Care Department Duty Social Worker for children and families and or Police, Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Depending on the circumstances, they will need to consider whether it is appropriate to speak to the parents of the child. If they are not sure about this, then they will contact Thirtyone:eight.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether to contact Children's Social Care /Police, Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is need of protection:

Concerns or allegations of abuse or harm including : physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services on 999, informing them of any suspicions.
- Contact Adult Social Care Team, who have responsibility under Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. and who will be able to advise whether this reaches the safeguarding threshold and actions are required Alternatively thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.

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

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/ Deputy will:

- * Make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS England and Wales) for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), if they are involved.
- * Share information about the concern with the police.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs:

The safeguarding co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Care to establish whether this can be investigated under their safeguarding processes.
- Make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Services DBS (England and Wales), following the advice of Adult Social Services.
- Share information about the concern with the police..

The Care Act 2014 places the duty upon Adult Social Care to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the church./organisation

Allegations of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult:

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from a child, the procedure in relation to sexual abuse will be followed (please see above).

If an accusation is made of non-recent sexual abuse from an adult, the Safeguarding Lead will:

- Give the adult the option to report this to the Police (England and Wales), Police Scotland or Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI). If the adult does not wish to report this to the police, then the Safeguarding Lead can pass on the information relating to the alleged Perpetrator, however, must not share details of the Survivor.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working or volunteering with children or young people, make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer -LADO (England and Wales), whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role working with adults with care and support needs, liaise with Adult Social Care .
- If the alleged Perpetrator is in a role within your organisation, contact Thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Section 6:

Wellbeing Support and Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

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

One of the main ways in which organised pastoral care is provided at Grace Church is through our prayer and Bible study group. All members of the church family are encouraged to be in this group, and where this is not possible alternative arrangements will be made, as far as reasonably possible. For example it is possible that members of the leadership, or nominated members of the church may be able to provide specific pastoral care through regular meetings to pray and study the Bible. (All of these people will be DBS checked) While the church leadership will seek to support those affected by abuse as best we can, we recognise that some situations will require assistance beyond our expertise. We will not attempt to provide professional counselling, but seek to support those who require it to access the help they need.

Please see below the details for the individual responsible for wellbeing support/pastoral care

Name: Val Kapke

Tel: 07502260079

Email: pastoral@gracechurchsouthshields.org.uk

Working with those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the organisation is known to pose a potential risk to children, or adults with care and support needs; the Leadership will supervise the individual concerned and offer wellbeing support/pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on a risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate external parties.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- * endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- * provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached
- * ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- * support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- * the Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually.

Signed by:

Position:

Signed by:

Position:

Date:

A copy of this policy is also lodged with

Section 7: Appendices

1. Safeguarding statement

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS POLICY STATEMENT

Grace Church South Shields

- This place of worship is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or abuse to children and adults with care and support needs in all their recognised forms.
- We recognise that the personal dignity and rights of adults and children and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
- We believe all people should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the place of worship.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
- We believe every child and adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that all those we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

- Following statutory denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and will ensure that as a place of worship all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
- Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and referring concerns about adults with care and support needs to the local authority under the Care Act 2014.
- Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
- Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this place of worship.
- Supporting all in the place of worship affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- Children's Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for

investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.

- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this place of worship/organisation.

Pamela Young _____ Safeguarding Co-Ordinator

(not yet appointed) _____ Deputy Safeguarding Co-Ordinator

A copy of this place of worship's * policy can be seen

gracechurchsouthshields.org.uk

Signed by leadership

Signed _____

Date _____

2. Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Adults)

The following information relates to the Safeguarding of Adults as defined in the Care Act 2014, Chapter 14. Safeguarding, this replaces the previous guidelines produced in 'No Secrets' (Department of Health 2000).

The legislation is relevant across England and Wales but on occasions applies only to local authorities in England.

The Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect or exploitation; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect or exploitation.

Throughout this Safeguarding Policy we have generally described these adults simply as 'adults', 'adults at risk' or 'adults with care and support needs' in order to be concise. There has been a general move away from using the term 'vulnerable adults' to that of 'adults at risk' or 'safeguarding adults.' This is because the term 'vulnerable adult' may wrongly imply that some of the fault for the abuse lies with the victim or survivor of abuse. We use 'adult at risk' or 'adult with care and support needs' as exact replacements for 'vulnerable adult' as that phrase is used throughout existing government guidance e.g. Section 42, The Care Act 2014.

Organisations should always promote the adult's wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professional and other staff should not be advocating 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual well-being, as defined in Section 1 of the Care Act.

Link: The Care Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Link: Care and Support Statutory Guidance under the Care Act 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

This section considers the different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and the different circumstances in which they may take place. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, slapping, pushing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, misuse of medication, fabrication of or induced illness, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions, or otherwise causing harm to an adult.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, and so called 'honour' based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude and illegal employment. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, appearance, gender and gender identity, age, disability and illness, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more.

Self-harm – we recognize that adults at risk may pose harm to themselves in many of the categories above.

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterized by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, requirement of obedience to the abuse, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism (Oakley and Humphreys, 2019).

3. Statutory Definitions of Abuse (Children)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Child protection legislation throughout the UK is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each nation within the UK has incorporated the convention within its legislation and guidance.

England

The four definitions (with a few additional categories) of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015 and updated in 2018)'.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual activity (a) in exchange for

something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur **Extremism** goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable – including the young – by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or through the use of technology.denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

4. Signs of Possible Abuse in Adults

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

Physical abuse

History of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries.

Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems left unattended.

Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.

Bruising and discolouration - particularly if there is a lot of bruising of different ages and in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc.

Recurring injuries without plausible explanation e.g. bruises in the shape of finger-marks or fingerprints.

Loss of hair, loss of weight and change of appetite.

Person flinches at physical contact &/or keeps fully covered, even in hot weather.

Person appears frightened or subdued in the presence of a particular person or People.

Domestic violence

Unexplained injuries or 'excuses' for marks or scars.

Controlling and/or threatening relationship including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence and Female Genital Mutilation.

Sexual abuse

Pregnancy in a woman who lacks mental capacity or is unable to consent to sexual Intercourse.

Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually explicit behaviour.

Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting.

Infections or sexually transmitted diseases.

Full or partial disclosures or hints of sexual abuse.

Self-harming.

Emotional distress.

Mood changes.

Disturbed sleep patterns.

Psychological abuse.

Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful.

Intimidated or subdued in the presence of a carer.

Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes.

Unexplained paranoia.

Changes in mood, attitude and behaviour, excessive fear or anxiety.

Changes in sleep pattern or persistent tiredness.

Loss of appetite.

Helplessness or passivity.

Confusion or disorientation.

Implausible stories and attention seeking behaviour.

Low self-esteem.

Financial or material abuse

Disparity between assets and living conditions.

Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents or loss of money.

Sudden inability to pay bills, getting into debt.

Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf.

Recent changes of deeds or title to property.
Missing personal belongings.
Inappropriate granting and/or use of Power of Attorney.

Modern slavery

Physical appearance; unkempt, inappropriate clothing, malnourished.
Movement monitored, rarely alone, travel early or late at night to facilitate working hours.
Few personal possessions or ID documents.
Fear of seeking help or trusting people.
Financial difficulties.

Discriminatory abuse

Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect.
Poor quality or avoidance care.
Low self-esteem.
Withdrawn.
Anger.
Person puts themselves down in terms of their gender or sexuality.
Abuse may be observed in conversations or reports by the person of how they perceive themselves.

Institutional Abuse

Low self-esteem.
Withdrawn.
Anger.
Person puts themselves down in terms of their gender or sexuality.
Abuse may be observed in conversations or reports by the person of how they perceive themselves.
No confidence in complaints procedures for staff or service users.
Neglectful or poor professional practice.
Person appears unkempt in appearance, unexpected weight loss, deteriorating health.

Neglect and acts of omission

Deteriorating despite apparent care.
Poor home conditions, clothing or care and support.
Lack of medication or medical intervention

Self-neglect

Hoarding inside or outside a property.
Neglecting personal hygiene or medical needs.
Person looking unkempt or dirty and has poor personal hygiene.
Person is malnourished, has sudden or continuous weight loss and is dehydrated – constant hunger, stealing or gorging on food.
Person is dressed inappropriately for the weather conditions.
Dirt, urine or faecal smells in a person's environment.
Home environment does not meet basic needs (for example not heating or lighting).
Depression.

The category spiritual abuse has not currently been recognised in legislation, but churches need to have an awareness to respond appropriately and in serious cases it may fall under other categories of abuse identified in legislation.

5. Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)

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

Physical

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- A fear of repercussions at home.
- A reluctance to go home.
- Bruises on babies.
- Suspicious looking bruises (fingerprints or fingermarks).
- Bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation*
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse*

Sexual

- Any full or partial allegations or disclosures made concerning sexual abuse.
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting.
- Fearful, flinching, or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes.
- A fear of a particular gender, or of those in authority.
- A reluctance to go home.
- Intimidated or subdued in the presence of a parent or carer.
- Self-harming.
- Emotional distress.
- Changes in mood, attitude and behaviour, excessive fear or anxiety.
- Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Sexually transmitted diseases or urinary tract infections.
- Helplessness or passivity.
- Confusion or disorientation.
- Low self-esteem.
- Loss of appetite.
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia*

Emotional

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.

Running away/stealing/lying.

Neglect

Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, Untreated illnesses, Inadequate care, etc

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

The category spiritual abuse has not currently been recognised in legislation, but churches need to have an awareness to respond appropriately and in serious cases it may fall under other categories of abuse identified in legislation.

6. Policy Considerations

6.1 Duty of Care

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

The duty of care is in part exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships but also by workers taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those they have responsibility for, particularly in relation to sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Before individuals start working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent to their role.

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

6.2 Positions of Trust

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

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

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

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

At the present time, non-statutory organisations are not included in the legislation on this issue within the Sexual Offences Act. However, we believe that good practice dictates that boundaries need to be in place to ensure that the safeguarding of vulnerable groups is not compromised and that there are clear expectations about appropriate behaviour of leaders

6.3 Data Protection, Human Rights and Safeguarding

The Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation Act 2018 are designed to provide privacy protection for individuals about whom certain personal information is kept. It lays down 'best practice' principles for those who keep the data and it applies to paper records as well as computerised information. The Act covers the whole of the UK, and all organisations, including places of worship, must comply with the rules on processing data.

Where disclosing information might place a child, young person or vulnerable adult at risk, then safeguarding considerations take precedence over data protection. In certain circumstances the Data Protection Act allows for disclosure of information without the consent of the person involved, including for the prevention or detection of crime, or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. The European Convention of Human Rights also makes provision for the disclosure of information in connection with 'the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others and for the prevention of disorder or crime.... Disclosure should be appropriate for the purpose and only to the extent necessary to achieve that purpose'.

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

Information about allegations or concerns of abuse should not be shown to a parent or carer. Advice should always be sought from Children's Social Services, Adult Services, or the police. Thirtyone:eight (of which Grace Church South Shields is a member) can also advise in such circumstances.

Data Protection Principles

The Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation Act 2018 define the law on the processing of data on identifiable living people and how that data should be protected. The following information sets out data protection principles to which every organisation should be working. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully.

- Personal data shall be held only for one or more specified and lawful purposes and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or purposes.
- Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which it is processed.
- Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
- Personal data processed for any purpose shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose.
- Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subject under the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation Act.
- Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of the data.

Complying With Data Protection Principles

- i. No personal data should be obtained or held unless the individual has given consent. In the case of sensitive data, (defined as race, political opinion, religious belief, trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexuality, criminal offences) specific consent must be obtained i.e. the individual must be informed that this type of data is being held, told the reason for it and give permission for its use. NB: photographs count as sensitive data since they may reveal information about the subject's race. Permission should always be obtained to keep a copy or use a photograph of an individual.
- ii. Data obtained for one purpose must not be used for a different purpose. For example the church members' list may not be used for commercial mail shots.
- iii. Do not collect information about individuals which is not necessary for the purpose intended. Do not ask questions or seek data without ensuring that the information is relevant. If data is given or obtained which is excessive for the purpose it is collected, it should be immediately deleted or destroyed.
- iv. If data is kept for a considerable length of time it must be reviewed and if necessary updated. No data should be kept unless it is reasonable to assume it is accurate.
- v. There should be regular reviews of files containing data to ensure that it is not kept for longer than required for the particular purpose.
- vi. You should always consider the rights of the individual in respect of their data. These are, briefly, that consent should be obtained if data is to be kept and used for any purpose; that individuals are entitled to know what data is kept about them and that no personal data must be disclosed to anyone outside or inside the church/organisation who does not strictly need to know, without the individual's consent.
- vii. Churches and organisations should have systems in place to ensure the security of data on computer systems and these must be adhered to. Personal data must be kept in a secure place, e.g. in a filing cabinet which can be locked or in a room which can be locked when unoccupied. Individuals must seek to prevent unauthorised access to any computers that contain personal data.
- viii. No data can be transferred, even for a legitimate purpose, outside of the EEA (European Economic Area - most of Europe) without the consent of the individual. This is particularly important when putting information on the Web which can be accessed from anywhere in the world.

Data Retention Advice

The Safe and Secure Manual discusses Data Protection and the associated principles to consider when handling sensitive information in some detail within Standard 5. We also recommend that you read the information from the Information Commissioner's Office which sets out 8 principles regarding collecting, retaining and disposing of data. (Data Protection Principles, ICO). In brief, they are as follows:

- Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully
- Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
- Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
- Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
- Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
- Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
- Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

In this InFocus we hope to offer some guidance on one of those principles which is often a common enquiry that we receive on the Helpline viz, data retention. We will address this in five sections which are as follows:

- A. Why retain information
- B. How long to retain it
- C. How to retain it - secure storage
- D. How to keep a record of retention
- E. How to dispose of unwanted information

A. Why retain this information?: On the Helpline, we receive frequent calls with regards to data retention. This InFocus is to assist you to answer the questions as recommended by in anticipation of the "General Data Protection Regulations" that are due to come into effect on 25th May 2018. Until this is clarified the guiding legislation is the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. The Act does not set out any specific minimum or maximum periods for retaining personal data. Instead, it says that: Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes. In practice, it means that you will need to:

- review the length of time you keep personal data;
- consider the purpose or purposes you hold the information for in deciding whether (and for how long) to retain it;
- securely delete information that is no longer needed for this purpose or these purposes; and
- update, archive or securely delete information if it goes out of date. Along with the Data Protection Act, 1998 the following regulations and laws may also impact the work of several charitable organisations:
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2015
- The Charities Act, 2011
- Freedom of Information Act, 2000
- Fundraising Regulators Fundraising Code
- Limitations Act, 1980

B. Duration of retention: Retention of safeguarding information is crucial to maintaining a transparent approach on the part of the organisation, both to assist in any future investigations and also to protect reputation. Local authorities usually retain their records for a period of 75 years and in some cases the term permanently maybe considered. With regards to all other information and data of a non-safeguarding nature, you should demonstrate evidence of giving adequate reasons to retain and safe keep such relevant information. A variety of reasons can be given for retaining any document, but the need is to have a measured approach. The default standard retention period for most organisations is 6 years plus the current year to allow for a review and/or disposal to be carried out within that year.

Possible retention periods to consider are, immediately after creation, after 6 months, after 1 year, after 2 years, after 6 years, after 10 years etc. There are however some statutory retention periods that one would need to carefully consider, which are impacted by legislations and guidance such as the Limitations Act, 1980, Keeping children safe in education etc.

For example Keeping Children safe in Education 2015, gives the following advice on retention of records of allegations: *Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious* should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record should be retained at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.*

*at CCPAS we are mindful of the fact that not all allegations regarded as malicious should easily be dismissed and that a vulnerable person or child may in fact be trying to convey a message about an event. We usually use the word 'unfounded' to convey this as a more accurate term. Some of the past case reviews have found that allegations which were dismissed have now returned to be re examined and some have reached a different conclusion than previously

However please also check with your denomination's protocols if they issue longer retention periods, particularly in the light of the investigations by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).

C. Storage: Any personal and sensitive information needs to be kept securely.

- a. A locked filing cabinet in a place where access is limited to known/designated people.
- b. Alternatively, documents can be scanned onto a computer where the information is password protected, backed up, where the password is regularly changed and where access is limited to known people.
- c. The computer should not be a personal computer.
- d. Where the information is needed for an event (for example a list of health information for young people at a camp), this should be kept in a secure place by the camp leader or designated person.

The CPSU (Child Protection in Sport Units) also offer additional advice on this which includes:

- e. Maintain a log of individuals who access the unit and enter details of the files used.
- f. Maintain separate files for concerns, allegations and referrals relating to individuals.
- g. Make appropriate arrangements for safe exchange of keys in the event of a transfer of responsibilities/role.
- h. Careful consideration of this facility in the event that the organisation/service is closing down.

D. Record of retention: A retention schedule is usually helpful in such situations. The ICO defines a Retention Schedule as "a tool used to ensure the retention of business information for as long as it is needed". The ICO advice that a retention schedule should be kept up-to-date in the light of the changing needs of the organisation, new legislation and regulation, risks involved etc.

Link: [Records Management in Charities](#)

As an organisation you may want to consider developing an Information Asset Register that captures details of all the data you hold within your organisation.

(Thirtyone:eight has a template for an Information Asset Register a copy of this is in the Church File)

Some useful principles to keep in mind when looking at data retention are:

- Does the data have any historic value (heritage) associated with the organisation?
- Does it have any safeguarding value? (i.e. potentially assist in future investigations/enquiries)

- Has explicit consent been given for retaining the information (particularly personal/sensitive data i.e. names, addresses, photographs or any other identifying information)?
- If the data has been identified for longer term retention, can it be transferred into a different format i.e. paper files to electronic copies.
- Do you need to seek legal advice or speak to your insurance company regarding data retention?
- Does your denomination have any specific guidance/policy on the matter? (for example the Church of England and the Methodist Church have detailed guidance on this subject which can be accessed on their website)

E. Destruction and Disposal - the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) offer some good advice which is as follows:

- Documents are shredded or incinerated in the presence of a member of organisation or handed to a firm that specialises in destruction of confidential material
- Destruction of both electronic and paper copies should be carried out at the same time
- If not shredded immediately, all confidential records must be held in a secured plastic bag, labelled as confidential and locked in a cupboard or other secure place.
- When a part of an organisation (e.g. a club, team, project etc.) is closed down, the organisation must make arrangements for ongoing management of records relating to that club/team/project including the review, retention and disposal of records. (CPSU Briefings, 2013)

Updated on : 08 December 2017

Useful Contact:

The Information Commissioner's Office,

Head Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Helpline: 0303 123 1113. **Email:** casework@ico.org.uk. **Web:** www.ico.org.uk

6.4 Anti-bullying Policy and Practice (Children & Young People)

There should be a known zero tolerance to bullying, so if it does occur, children and leaders are able to report the matter and it can be dealt with promptly and effectively. There can be an expectation that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will report it.

Whilst the child being bullied needs protection, the person/people doing it need to address the reasons for their behaviour and be encouraged to relate to others in more positive ways.

The organisation has a clear responsibility to respond appropriately to this issue and one way is operate a clear anti-bullying policy.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Children can bully each other, be bullied by adults and can sometimes bully adults. Any form of bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is unacceptable behaviour within any organisation. Some common forms of bullying can be:

Verbal : name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing including via emails or text messaging

Emotional : being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, graffiti, gestures, racial taunts

Physical : pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Sexual : sexually abusive comments or gestures

Racial : any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of racial differences

Homophobic : any of the above because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation

Unofficial activities such as initiation ceremonies and practical jokes which may cause children physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended

Procedural Implications

6.5 Peer-group Activities (children and young people)

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

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

- The appropriateness of the venue for the activity
- Any medical issues, dietary needs and allergies will be appropriately managed.
- Emergency contact numbers are to hand for all members under the age of 18 years.

If the provision of food is part of the activity, leaders must ensure that food is prepared in accordance with Basic Food Hygiene standards.

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

Faith Fact: *It is not uncommon for peer-group activities such as youth cell groups or children's cell groups to operate in the home of a participating child or young person.*

The following should also be followed:

If there are children/young people under 16 years at an activity, adults workers should be present or within earshot.

No person under the age of 16 should be left with the sole responsibility of caring for or supervising other children or vulnerable adults.

Young people (over 16) who assist with caring for other children/young people should be subjected to the same recruitment process as adults and have undertaken safeguarding training.

Peer-group leaders should be aware of safeguarding procedures, including reporting concerns (e.g. abuse, bullying) to their supervising adult and that sensitive information should not be shared openly in the group.

Parents/carers must always be kept informed about what peer-group activities are for, who the leaders are, how they are run, where they meet and what parents can do to support them.

NB: Thirtyone;eight advise that best practice is when adults aged 18 or over are responsible for working with children or vulnerable adults. Although it is possible to undertake DBS checks for those over 16 (where legal), there are implications for those holding DBS certificates because where something goes wrong it may result in a blemished DBS certificate. Extreme caution needs to be exercised about 16-18 year olds having such a responsibility before the necessary level of maturity is reached.

[Junior Helper Form](#) (see page 48)

6.6 Risk Assessments

Taking care of children, young people and vulnerable adults involves taking responsibility for their well-being at all times, being prepared for unforeseen eventualities, anticipating situations where they could be harmed and taking steps to minimise the risks.

Organisations have a responsibility to assess the risk involved in the activities that are provided. This can include an informal check before the start of an activity that the building is safe and that the planned activities have been assessed for any risks.

It is advisable to appoint someone specifically for carrying out risk assessments. An easy and effective way of doing this is to compile a checklist for the activity, identifying any risks that could be encountered, the action required, and the person responsible to carry this out and when any action has been completed.

The following are some areas that should be considered:

- Identification of hazards.

- Consider who might be harmed and how this might happen.
- Assess the risks and take action to remove or reduce them as far as possible.
- Record details of the action taken.

6.7 Health and Safety (Buildings and Equipment)

Buildings being used for groups or activities should be properly maintained. The external fabric of the building, plus all internal fixtures, fittings, lighting, fire exits and equipment should meet the required safety standards. An annual review should also be carried out and, where necessary, action taken. All electrical equipment should have undergone an electrical safety test. In the UK these are known as PAT (Portable Appliance Inspection) tests.

In a building the following may be considered hazardous: loose-fitting carpets, uneven floors, over-filled cupboards, very high shelves, blocked fire exits, glass doors, missing light bulbs, overloaded power points, trailing electrical cables, loose window fastenings.

Outside play areas should be appropriately fenced off with secure/boltable gates to prevent small children from straying from the premises.

Safety requirements could also be publicly displayed on posters in appropriate locations around the building.

Checklist for Building Safety and Equipment (available in Church File)

6.8 Health and Safety (Food Hygiene)

Any food that is made and/or consumed on the premises should meet food safety regulations. It follows therefore that there should be someone within the organisation who has responsibility for this. They should possess a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate or equivalent and be knowledgeable in areas such as food preparation, handling, storage, disposal of waste etc. This is relevant to all organisations and especially to those running camps and other residential activities.

These regulations do not apply to activities like shared suppers when food is brought from members' homes to be shared on the premises. However, it remains important that basic standards of food hygiene be adhered to and shared food should be accurately labelled in terms of its ingredients.

If food and drink are provided during an activity, the following should be considered:

- Workers should follow good personal hygiene
- Basic health and hygiene regulations should be adhered to
- All food and drink is stored appropriately
- Hot drinks should not be carried through an activity area and not placed within the reach of young children
- Snacks and mealtimes are appropriately supervised
- Fresh drinking water is available at all times
- Systems are in place to ensure that children, young people or adults with care and support needs do not have access to food/drinks to which they are allergic. Typically this can be peanuts, nuts, milk, eggs, fish, shell fish and gluten - found in wheat, barley and oats.

Useful contact

The Food Standards Agency is an independent Government department set up by an Act of Parliament in 2000 to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food.

Telephone helpline: 020 7276 8829

Email: helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.food.gov.uk

[GCNH Food Safety Policy](#)

6.9 First Aid

Provision should be made for an appropriately qualified first-aider to be available at all activities together with an adequate First Aid kit.

Policy created using Thirtyone:eight model safeguarding policy © thirtyone:eight

Under the Health & Safety (First Aid) regulations it is the duty of every employer to provide at least one first aid container for each work site. Its contents should be stored in a waterproof container and the designated worker should regularly check the contents.

Useful Contacts St. John Ambulance, 27 St. Johns Lane, London, EC1M 4BU. Tel: 08700 104950. Web: www.sja.org.uk

St. Andrew's Ambulance Association, 48 Milton Street, Glasgow, G4 0HR. Web: www.firstaid.org.uk

British Red Cross, 44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL. Tel: 0844 871 11 11. Web: www.redcross.org.uk

NI First Aid Services, 102 Craighil, Antrim, BT41 1QQ, N. Ireland. Tel: 028 9446 6126 Email: info@nifas.com

6.10 Keeping Records

Organisations need to keep records of their activities for management and accountability purposes. These records should be proportionate and purposeful and personal data should only be kept when there is a good reason for doing so (see section 5.3 above)

- **Keeping a Register**

When a child becomes a member or becomes involved in an activity run by an organisation, it is important at the outset that a general information and consent form is completed and returned giving contact details of parents/carers, plus medical and other details such as allergies or special dietary requirements. This form should be renewed annually.

General Information and Consent Forms (see page 53)

A register of those attending a club or activity should also be maintained, together with a register of workers. This should include a record of arrival and departure times, particularly if the participant does not attend the whole session. It is also good practice to keep parents/carers informed of the nature of activities.

Faith Fact: *Parents/carers may or may not attend a place of worship even though a child, young person does. It is important that they are given information about the group and activities including contact telephone numbers.*

- **Logbook**

A logbook should be maintained for all activities where workers can write down unusual events or conversations that they witnessed. This may be very helpful if, for example, leaders have to deal with a difficult member who subsequently makes an accusation of assault or a young person repeatedly makes sexual comments about workers that may, at a later date, result in an allegation of abuse. In this situation, written records would enable any allegations to be seen in context.

Patterns of behaviour or concerns might also emerge from log records that might not otherwise be so obvious - for example, bruising noted on a regular basis or a number of young people making similar comments about one worker that raises concerns. Other information might include records of incidents such as fights and the action taken. Logbooks safeguard both children and workers.

Every child, young person, vulnerable adult, parent or carer should be able to view what is recorded about them in the logbook. This information would need to be kept in a way that does not breach the confidentiality of an individual.

Whilst it is important to observe data protection requirements, remember safeguarding is always the priority.

Information about the prevention and detection of crime is exempt from data protection requirements. It may, therefore, be inappropriate to release information to a parent that has been disclosed by a young person, without first consulting the statutory agencies.

Information of a sensitive nature (e.g. a child disclosing abuse) will need to be kept separately in a secure place.

However, a cross reference could be recorded in the logbook along the lines of "Jenny spoke to Bill tonight - see separate note in her file". In certain circumstances this information would need to be cross referenced between records. The experience of CCPAS is that concerns can be raised many years after an event and therefore records should be kept indefinitely as advised by insurance companies.

- **Accident Book**

All accidents, however minor, should be recorded in an accident book. In the event of an accident, the parent/carers of a child or young person should be asked to read and sign the accident book. Whether an adult with care and support needs can sign the book will depend on the nature and extent of their disability.

If the child, young person or vulnerable adult is not collected at the end of a session, a letter should be sent to the parent or carer explaining what has happened in much the same way a school would respond.

[Accident and Incident Form](#) (see page 52)

[Practice Guidance](#)

6.11 Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

The giving of gifts or rewards to children, young people and vulnerable adults can be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. In some situations, the

giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of children, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual child or young person will be part of an agreed plan with the knowledge of a manager and the parent or carer.

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

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

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

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

6.12 Safeguarding Principles for Group or Activity

Some general principles for running a club, activity or service include:

- Ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- Consideration for the number of workers needed to run the group and whether they should be male, female or both.
- A clear strategy for summoning additional help (if needed) in situations where a worker is working alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) required appropriate to the needs of the individual.
- Clear guidelines on personal privacy e.g. when working with children avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.
- Not allowing anyone under 16 years of age to be left in charge of children of any age or those attending the group being left unsupervised.
- Only workers assigned to the group being allowed to participate in the activity. Other adults should not be allowed free access.
- Making a note of other people in the building during the activity and any other events taking place at the same time.

6.13 Adult to Child Ratios

In order to supervise children's activities safely it is necessary to have sufficient adult leaders and helpers. In the past thirtyone:eight has relied on OFSTED recommendations but since the introduction of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage the following ratios should be applied:

For children under 2 years old in any group setting, there needs to be at least one member of staff for every 3 children. There are a number of additional provisos in regard to the qualifications and the experience of those staff, but in terms of children aged 2-3 in an early years setting, there needs to be at least one member of staff for every 4 children.

Children aged 3 and over in a registered early year's provision, there needs to be at least one member of staff for every 13 children. Again there are a number of provisos, namely that this is between the hours of 8.00 am and 4.00 pm, and the provisos relate to the qualifications of those staff members. At other times outside of the hours of 8.00 am – 4.00 pm, and where it is within those hours but people have less qualification then the ratio alters to one staff member for every 8 children.

Most of the activities that churches run for young children- parent and toddler groups, for example, or crèches during worship services- would not need to be on the early years register and are therefore not regulated to the same extent

However, good practice guidelines for protecting children, such as those outlined in this guidance, still apply.

Children aged 3 and over in independent schools, including reception classes, the ratio is one member of staff for every 13 children, again with a number of provisos. Children aged 3 and over in maintained schools and nursery schools where the provision is led by a school teacher, then the ratio is one member of staff for every 13 children.

The Early Years Foundation Stage does not place ratio and qualification requirements on reception classes in maintained schools because they fall within the legal definition of an infant class. These classes fall within the legislation of an infant class and must not contain more than 30 pupils. There are also specific requirements in regard to child minders and maximum number of children they can have.

A risk assessment should be carried out for activities and especially where it is:

- outdoors
- high risk or dangerous
- when catering for people with disabilities or other needs

The results of the risk assessment may mean ratios need to be increased. The most important thing is to be specific in written guidance about the expectations within your organisation.

6.14 Working safely with disabled children, young people and adults

Workers should be aware that any child, young person or adult with care and support needs attending an activity who has a disability may need extra help in areas such as communication and mobility (e.g. use of sign language and assistance in going to the toilet).

They may behave in a non-age appropriate way. For example, a young person of 17 might behave more like a 2-3 year old, particularly in demanding cuddles or sitting on a worker's lap. So it is important to set appropriate boundaries that take their needs into account, but also protect workers from false accusation.

The organisation should:

Ask the child, young person or adult attending the activity, and parents or carers how their needs can be met, ensuring all workers involved with them are aware of their expectations. This includes the number of workers needed to assist for a specific activity to prevent injury. Some of these needs may be more easily met than others, so be realistic. A family may ask for changes to enable easier access to the building (ensure you meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010). Listen, and give feedback to the person, family or carer as to what can or can't be achieved and the reasons why.

Ideally ensure that a worker of the same gender assists if they need help with toileting, but again discuss with the person, their family or carer to discuss their preference and your ability to provide this. For example you may have a Sunday School with only female workers, so is a male child happy for a female to provide personal care, are the parents comfortable with this?

Generally these issues once discussed can be agreed upon. It may help to have an 'intimate care' policy in place and a personalised plan agreed with the parents or carer, on behalf of the child or young person (See 5.15 below)

Make buildings accessible (e.g. ramps, toilets for the disabled and hearing loop system) and encourage integration within the group.

Developing appropriate disability awareness including the use of different forms of communication (e.g. sign language) and language etiquette.

6.15 Intimate Care

In places of worship and organisations intimate care may be provided for small children e.g. those attending crèche, and for disabled children and adults. Workers should therefore be operating clear guidelines in this area.

Workers involved with intimate care need to be sensitive to the individual needs of each person and that some care tasks could be open to misinterpretation. False allegations of sexual abuse are rare but guidelines will safeguard both the children and adults. People feel safer if expectations are clear and methods of working are, as far as possible, consistent.

Intimate Care Guidelines (copy available in Church File)

6.16 Challenging Behaviour

Sometimes children and young people become angry, upset or disruptive. Occasionally their behaviour may endanger themselves or others. The Government has developed national standards in relation to early years and day care and the following guidelines can be adopted by organisations providing services to children and young people.

If someone is being disruptive:

- Ask them to stop.
- Speak to them to establish the cause(s) of the upset.
- Inform them they will be asked to leave if the behaviour continues.
- Warn them if they continue to be disruptive, this might result in longer-term exclusion from the group.
- If they are harming themselves, another person or property then others in the group should be escorted away from the area where the disruption is occurring. At the same time, and with a second worker present, request them to STOP. If your request is ignored, you might need to warn the individual that you will consider calling the Police. As a last resort, in the event of them harming themselves, other people or property, physical restraint may be needed until the Police to arrive.

Training in appropriate restraint techniques may be available through the local Police or Area Youth and Community services.

The workers involved should always record what happened in writing as soon as possible after the incident. This should include:

- What activity was taking place
- What might have caused the disruptive behaviour
- The person's behaviour.
- What was said and how the worker and others responded.
- A list of others present who witnessed the incident.

A copy should be given to the leader, a copy retained by the worker and a copy kept with the logbook. Parents should be informed if their child has been restrained.

It may be helpful, after such an incident, for the worker involved to meet with their line manager to talk things through, reviewing what happened and considering whether there is a way of doing things differently so that the incident could be de-escalated avoiding the need for restraint.

Accident and incident form ([see page 56](#))

6.17 Unexpected Attendance at Activities

Sometimes children, young people or vulnerable adults will want to join in with an organisation's activities without the knowledge of parents or carers e.g. children playing outside or wandering the streets with no adult supervision. In these circumstances it is important to:

- Welcome them, but try to establish their name, age (children), address and telephone number. Record their visit in a register.

- Ask if a parent/carer is aware where they are, and what time they are expected home.
- If this is before the session ends, they should be encouraged to return home, unless the parent/carer can be contacted and they are happy with the arrangement. In the case of children in particular, suggest the child seeks the parent/carer's permission to return the following week.
- Link the visiting person with a regular attendee who can introduce them to the group and explain about the activity.
- On leaving, give the person a leaflet about the group with contact telephone numbers etc and perhaps a standard letter to the parent/carer inviting them to make contact.
- Without interrogation, you will need to find out as soon as possible whether they have any additional needs, (e.g. medication), so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.

6.18 Parents/Carers Staying With Children's Groups

There may be occasions where parents ask if they can stay to watch the children's group's activity. It is important not to appear guarded but there may be concerns, particularly where the expectation is that all adults who work with children in any capacity should undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Organisations should therefore consider the following:

- Parents can be permitted to observe groups but not take part. A distinction should be made.
- It can help certain children settle into a group, if the child knows that a parent/carer is there. After the settling in period, if a parent/carer wishes to continue to stay, consideration could be given to them becoming a helper/worker but they would be required to undertake the same recruitment and selection procedure as with any other worker.
- Whilst a person watching may be a parent/carer for one or more of the children, to the rest of the children they are strangers.
- Organise an open evening from time to time as part of the on-going children's programme to build relationships and encourage parents to take an active role in supporting the group.
- Be aware that for some disabled children, it may be appropriate for their parent/carer to stay with them for an extended period. This should be considered on an individual basis to help the child become fully integrated into the group/activity.

6.19 Home Visits

Workers and leaders may need to make home visits from time to time. In these circumstances the organisation should issue formal identification to the person doing the visit.

Guidelines for visiting:

1. Inform a supervisor or another worker of the proposed visit.
2. In the case of children and young people never go into a home if a parent or carer is absent unless the child would be at risk of significant harm if you do not do so.
3. Keep a written record of the visit detailing the following:
 - Purpose
 - Time you arrived and left
 - Who was present
 - What was discussed

If the parent/carer is absent when the call is made, leave some means of identification and explanation for the visit that can be given to them.

An invitation to a worker's home should only be extended with the knowledge of the team/leadership and the permission of the parent/ carer.

6.20 Filming and Taking Photographs

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or film footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or that filming is prohibited, but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe.

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. The worker should write to parents or carers to explain what is happening and leave the onus on the parent/ carer to contact them if they have any objections. In addition to this:

It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.

When using photographs of children and young people, use group pictures and never identify them by name or other personal details. These details include e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.

Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs on a website.

[Image use consent form \(see page 55\)](#)

6.21 Tobacco and Alcohol

There is a smoking ban in all enclosed public spaces throughout the UK and a no-smoking policy should therefore be enforced within any buildings where the organisation operates.

There are exemptions to this in places such as care homes. From October 2014, the ban on smoking has now been extended to smoking in a vehicle with children present (in England and Wales).

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

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

There may be occasions where it is felt necessary to inform parents /carers that a child/young person has been drinking, particularly if they are under the influence of alcohol at the group or there are concerns for their health or safety. This should be discussed with the activity and Safeguarding coordinator.

6.22 Solvents and Illegal Substances.

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

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

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

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

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

6.23 Gangs and Gang Crime

It is not uncommon for groups of children to gather in a public place. This is quite normal, and though some might become disorderly or anti-social, this does not mean they are part of a gang. However, there is a strong association between gang membership and violence and crime and sometimes a young person may not realise they are in a gang, they just think they are socialising with a group of friends.

Young people join gangs for a number of reasons such as belonging to a group, feeling acceptance, being respected by their peers, having power over other people and feeling safe.

Belonging to a gang isn't against the law, it's only criminal offences committed by gang members that are illegal. Having said this, if an offender is part of a gang they may be given a harsher sentence if they are found guilty of:

- possessing drugs like cannabis, cocaine and ecstasy
- carrying a knife if there is intent to use it as a weapon (even if it belongs to someone else)
- carrying or keeping a gun without a licence, including fake or replica guns

The Police will search anyone they think may be carrying a gun or a knife and, working with school staff, may search young people for weapons at school. If there is reason to believe children and young people are involved in criminal gang activity, they need to be told if they carry a gun or a knife they could be arrested; also that a court appearance and a criminal record could jeopardise their chances of employment, going to university or college, or even travelling abroad.

The best way workers can help prevent children getting involved in a gang is by talking openly about gangs, finding out what children think about gangs and warning them of the dangers of becoming involved.

7. Code of Conduct

Grace Church South Shields behaviour code for working with children, young people and adults at risk of harm

Purpose

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of all workers (staff and volunteers).

The code of conduct aims to help protect adults at risk of harm, children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from those in positions of trust, and to reduce the risk of unfounded allegations of abuse being made.

The role of workers (staff and volunteers)

When working with children and young people or adults at risk of harm, you are acting in a position of trust for Grace Church South Shields. You will be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

Good practice

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect and fairness, and have proper regard for individuals' interests, rights, safety and welfare
- Work in a responsible, transparent and accountable way
- Be prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour or to be challenged
- Listen carefully to those you are supporting
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, spiritual abuse or sexual abuse (including inappropriate physical contact such as rough play and inappropriate language or gestures)
- Seek advice from someone with greater experience when necessary
- Work in an open environment – avoid private or unobserved situations
- Follow policies, procedures and guidelines and report all disclosures, concerns, allegations, and suspicions to the safeguarding co-ordinator
- Don't make inappropriate promises particularly in relation to confidentiality
- Do explain to the individual what you intend to do and don't delay taking action

Unacceptable behaviour

- Not reporting concerns or delaying reporting concerns
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Any behaviour that is or may be perceived as threatening or abusive in any way
- Passing on your personal and/or social media contact details.
- Developing inappropriate relationships
- Smoking and consuming alcohol or illegal substances
- Favouritism/exclusion – all people should be equally supported and encouraged

Breaching the Code of Conduct

If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to disciplinary procedures (particularly in the case of paid staff where the line manager will consult the safeguarding coordinator as appropriate). Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave Grace Church Newton Hall. We may also make a referral to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority children's or adult's social care

departments or DBS. If you become aware of a breach of this code, you should escalate your concerns to the safeguarding coordinator or line manager (in the case of a paid staff member).

Declaration

I agree to abide by the expectations outlined in this document and confirm that I have read the relevant policies that assist my work with vulnerable groups.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

8. Sample Contract

Suggested boundaries, for a tailored contract, when someone attending the organisation is known to have abused or to present a risk to children or adults with care and support needs

- I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children, young people or adults with care and support needs
- I will attend meetings and activities as directed by the leadership
- I will sit where directed at activities (e.g. religious meetings, social gatherings) and will not place myself near children, young people and adults with care and support needs
- I will not enter certain parts of the building designated by the leadership, nor any area where activities for children, young people and adults with care and support needs are in progress
- I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children, young people or adults with care and support needs in the home
- I accept that "x" and "y" will sit with me during activities (e.g. religious meetings, social gatherings) and accompany me when I need to use other facilities. They will know I am a sex offender.
- I accept there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children, young people or adults with care and support needs for whom they care
- I accept that contact will need to be made with my probation officer, who will meet with leaders as and when necessary (where appropriate)
- I accept that "z" will provide me with pastoral care.
- I understand that if I do not keep to these conditions, I may be barred from attending activities. In such circumstances the leadership may choose to inform the statutory agencies (e.g. police, probation, Adult Services, Children's Social Services), and any other relevant organisations, as well as members of the faith community or organisation.
- I understand that any other concerns will be taken seriously and reported
- I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every _____ months and will remain for an indefinite period

Suggested ways of supporting and providing pastoral care to someone attending the organisation that is known to have abused or to present a risk to children or adults with care and support needs

'X' and 'Y' and 'Z' have agreed to provide you with pastoral care and support; as part of that undertaking, they and the leadership of the organisation agree to:

- Support you in finding suitable employment opportunity which will not bring you into contact with children or adults with care and support needs.
- Support you in seeking any specialist help e.g. attendance on any Sex Offender Treatment Programmes, drug or alcohol or psychiatric rehabilitation or any counselling appointments.
- Liaise with any previous Places of Worship you have attended, with the Prison Chaplaincy Team, or any other organisation you have worked with prior to joining us.
- Work closely as an organisation with any statutory authorities with responsibility for you, such as your probation officer, police public protection team or children's social services, cooperating with them in helping and supporting you.
- Where appropriate, ask for any risk assessment in order to determine how best we can meet your needs while protecting children and adults with care and support needs.

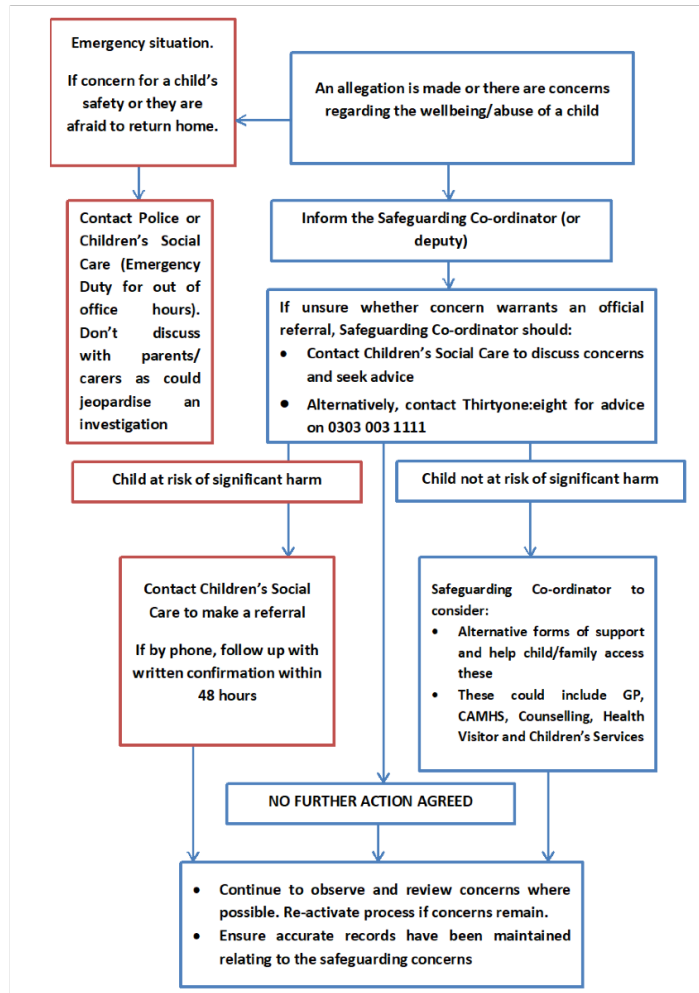
- Attempt to meet any practical needs you may have, including assisting with options for accommodation.
- Support you in joining Circles of Support or any other similar programme.
- Provide pastoral care and support to anyone with whom you are living with. We recognise that partners of know sex offenders need pastoral care, and 'space' to share without judgement.
- Be there for you and will support you.

9. Flowchart for Action Children and Young People

Flowchart for Action Children and Young People



This flow chart provides an overview of action to be taken when concerned about the welfare of a child. It is to be used in conjunction with written procedures.



Working Together to Safeguard Children defines significant harm as:

"... any Physical, Sexual, or Emotional Abuse, Neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life. Harm is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development."

© Thirtyone: eight 2018 Flowchart for Action Children & Young People

Junior Helper Form

Name of Place of Worship/Organisation _____

Group _____

Full Name of Junior Helper _____ DOB _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Thank you for agreeing to be a junior helper in _____ (name of group). We very much value and appreciate your willingness to serve God in this way. You will be expected to help _____ (leader) with _____ (please state tasks). Above all help the children to have lots of fun but not forgetting to have fun yourself.

Never be aggressive, angry or unfriendly towards the children. Try and have a happy smile and be gentle with them during games. Give praise for their achievements but help and encourage them with consideration when they find things difficult. Above all show them God's love through your caring actions.

You will be assigned a named leader (please state) _____ who will give you care, personal supervision and guidance. You can talk to them at any time on any topic, even if it's not related to _____ (name of group) and even outside _____ (name of group) time. Also feel free to contact them if you can't attend _____ (name of group).

During _____ (name of group) other leaders may ask you to assist them when children are separated into different groups: please take your supervision from them for that period.

Finally, avoid too much close physical contact, children may wish to cling to you or constantly sit on your lap or jump on you whilst rolling around on the floor. Instead just encourage them to take part in what has been organised for them. To support you in the great work you will be doing as a helper we will ensure that you are NEVER alone with the children. We will ensure that you will only be involved in activities where you are under direct supervision and eye contact of the leader.

I _____ commit regularly to attend and help at _____ (name of group) for the agreed period of time with the exception of sickness, school outings, exams and study leave.

Signed _____ Age _____ Date _____

Travel arrangements getting home: I have made travel arrangements after _____ (name of group) particularly during the dark evenings, and these are as follows:

Approved by: Parent/Carer (person with parental responsibility)

Sign: _____ please keep a copy and return the other.

Agreed period: _____ months. Expires _____ You can arrange to renew this commitment at this date.

Appointment approved by: _____ (name of leader of group/organisation)

Named Leader: _____ Contact Number: _____

11. General Information and Consent Form

General Information and Consent Form (for children and young people)

Place of Worship/Organisation: _____

Group: _____

Full name of child/young person _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Address: _____

Name of GP: _____

Tel No: _____

Address: _____

NHS No: _____

Date of last anti-tetanus injection: _____

Details of any regular medication, medical problem (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, allergies, dietary needs, etc.) or additional needs/impairment which may affect activity:

Name of parent/carer: _____

Tel no: Daytime _____ Evening _____ Mobile _____

Additional contact (grandparent etc or other holding parental responsibility)

Name _____

Tel no: _____

If you do not have parental responsibility (e.g. you are a foster carer/grandparent etc)

please give details of those with parental responsibility

Name(s): _____ Tel no: _____

Address: _____

I give permission for _____ to take part in the normal activities of this group. I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities, including swimming, and outings lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group. I understand that while involved he/she will be under the control and care of the group leader and/or other adults approved by the place of worship/organisation leadership and that, while the staff in charge of the group will take all reasonable care of the children,

they cannot necessarily be held responsible for any loss, damage or injury suffered by my child during, or as a result of, the activity.

Whenever medical advice or treatment is needed, the assistance of a GP or A&E Department of a hospital should be sought. The Children Act 1989 allows a doctor to provide any necessary treatment by doing 'what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare'.

However, the parent/carer should be contacted and advised of the situation as soon as possible. It is important, however that those caring for children and young people on day trips, outings and residential activities obtain in advance, the following from the parent/carer:

1. All necessary information concerning the child/young person's health, allergies, medication etc.
2. Written agreement as follows:

I understand:

- My child will receive medication as instructed before or during the event.
- Every effort will be made to contact me as soon as possible should my child become ill or have an accident.
- My child will be given medical/dental treatment as necessary.

Communicating with children & young people

Children and young people communicate via telephone, mobile, email and the internet. Do you give permission for children/youth workers to communicate via these methods to your child? E.g, contact via email with changes to the youth meeting times: _Yes _No

I give permission for my child and the youth/children's workers to communicate using

_Telephone _mobile _email _internet

for the purpose of arranging children/youth activities.

(Please delete forms of communication you don't want your child contacted by)

Signed: (parent/adult with parental responsibility) _____

Date: _____

The information requested on this form can be completed by a carer, but only those with parental responsibility can sign the consent (NB: This may not include a foster carer). If you would like to withdraw consent or have any further questions about the information we hold about you, please contact _____ [name and designation] on _____[contact email] or _____ [phone number].

12. Accident and Incident Form

Accident and Incident Form

This form should be completed immediately after any accident or significant incident. The worker should discuss with the appropriate leader for the group/activity what follow up action is necessary.

Day, date and time of the incident

Names, addresses and ages of those involved in the incident

Where did this incident take place?

Name of place of worship/organisation:

Name of the group:

Who is normally responsible for group? (Name, address and telephone number)

Who was responsible for the group at the time of the incident, if different from the above?
(Name, address and telephone number)

Which other workers were supervising the group at the time of the incident? (names, addresses and telephone numbers)

Who witnessed the incident? (Names, addresses, telephone numbers, and ages if under 16) Normally only two witnesses would be needed.

Describe the accident/incident (include injuries received and any first aid or medical treatment given)

Have you retained any defective equipment?

YES NO NONE INVOLVED (Please tick)

If yes, where is it being kept and by whom?

What action have you taken to prevent a recurrence of the incident?

Is the site or premises still safe for your group to use YES NO (Please tick)

Is the equipment still safe for your group to use? YES NO (Please tick)

Who else do you need to inform?

Have they been informed? YES NO (Please tick)

If so, when and by whom?

Have you reported a serious/significant accident or injury to the Local Authority
environmental health department? YES NO (Please tick)

Signature of person in charge of group at time of accident/incident

Signed: _____ Print Name _____

Date: ____/____/____

Form seen by: _____

(state role eg. Church Minister, Head of Organisation/Health & Safety Officer)

Signed: _____ Print Name: _____

Date: ____/____/____

13. Using Images of Children Consent Form

Using Images of Children

Consent form for:

(Name of church/organisation commissioning photography)

To: _____
Name of parent/carer* (*person with parental responsibility)

Name and age of child: _____

Church /Organisation/ Club child attends: _____

Location of photograph: _____

[Church/Organisation name] _____ would like to take
photograph(s)/make a video/webcam recording of
_____ (name of child/ren)

These images may appear in our printed publications, on our website, or both.
(Delete/add as appropriate).

Permission must be granted by the parent/carer before any images of your child/children
are taken and used. Please answer questions 1, 2 and 3 below, then sign and date the form
where shown.

Please return the completed form to

(Insert the name of the worker commissioning the photography and the return address.)

To the parent (Delete as appropriate)

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. May we take images of your child? | Yes/No |
| 2. May we use your child's image in our printed promotional publications? | Yes/No |
| 3. May we use your child's image on our website? | Yes/No |

Signed: (parent/adult with parental responsibility)

_____ Date: ____/____/____/

14. Job Application Form

Model Job Application Form

APPLICATION FORM FOR PAID OR VOLUNTARY WORK WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Name of place of worship/organisation:

We ask all prospective workers with children, young people and adults to complete this form. If there is insufficient room to fully answer any question, please continue on a separate sheet. The information will be kept confidentially by the place of worship/organisation, unless requested by an appropriate authority.

1. Personal Details

We will need to see birth/marriage certificates or documents regarding a change of name.

Full Name:

Maiden/Formal Name(s):

Date and place of birth: ____/____/____

Address:

Postcode: _____

Daytime Tel No: _____ Mobile Tel No: _____

Evening Tel No. _____ Email address: _____

How long have you lived at the above address? _____ Years _____ Months

If less than 5 years, please give previous address(es) with dates:

From/To ____/____/____ ____/____/____ From/To ____/____/____ ____/____/____

Previous _____ Previous _____

Address _____ Address _____

Post Code _____ Post Code _____

Please tell us about your Christian experience/experience in the church(es)/organisation(s) you have been involved in, including names, dates and detail of the areas of your involvement.

Please give details of previous experience of looking after or working with children, young people or adults. This should include details of any relevant qualifications or appropriate training either in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Have you ever had an offer to work with children, young people or adults with care and support needs declined?

YES NO (Please tick)

If yes, please give details

2. Employment History

Please tell us about your past and current employment / voluntary work in the table below.

| Employers Name and Address | Employed from (Date) | Employed to (Date) | Job Title and Description | Reason for Leaving |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

3. Are you currently working in any other care position in either a voluntary or paid capacity?

If yes please give details:

Name of the organisation: _____ Contact person _____

:

Address _____

_____ Tel no: _____

Details of duties:

4. References

Please complete the details below of two people who would be willing to provide a personal reference. If you are currently working, (paid or voluntary) one of these should be your present employer. You should also provide details of your leader of place of worship/line manager. We reserve the right to take up character references from any other individuals deemed necessary.

Name _____ Name _____

Address _____ Address _____

Post Code _____ Post Code _____

Tel No _____ Tel No _____

Relationship _____ Relationship _____

Email _____ Email _____

Place of worship, leader/ line manager

Name

Address

Tel no: _____

Please would you complete the attached Self-declaration Form, place it in a sealed envelope and address it to _____ (the person responsible for processing Disclosure Checks) with whom you are welcome to discuss any aspects of this procedure. Please confirm that you understand and agree to a Disclosure Check should we wish to appoint you to a post involving working with adults and/or children.

I confirm that the submitted information is correct and complete, I understand and agree to the conditions involving a Disclosure Check and I have sent the Self-Declaration Form to the Recruiter in a separate, sealed envelope.

Signed: _____ Date _____

15. Cause for Concern Form

Part 1: Record of concern about a child/adult's safety and welfare

(for use by any staff/volunteers– This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible)^{1, 2, 3}

| | | |
|---|--|----------|
| Child/Adult's name (subject of concern): | Date of birth/age: Child/Adult: | Address: |
| Date & time of incident: | Date & time (of writing): | |
| Your Name (print): _____ Role/Job title: | | |
| Signature: _____ | | |
| Other members of the household ⁴ : | | |
| Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. <i>(please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember – the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)</i> | | |
| How did the concern come to light? | | |
| What is the child/adult saying about what has happened ⁴ ? | | |
| Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc. | | |
| Date and time of discussion with Safeguarding Lead ⁵ : _____ | | |

Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.

Please pass this form to your Safeguarding Lead without delay

Guidance notes for Form 1 (volunteers/staff only):

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form:

1. As a registered body the church/charitable organisation is required to ensure that its duty of care towards its beneficiaries is carried out in line with the principles enshrined within the Working together to safeguard children and young people, 2018 and the Care Act, 2014. (Refer to your own church's/organisation's safeguarding policy at this point too).
2. Essential principles of recording the information received/disclosed/observed:
 - a. Remember: do not investigate or ask any leading questions
 - b. make notes within the first one hour of receiving the disclosure or observing the incident
 - c. be clear and factual in your recording of the incident or disclosure
 - d. avoid giving your opinion or feelings on the matter
 - e. aim to record using the 4 W's and 1 H: When, where, what, why and how
 - f. do not share this information with anyone else except your safeguarding lead in the first instance and they will advise on who else will need to be informed, how and when.
 - g. make use of the additional information section to add any other relevant information regarding the child/adult/ family that you may be aware of. This can include any historic concerns or observations.
3. ***What constitutes a safeguarding concern?*** – any incident that has caused or likely to cause significant harm to a child can be classed as a safeguarding concern. Abuse is classified under four different categories (with regards to children) as already stated within the safeguarding policy (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect). With regards to adults there are 6 further categorisations. Whilst it may be helpful to record a specific category in the above form, if possible, this may not always be the case. Therefore, it is important to seek advice from your safeguarding lead or thirtyone:eight at this stage.
4. ***Why do you need information regarding 'other household members'?*** – It has been demonstrated as important to include information about significant adults in the household especially when concerns relate to children as this has been a recurrent risk factor in several serious case reviews.
5. ***Why is the view of the child/adult significant?*** It is important to give whatever detail is available of the child or adult's explanation (or verbatim) of the matter to help ascertain if it is plausible and to help offer a context to the concern identified.
6. ***Passing information to the Safeguarding Lead*** – Your safeguarding lead holds ultimate responsibility in responding to any safeguarding concerns within the church/organisation and therefore it is important that they have oversight of the actions being taken and make relevant and appropriate contact with statutory agencies if required. They will remain the most appropriate link between the organisation and external agencies.

Part 2: Record of concern about a child/adult's safety and welfare

(for use by Safeguarding Lead - This form can be filled in electronically. If the form is handwritten care should be taken to ensure that the form is legible)

| | | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Information received by SC: | Date: | Time completed: | From whom: | | |
| Any advice sought, if applicable | Date: | Time completed: | Source of advice: name/organisation: | | |
| | <p>Advice received:</p> <p>Advice received about informing parents or in the case of adults, seeking consent/capacity¹:</p> | | | | |
| Initial Assessment of concern following advice ² | | | | | |
| Action taken with reasons recorded (e.g. Referral completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff, CAF etc) | Date: | Time completed: | By whom: | | |
| | Referral | | To whom | | |
| | Signposting to other community resources | | | | |
| | Pastoral Care and other support from church | | | | |
| | Ongoing Monitoring | | | | |
| Parent/carer informed? | Y | Who spoken to: | Date: | Time: | By whom: |
| | N | Detail reason: | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|------------|--|
| Any other relevant information | | | |
| Name of Safeguarding Lead: | | Signature: | |

OVERVIEW OF ACTIONS³:

| S.No | Date | Outcome (if known) | Service currently involved | Ongoing support offered by church (this can include monitoring)- include dates |
|------|------|--------------------|----------------------------|--|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Guidance notes for Form 2:

Following are some helpful pointers in completing the above form(s)

1. **Importance of consent from parents/carer or adults (in the light of mental capacity)** – With regards to children, consent of the parents is considered important before a referral is made to external agencies, unless of course doing so will place the child(ren) at greater risk of harm. With regards to adults, it is important to be aware that their consent is crucial before reporting concerns onto statutory agencies. The individual's mental capacity will also be a significant factor to consider at this stage. You can always seek the advice of local authority social services.
2. **Initial assessment-** Based on the advice you may have received from relevant individuals/agencies (i.e. this could be school/thirtyone:eight/CEOP etc), what are the concerns categorised as?
3. **Overview of actions** - Includes a summary of the actions taken so far and who holds responsibility for it. You can use this section to add on information gathered when monitoring the situation or offering pastoral care over a defined period of time.

16.Guidance for workers in responding to a person wishing to disclose abuse:

Effective Listening

Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or adult with care and support needs to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.

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

HELPFUL RESPONSES

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

DON'T SAY

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

17. Whistleblowing Policy

Grace Church South Shields Whistleblowing Policy

(To be read in conjunction with Whistleblowing: Guidance for Employers and Code of Practice)

By actively developing a healthy culture of openness Grace Church South Shields wants to encourage employees to raise issues which concern them at work. As an organisation we want to observe high standards of business and personal ethics within the conduct of staff duties and responsibilities. A healthy culture is one where we practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and we comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Grace Church South Shields understanding of a healthy culture is one that is based on our Statement of Faith and our Community Standards. We endeavour to train our all workers and volunteers in Whistleblowing law and the organisation's policies.

Whistleblowing definition:

According to ACAS, Whistleblowing constitutes:

"By law, there are several issues you can whistle blow about. These are called 'qualifying disclosures'.

Qualifying disclosures include:

- *a criminal offence – for example, an employer has been trying to bribe people*
- *the breach of a legal obligation by an organisation – for example, an employer has neglected their duty of care towards children in a care home*
- *a miscarriage of justice – for example, a member of staff has been dismissed for something that turned out to be a computer error*
- *someone's health and safety being in danger – for example, an employer has forced staff to serve contaminated food*
- *damage to the environment – for example, an employer has been regularly polluting local rivers*

You can also whistle blow about someone trying to cover up information about any of these issues."

Personal grievances (E.G. bullying, harassment, discrimination) are not covered by whistleblowing law, unless it is in the public's interest. These would be addressed through the complaint's procedure.

How does the whistleblowing process work?

- If an employee is concerned about any form of malpractice, they should normally first raise the issue with their line manager. This can be done at any time, either verbally or in writing.

- If they feel they cannot tell their line manager, for whatever reason (e.g. the malpractice issue the employee wishes to raise may involve their line manager or a person who is a friend of the line manager/the matter is so serious it should be brought to the attention of senior leadership) they should raise the issue with their line manager's manager; a prescribed person or their third party manager.
- If the employee feels they cannot raise it with any of the above, they can raise the malpractice issue with the Compliance Officer/nominated person on the senior management team/ President & CEO/named person on Board of Directors.
- The whistleblower does not need to provide evidence to support their concern.
- You can whistle blow anonymously (using the organisation's process); however, **Grace Church South Shields** might not be able to take the claim any further, if there isn't enough information to follow.

Our Response

- After an employee has raised a concern, **Grace Church South Shields** will decide how to respond in a responsible and appropriate manner. Usually this will involve making internal enquiries first, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation at a later stage which may be formal or informal depending on the nature of the concern raised. External investigators may be brought in where necessary. **Grace Church South Shields** will endeavour to complete investigations within a reasonable time, which will be communicated at each stage of the investigation.
- **Grace Church South Shields** will keep the employee informed of the progress of the investigation carried out and when it is completed. **Grace Church South Shields** will not be able to inform them of any matters which would infringe the duty of confidentiality owed to others; however, **Grace Church South Shields** will take reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the whistleblower, where requested (unless required by law to break that confidentiality).
- If the whistleblower is anonymous, **Grace Church South Shields** cannot guarantee feedback can be given and the action of looking into a concern could be limited.
- Employees will not be opening themselves up to detrimental treatment, retribution or risking their job security by whistleblowing, and all staff have organisational protection if they raise concerns in the right way. Any person who victimises a bona fide whistleblower will be liable to disciplinary action and liable to an employment tribunal claim (which may include liability for unlimited damages) brought by the whistleblower against them personally. To ensure the protection of all our employees, those who maliciously make an allegation, they do not reasonably believe to be true and/or made in the public interest, may also be liable to disciplinary action.

If you are not happy with how **Grace Church South Shields** handle the whistleblowing, you can contact:

[Protect - Speak up stop harm - Whistleblowing Homepage](#)

[Work and employment law advice | Acas](#)

Government's guidance on Whistleblowing:

[Whistleblowing for employees: What is a whistleblower - GOV.UK](#) (England / Wales / Scotland)

[Whistleblowing - mygov.scot](#) (Scotland)

[Blowing the whistle on workplace wrongdoing | nidirect](#) (Northern Ireland)

[Written Statement - Whistleblowing \(17 April 2013\) | GOV.WALES](#) (Wales)

[What someone can whistleblow about - Whistleblowing at work - Acas](#)

NSPCC whistleblowing line on 0800 028 0285 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

18. Online Safety Policy

Grace Church South Shields Online Safety Policy

(Thirtyone:eight Online Safety definition:

Online safety is the collective term for safeguarding involving the use of electronic devices and applications to communicate and access the Internet; often referred to as Information and Communications Technology.)

Guidelines/Rules for Workers/Volunteers

- Generally, maintain good and open relationships with parents and carers regarding communication with them and their children.
- Use an appropriate tone: friendly, but not over-familiar or personal.
- Be warm and friendly, but do not suggest or offer a special relationship.
- Be clear and explicit about information that you need to share; don't abbreviate or short-cut your communications.
- Be cautious in your communications with children to avoid any possible misinterpretation of your motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.
- Do not share any personal information with children, or request or respond to any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of your role.
- Only make contact with children for reasons related to the work of the church/organisation and maintain records of all electronic contact with individuals or groups, including messaging and texting.
- Workers and volunteers may use personal equipment in accordance with the other stipulations of this policy.
- Respect a child's right to confidentiality unless abuse/harm is suspected or disclosed.
- The organisation domain/logo should be used on any public online post which represents the organisation.
- Email should only be used to communicate specific information. (e.g. times and dates of events). It should not be used as a relationship building tool.
- Email History should be kept and dated.
- Electronic communication with children should take place between the hours of 9am-5pm. Online activities taking place outside of these hours will be planned in advance.

Video conferencing and calling

When using video conferencing platforms, the following shall be observed:

- Consent is sought for children/young people.
- A minimum of 2 leaders will be present.
- Appropriate locations will be used for participants.
- Participants will wear suitable attire.
- Avoid 1 to 1 video calls with young people unless agreed in advance with your

supervisor/line manager and with the knowledge of the parents.

Social Media Policy

- All social media interaction between workers, paid or voluntary, and children under 18 shall be limited to monitored/administrated groups.
- Social media groups for young people will be moderated by two leaders or more.
- Text and any other media posted shall be subject to the acceptable use policy.
- All interaction on social media groups shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes.
- Any private messages shall be recorded for safeguarding purposes.
- Any safeguarding concerns/allegations arising from social media shall be referred onto the safeguarding co-ordinator.
- All users of social media must be above the minimum age limit which is usually 13+.
- Workers should ensure their privacy settings are set to the highest levels to restrict children being able to see any more than what is relevant to communication within the group.
- All social media groups should provide links to statutory authorities such as CEOP, to enable children to report online abuse.

Consent for photographic images and videos online

- Photographs that include children will be selected carefully and will endeavour to prevent children from being easily identified.
- Children's full names will not be used on the website in association with their photographs.
- Parental consent will be sought before any images are taken or displayed and images will only be used for the specific purpose for which permission was sought for and how the image will be stored if not destroyed. If the intention is to use an image on the internet this must be clearly stated and further permission must be acquired if an image is to be used in a way not originally stated.
- Use of images will reflect diversity of age, ethnicity and gender of the activity.
- Live streaming of events must be clearly advertised in advance and where children are involved permission should be sought in line with the photographic guidelines.

19.Social Media Policy

Social media is useful for communicating Grace Church South Shields information about church services and events to raise the profile of the church in the local area and within the AMiE network of churches in the UK

At present Grace Church South Shields uses a Facebook account and a Whatsapp group.

Facebook

The Facebook page is used primarily to share meetings and event information with church members, people in the local area and other AMiE churches. It may also be used to share passages from the Bible, or information from other churches we have links with in the local area.

There will be at least two administrators (hereafter referred to as 'admin') for the Facebook page. At present there is only one 'admin' Dean Olsen. He is responsible for setting up and managing the Facebook account under the direction of the leadership within the following guidelines.

The account will only be used to post the following items;

- *Grace Church news and events as agreed by the leadership
- *Events and news from local churches as agreed by the leadership
- *Events and news from AMiE or other AMiE churches.
- *Events and news from Christian organisations as agreed by the leadership

The account will not be used

- *to host discussion forums.
- *to sell or advertise goods

Please note

- *any images of children used on the page can only be used if an image use consent form has been completed by the parent. (see Online safety policy)
- *any links to external sites from the Facebook page must be checked to ensure they are appropriate to our Christian values and safe
- *Unauthorised third party content will be removed by "admin"
- *Any comments using foul or inappropriate language will be removed by 'admin'

WhatsApp Group

The WhatsApp group is used primarily to share Grace Church South Shields meetings, notices, event information and prayer requests. It may also be used to share information from other AMiE churches in the UK

There will be at least two administrators (hereafter referred to as 'admin') for the Whatsapp group. At present there is only one 'admin' David Profit.. He is responsible for setting up and managing the account and for adding or removing people from the group under the direction of the leadership within the following guidelines.

The account will only be used to post the following items;

- *Grace Church news and events as agreed by the leadership
- *Events and news from local churches as agreed by the leadership
- *Events and news from AMiE or other AMiE churches.
- *Events and news from Christian organisations as agreed by the leadership

The account will not be used

- *to host discussion forums.
- *to sell or advertise goods
- * to post videos, information or links from unknown churches or sources

Please note

- *Unauthorised third party content will be removed.
- *Any comments using foul or inappropriate language will be removed.

The safeguarding co-ordinator is responsible for updating the social media policy, which must be approved by the trustees and reviewed every two years, unless a significant change requires the church to check the policy before the next review date.

Staying safe on line

It can be challenging working on social media and there may be times where unpleasant or abusive comments may be directed at Grace Church or its members. We encourage everyone who is on social media to be aware of our safeguarding and wellbeing practices to deal with online abuse and consult with the safeguarding co-ordinator where necessary.

Everyone should be vigilant regarding suspicious content or links and must not reveal personal, confidential or sensitive information about themselves, volunteers or leaders of Grace Church South Shields. Everyone should be wary of fake accounts that may claim to be Grace Church South Shields and should immediately notify the leadership.

Participation in social media on behalf of Grace Church South Shields is not a right but an opportunity to be treated seriously with respect.

