

# Heworth Christ Church

## Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy Statement 2022

As reflected in the Church of England's document 'Fully Alive in God', Heworth, Christ Church recognizes and values children and young people (anyone under the age of 18) as equal partners in the life and ministry of the church, and desires to encourage them to explore, discover and live out the Christian Gospel. The Parochial Church Council (hereafter PCC) takes seriously its obligations and responsibilities to protect and safeguard the welfare of any child or young person entrusted to the church's care.

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

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

*Toddlers*  
*Sunday morning crèche and children's groups*

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

*0-2 years = 1:3*  
*2-3 years = 1:4*  
*3-8 years = 1:8*  
*Over 8s = 1:8 for first 8, then 1 extra adult for every 12*

Will have clear procedures for responding to suspicions or allegations about abuse, or inappropriate behaviors towards children and young people by any member of the church, and procedures for working with known offenders attending the church, as depicted in the attached flow chart.

Will ensure that both employed and volunteer children's and youth workers and all other persons working within the church who may have contact with children or young people through their work are properly and appropriately selected and appointed by ensuring that all workers have a valid DBS, a signed 'confidential declaration' and two references.

Will ensure that all those working with children and young people are given appropriate support and training.

Will expect that a leader from each of our groups undertakes the basic online training (and provides proof thereof), and that at least one person from each group attends the Diocesan Safeguarding Training Day (a course which is usually open for others to attend too).

Will annually both appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer and review the Parish Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

Will maintain appropriate Third-Party Liability insurance for its work involving children and young people.

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## Commitment to Children and Young People

In accepting the Safeguarding Policy Statement, the PCC as agent of the whole church family in this Parish and within the Diocese of York is also committed:

To the children and young people, by:

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

To workers, volunteers, and the Safeguarding Officer, by:

- providing and/or enabling the delivery of basic safeguarding training, which may include on-line training (see Appendix 1)
- providing clear systems and procedures for the recruitment and introduction of 'new' workers and volunteers (see Appendix 2)
- providing clear guidelines on what to do if a disclosure is made by a child (See Appendix 3)
- providing clear systems and procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations about abuse, as outlined in the attached flow chart (see Appendix 4). Promoting and maintaining healthy links with Diocesan and statutory childcare authorities as necessary.

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

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

In Brief:

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

- a) Provide proof of their identity.
- b) Provide 2 referees who have known the applicant for at least 3 years; one from a church setting and the other not.
- c) Complete a 'Confidential Declaration Form' in accordance with The Children Act 1989 and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act **1974/5**.
- d) Obtain an up to date and satisfactory 'Enhanced Disclosure' check.

**Note:**

Where a person has only occasional contact with young people, such as a supervised steward or helper at occasional events, the volunteer only needs provide proof of identity, 2 referees and complete the Confidential Declaration Form.

Any increased involvement will necessitate a Enhanced Disclosure to be carried out. Please refer to the Diocese of York guide to DBS code of practice.

**Child Protection – Definitions of Abuse**

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

**Neglect**

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

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

**Physical Abuse**

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

**Sexual Abuse**

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

### **Emotional Abuse**

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

### **Organized Abuse**

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

### **Note**

A child may suffer more than one category of abuse mentioned here. Today we also need to be aware that a number of forms of abuse may potentially take place on-line.

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

If there is good reason to believe that someone attending the church may pose a risk to children, either because of a criminal conviction or for any other reason, the first concern will necessarily be a full commitment to the protection of all children and young people.

Whilst extending appropriate pastoral care to an individual, the Incumbent and Church Wardens (or authorized agent such as the Rural Dean), will discuss with the Diocesan Child Protection Officer then meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep a written agreement will be appropriate in such cases, and the PCC Safeguarding Officer and Diocesan Child Protection Officer informed and supplied with a copy of the written agreement.

## Child Protection Procedures for Referrals

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

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

## **Additional role of the PCC Safeguarding Officer**

1. The PCC Safeguarding Officer should support any church member raising or reporting a concern or allegation and make sure that the above procedures have been carried out appropriately.
2. Unless it is inappropriate in view of the nature of the allegation, the incumbent or Church Wardens should be informed of any referral being made as well as the Archdeacon. Do not discuss with anyone else.
3. Careful consideration should also be given as to whether the Parish's insurers should be contacted and advised of the incident or allegation.
4. If the PCC Safeguarding Officer is unsure, or feels they need to take further advice, they should contact the Archdeacon in the first instance, Social Services or alternatively the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service Help line (see useful telephone numbers).
5. In the event of the Archdeacon being unavailable within a reasonable time, another of the Archdeacons should be contacted. Alternatively telephone the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service Help Line. (See useful telephone numbers).

## **Data Protection**

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

## Policy Adoption

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

Signed:

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**Rev. Paul Deo – Incumbent**

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**Gordon Reid – Church Warden**

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**Mick Anderson – Church Warden**

Date. \_\_\_\_\_

## Useful Telephone numbers:

Church Safeguarding Officer: **Anne Mwangi**

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser: Julie O'Hara tel:01904 699524 and 07551 124951  
email safeguarding@yorkdiocese.org

Social Services 01904 555111 (8.30-5.00)

Child Safeguarding Team: 01904 551900 Emergency Duty Team: 08450 349417

Local Police: 101

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

Write to:

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

and marked "Strictly Private and Confidential"

If it is an emergency, call 01452 528533

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1

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

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

### Appendix 2

It's great when 'new' people express an interest or desire to help or lead in one of our groups, but when they do, we will need to insist on this, or similar, course of events.

- The person who oversees the group will need to inform the Safeguarding Officer of the intention for someone to explore the possibility of them helping.
- They will be invited to go along as an 'observer' first, with no sense of being part of the 'team', but just to have a 'taste' of the group and how it runs.
- They will be 'interviewed', usually by the person overseeing the group, as to their suitability and sense of 'calling' (which will often be very informal).
- They will be invited to help, but only under the close supervision of an established leader, all under the watchful eye of the person who oversees the group, until all the appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out and completed.
- The Safeguarding Officer will inform the person who oversees the group as soon as all those checks have been successfully completed, when (if appropriate) any 'restrictions' will be lifted.

### Appendix 3

It takes a lot of courage for a child to tell someone about abuse.  
So, here are some good guidelines in case you find yourself in that position:

#### Do

- Remain calm, accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully, without interrupting.
- Acknowledge their courage and reassure them that they are right to tell. Let them know that you will do everything you can to help.
- Explain that you will need to share what they have told you, and what may happen as a result.
- Make a note of what was said using the child's actual words wherever possible.

#### Don't

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

If you do find yourself in this kind of situation, after the initial conversation with the child or young person, you will need to begin the process outlined in the flow chart on the next page.

## Appendix 4 Flow Chart – Responding Promptly to Every Safeguarding Concern or Allegation

