

All parishes have a responsibility to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. It is therefore recommended that procedures on the safe recruitment of paid workers and volunteers should be incorporated into the Parish Safeguarding Policy Template (See Section 4).

This section refers to both paid workers and volunteers, yet the majority of work that is undertaken within the church is conducted by those who are not paid. Because of this, parishes may feel uneasy about recruiting people formally for voluntary roles. However, having a screening process in place for both paid workers and volunteers is important for the following reasons:

- Parishes have a duty of care to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults, whose needs must come first
- A thorough and open process for recruiting and appointing workers may in itself act as a deterrent to potential abusers
- It will ensure that the needs of the parish are matched to the needs and skills of the worker, as it is counter-productive to both the worker/volunteer and the church to place someone in a position that is inappropriate for them.

For some parish roles, selection can be informal, focussing on an introductory chat about the work and the potential worker's interests, however if the role has some degree of responsibility, i.e. supervising other people, working with or having any contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, or involves dealing with money, the selection procedures must be more formal. Parishes are recommended to follow the Parish Recruitment Flowchart provided at the end of this section.

Job Description

This is helpful in defining the role, and what is expected of the post-holder. It may be useful to consult beforehand with those who have done the job in the past, or the group they will be working with. A typical role description should include:

- Job title
- Responsible for/to (the individual should know to whom they are accountable and who will supervise them in their work)
- Main duties
- Contacts
- Time commitment
- Skills Required
- Terms and Conditions (Paid Workers only).

Seeking Possible Applicants

The most common source of finding suitable applicants for a vacancy is through advertising. This can be through a job advert in a newspaper or parish magazine, or through verbally communicating the post through current members of the church congregation.

Whichever process you decide upon, the single most important responsibility to be undertaken is to ensure that anyone placed in a position of trust within the Church, whether paid or otherwise, and which gives them direct access to children or vulnerable adults, is selected with the utmost care. Reliance on a practice of untested trust is no longer acceptable and parishes are expected to adhere to the highest standards of best practice, whilst continuing to foster a spirit of trust and openness that reflects the values of the Church.

The person responsible for the recruitment process must ensure that any role which requires a CRB Disclosure and/or ISA Registration (from July 2010) states this in the written advertisement.

If the post is not advertised, anyone who expresses an interest in the role should be informed as soon as possible that their appointment is conditional upon them registering with the ISA Scheme and completing an Enhanced CRB Disclosure.

All applicants must also complete a Volunteer Application Form and be provided with a copy of the Diocesan policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders prior to their interview (See Section 4).

Interview

The interview is an opportunity for both the interviewer and the applicant to find out more about each other and the role to be filled. The meeting can be informal and relaxed, but should cover the following topics:

- The role/task description and your expectations of the job holder
- The applicant's relevant skills, interests and experience
- The applicant's motivations for applying for the role
- The applicant's awareness and understanding of safeguards in working with children and/or vulnerable adults
- The applicant's willingness to undertake training or be supported in the work.

Recruitment Documentation

If at this stage you wish to appoint the applicant to a paid or voluntary role, you must ensure that they complete the following documents **BEFORE** they start.

- Confidential Declaration Form (See Section 4)
- CRB/ISA Application Form
- Details of two referees. If the person has a current position working (or volunteering) with children and/or vulnerable adults, one reference should be from that employer. If the person attends or has attended another church within the last five years, you should ask for a reference from their minister. References from relatives or people under the age of 18 are not acceptable, and those appointing are responsible for satisfying themselves that references are authentic. An example of a Reference Request Form can be found at Section 4.

Vetting and Barring Scheme

Launched on 12th October 2009, the Vetting and Barring Scheme is designed to improve the safety of children and vulnerable adults, ensuring that the risk of harm to them is avoided by ensuring that no-one who is unsuitable to work with them is able to do so.

It is therefore a criminal offence to knowingly employ someone who is barred from working with children and/or vulnerable adults, and for barred individuals to seek or undertake work with vulnerable groups.

From July 2010, it will become a legal requirement for all new entrants to work with children and/or vulnerable adults, to be registered with the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority), and it will be illegal to employ someone who is not registered.

All applications will continue to be processed through the Diocesan Safeguarding Office in Portsmouth, in the same way as the CRB Scheme.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Checks

A Disclosure is a document that contains details of an individual's criminal record (including convictions, reprimands, warnings and cautions) held on the Police National Computer (PNC). An Enhanced CRB Disclosure may also reveal other non-conviction information held on local police records.

A Disclosure enables organisations to make informed recruitment decisions (in accordance with the CRB Code of Practice and the Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders Act) to ensure that those working with children and/or vulnerable adults are suitable to carry out their duties without presenting a risk.

The CRB only release Disclosure information to Registered Bodies or Umbrella Bodies. All CRB applications must be countersigned by a Registered or Umbrella Body before they are sent to the CRB.

The Portsmouth Diocese is an Umbrella Body, as we have registered with the CRB, and are able to carry out Disclosure checks on behalf of other organisations that are not registered with the CRB. As well as acting for Diocesan posts, we act as an Umbrella Body for parishes who have signed an agreement agreeing to abide by the relevant policies and guidelines. This means that the Diocesan Office can relieve parishes of much of the expense and bureaucracy by processing applications on their behalf.

The CRB makes a charge for each Disclosure carried out for a paid employee, payable by the parish making the appointment. Voluntary worker applications are free of charge.

The difference between ISA Registration and a CRB Check

Once the Vetting and Barring Scheme is fully operational, individuals will be able to apply for ISA registration and a CRB disclosure.

Parishes should be aware that the ISA and the CRB offer different but complementary safeguards when recruiting people to work with vulnerable groups.

An ISA Check will only inform whether the person registered is considered safe to work with children or vulnerable adults and that they are not on a barred list.

An Enhanced CRB Check reveals the person's full criminal record and all relevant information held locally by the police.

In view of this, whilst a person can be registered with the ISA as someone who is suitable to work with children and/or vulnerable adults, they could still have a criminal record which might make them an unsuitable candidate for the particular role.

Examples could include a driver of a minibus transporting children to and from activities. Without a CRB check you would not know if this person had a conviction for dangerous driving, or a Youth Leader who is registered to work with children but has a recent serious drug conviction which does not alter their ISA status. Without a CRB check, you would not know about this conviction.

In view of this, we recommend that all those who work with children and vulnerable adults and who are required to have a CRB check must also register with the ISA.

It is very important to ensure that anyone placed in a position of trust within the Church, whether paid or otherwise, which gives them direct access to children or vulnerable adults is selected with the utmost care. The use of CRB/ISA checks within the Church should not replace any normal recruitment practices such as gathering of personal details, face-to-face interview and the taking up of references nor should it be seen as a substitute for carrying out these pre-appointment checks.

Who needs to be Checked?

The key criterion for assessing the eligibility for police checks is contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, and the nature of this contact is of major importance.

It is the responsibility of the Parish Safeguarding Representative in conjunction with the PCC to identify which jobs are eligible for checks. A Disclosure can only be requested in respect of positions and professions which fall within the Exceptions Order under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

If a PCC knowingly allows someone to work with vulnerable groups when that person is barred from doing so, or allows someone to engage in regulated activity without first undertaking the necessary vetting checks, then this will constitute a criminal offence. *Any individual working in a regulated activity will need to be checked.*

A regulated activity is any activity of a specified nature (teaching, training, care,

supervision, advice, treatment and transportation), that involves contact with children or vulnerable adults frequently, intensively and/or overnight in a specified place (schools, children's homes, hospitals, juvenile detention facilities, adult care homes). It is also any activity that involves people in certain *defined positions* of responsibility (school governor, trustee, etc.).

The following is a list of parish roles that will normally be subject to a CRB check and ISA registration. It is not an exclusive list. If a parish is in doubt as to whether a role meets the eligibility criteria, they should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team for advice.

- All Clergy, Ordinands and Readers (administered by the Bishops Office)
- Youth Club Leaders and helpers
- Children's Leaders and helpers
- Sunday School Teachers and helpers
- Head Server/Sacristan or Leader of serving team, if servers include children under the age of 18 years
- All Tower Captains, Ringing Masters and Adult ringers who train/teach children under the age of 18 years
- Musical Director, Organist, Choir leader where the choir or musical group includes children under the age of 18 years
- PCC approved drivers for PCC sponsored arrangements for children, young people and/or vulnerable adults
- PCC approved Home Visitors and Luncheon Club/Specialist Club Leaders and helpers for schemes that are wholly or mainly for vulnerable adults.

For those positions that are not highlighted above, and who are employed by or undertake voluntary work with the Diocese, Cathedral or a Parish and who come into regular contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults as part of their duties, it is recommended that the Parish Safeguarding Representative in liaison with the PCC and Incumbent uses the *CRB Risk Assessment Flowchart* at the end of this section to determine whether these roles, and all other parish positions require checking. All of these posts should then be recorded in the Parish Safeguarding Policy Template (*See Section 4*).

Failure on the part of the applicant to supply information requested or to agree to undertake a relevant check will result in the individual not being employed or allowed to be involved in work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Helpers Aged Under 18 years

Under the Children Act 1989 young people do not become adults until their 18th birthday, therefore it is the Diocesan policy that young persons under the age of 18 should not be asked to take formal responsibility for work with children and or vulnerable adults, and they should always be supervised and supported by an adult. When they reach the age of 18 and take on a leadership role or move into a position which has significant or unsupervised contact with children, young people, and/or vulnerable adults, they will be required to be checked at this time.

2A Disclosure Application Process

All Disclosure applications must be completed, signed and dated by the applicant. The CRB provide guidance notes for applicants on the correct completion of the form, and these can be requested from the Diocesan Safeguarding Office. The completed form should be presented to the Local Parish Safeguarding Representative/Parish ID Validator who must ensure that the information provided by the applicant is checked, and their identity confirmed through the examination of a range of documents that the applicant must provide.

All Disclosure forms must then be sent to the Safeguarding Administrator at the Portsmouth Diocesan offices for further checking, completion and signature and entry onto the database prior to submission to the CRB.

Once the Disclosure Application is processed by the CRB, a copy of the Disclosure is sent to the applicant directly from the CRB and a copy of also sent to the Safeguarding Administrator.

If the Disclosure is negative (clear), the Safeguarding Administrator will then send the Incumbent of the parish who appointed the applicant, a letter confirming the absence of a concern. The parish is not sent a copy of the Disclosure, and this is stored in the Safeguarding office safe and destroyed after six months.

Positive Disclosures and/or Confidential Declaration Forms

A proportion of the population have convictions for offences. These may be old, minor and unrelated to the safety of children and/or vulnerable adults, or they may be more serious. The policy of the Diocese is that where the contents of a Confidential Declaration Form and/or Disclosure indicate previous convictions or concerns, this will be assessed in relation to the tasks he or she will be required to perform and the circumstances in which the work will be undertaken. The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will discuss the situation with the appropriate Incumbent, in complete confidentiality.

Where the contents of a Disclosure indicate that the person may be unsuitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, and the individual concerned is an existing post-holder or volunteer, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will take appropriate action in consultation with the Incumbent to deal with any perceived immediate risk.

The final decision about whether to make or continue with the appointment, or not, remains with the Parish PCC, as the appointing body. If the decision is not to appoint or to discontinue employment, the incumbent will need to discuss this with the applicant, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser will offer assistance with this process, and advice or support will also be available from the Archdeacon if necessary. If an incumbent, in consultation with the PCC, decides to disregard the advice of the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, they may be putting at risk the parish insurance cover. They may also be committing a criminal offence.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The Diocese of Portsmouth complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly, and not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

The Diocese is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

Parishes are encouraged to adopt the Diocesan Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders and ensure it is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. The Diocesan Policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders is available at Section 4. The CRB Code of practice can be downloaded from their website: www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk

Secure Storage of Disclosure Information

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the Diocese of Portsmouth complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure Information. The Diocese also complies fully with its obligation under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling use, storage and disposal of Disclosure information and has a written policy on these matters, available on request.

Renewal of CRB Disclosures

CRB Disclosures are only valid up to the date on which they were issued. In view of this, you may choose to ask those who have regular contact with children and vulnerable adults to complete Confidential Declaration Forms at regular intervals, e.g. every two years. Currently, it is Diocesan policy that CRB applications are renewed after five years.

Appointing Employees and Volunteers

The applicant should NOT undertake work with children, young people or vulnerable adults until references have been received and the appropriate vetting checks have been made.

A probationary period for all people appointed to work with children and vulnerable adults contributes to vigilance. It also provides an opportunity for leaders to ensure the person's capability of undertaking the role and is working in accordance with the guidelines and principles for safeguarding.

A suitable probationary period would be six months, and more frequent supervision or a higher level of support should take place during the probationary period.

Written Agreements for Paid Workers and/or Volunteers

For paid workers, you should confirm the appointment in writing, and issue a contract of employment.

For voluntary workers, you should provide them with a Written Volunteer Agreement (See Section 4).

Retention of Records

As a general guideline:

- Personnel records relating to the period when someone was employed by the church should be kept for 6 years after the employment has ceased.
- Recruitment papers (application form, references, etc.) should be kept for a period of one year.
- Confidential Declaration Forms and correspondence relating to CRB Disclosures should be kept indefinitely.

For more information in respect of this, please refer to *Section 2F, Retention and Storage of Records and Data*.

Support, Supervision and Training

Children, young people and vulnerable adults are best protected when the people who are working with them do not feel isolated. The PCC, with the Incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Representative, should make sure that workers and volunteers have the opportunity to meet together regularly, to ensure a common approach, sharing concerns and identifying matters which need clarification or guidance.

It is also important to have in place a system of supervision and appraisal that checks on roles and relationships, observes practices, and reviews procedures regularly.

Appropriate induction and training in child-protection and safeguarding awareness, best practice, policy and procedures must be made available to all those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser is responsible for all Diocesan training in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The Parish Safeguarding Representative, with their incumbents, carry responsibility for ensuring that they, as well as parish workers with children and vulnerable adults receive training and support. Therefore, it is important that they attend Diocesan safeguarding training at least once every three years, in order to keep up to date with changes in legislation and Diocesan policy and practice.

Parishes should ensure that they have taken all reasonable steps to safeguard their children, young people and vulnerable adults in order that they can participate fully in any pastoral, social and other PCC endorsed activities, safe from harm and abuse.

Children and Young People

The following procedures apply whenever children and young people under the age of 18 take part in church organised events and activities. These include:

- One-off events or regular meetings specifically for children and young people in the parish, i.e. Sunday School, Youth Group, Mother and Toddler, etc.
- Day trips or outings which are non-residential
- Residential Events
- Any mixed aged activities or events including choir practice, bell-ringing, music groups, etc.

Leadership

- One person must be designated Group Leader for every activity or event.
- Young people under 18 years are welcome and encouraged to assist with events and activities, however, they must not be left in charge of a group of children of any age, and should always be supervised by an adult leader, who is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed.
- For Group Leaders aged 18—21 years we recommend that there is at least a four year age gap between them and the children they are in charge of.
- Parents and carers can assist with occasional activities such as holiday workshops, but they must always be supervised, and be responsible to an appointed leader. If they become part of a regular rota, they must be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process (*See Section 2A Recruitment and Selection*).

Supervision

It is important to ensure that, in planning and running activities and events for children and young people, consideration is given to providing an appropriate staffing/supervision ratio of adults to participants. This will minimise any risks to children, enhance the benefits they draw from the activity or event, reassure carers, and provide some protection to those responsible for providing the activity, should concerns or incidents arise.

In the planning of activities, key factors to consider when implementing appropriate supervision levels include:

- Age and gender of children/young people
- Children with special needs
- Nature of the activity and venue

2B Supervision Ratios

The minimum required staffing levels for children's groups are given below. At all times there must always be a minimum of two adults present, and one of these must be the designated Group Leader. It is also recommended that a gender balance is maintained where possible. It should be noted that any young helper under the age of 18 should not be included in these supervision ratios (*See 2A Recruitment and Selection for more information on Helpers Aged Under 18 years*).

A risk assessment may well indicate the need for an enhanced level of supervision and staffing for a particular activity, however the following guidelines are considered a minimum requirement for any activity:

Supervising Adults (one must be Leader)	Age of children	Maximum number of children	Ratio
2 (minimum)	0-2 years	6	1:3
2 (minimum)	2-3 years	8	1:4
2 (minimum)	3-8 years	16	1:8
2 (minimum)	Over 8 years	20	1:10

Administration

For all church activities and events, the person with parental responsibility for each child or young person under 18 will be required to complete and sign the following documentation before their child/ren take part:

- Registration Record for Activities Form
- Photo Consent Form

Before every outing, day trip or residential events, parents/carers must give their further written consent, and under no circumstances should a child be included in the pursuit without first obtaining written permission from their parent/carer. The Parent Consent and Medical Information Form can be found at Section 4.

All of these forms should be stored in a confidential place, but always be available for the Group leader/s of the activity to refer to if necessary.

Group Leaders should also keep an *attendance register* of every child and adult attending each activity, event, or outing.

The Parish Safeguarding Representative should have an up-date list of all paid and voluntary workers in the church who have regular, direct contact with children and ensure that the full recruitment procedures have been followed for each of them.

Ofsted Registration

Churches who provide child care on their premises are classed as 'childcare providers on non-domestic premises' and may be required to register to care for children with Ofsted. However, there are a series of exemptions which may cover the activities of church-run holiday and after-school clubs for children.

Registration is the responsibility of the organisation providing the child care. This may be the church or an individual or organisation who is a tenant of the church. The process can take up to six months after submission of the application, and will involve checks and reference requests, and a visit to the premises. There is also a cost for registration. For further information you should visit www.ofsted.gov.uk or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

A Fact Sheet on Childcare, out-of-school clubs and Registration is provided at the end of this section.

Running Activities and Events

The Group Leader should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event or activity, and should ensure that:

- All adult helpers have been adequately vetted, and recruited in accordance with the Recruitment procedures in Section 2A
- The activity, event and transport arrangements are covered by insurance. This should include public liability
- The appropriate parental approval and consent has been obtained and all relevant documentation has been completed
- Parents and carers have been clearly informed of the arrangements of the activity/event in order that children can be collected
- The appropriate adult/child ratios are in place, so that children are adequately supervised at all times
- There is a phone available for emergencies; this could be a mobile phone
- All adults are aware of the health and safety issues relating to the activity/event, including procedures for first aid and fire.

Mixed Age Groups

One of the positive things that the church can offer is a place where young and old, children and adults can be together including worship and learning about the faith together. Children have the opportunity to get to know adults in a shared activity, i.e. singing, making music, serving, bell ringing, study groups, etc.

When these activities include children without their parents or carers being present, it is the responsibility of the PCC to make sure that these children and young people are cared for, within health, safety and safeguarding guidelines. Experience has shown that mixed age groups are vulnerable to infiltration by people seeking to harm children. The opportunity for regular informal contact can enable an offender or potential offender to gain the trust of a child or young person enabling them to move on to offend. The following good practice should be followed to ensure that children and young people are suitably protected when involved in a mixed age group activity:

- Mixed age activities must have designated leaders who have been appointed in accordance with the recruitment procedures in Section 2A
- Organists, Choir Leaders, Tower Captains and bell ringing trainers should always be appointed as children's leaders if there are or likely to be children

- for whom they are responsible
- There must always be a minimum of two designated children's leaders/ chaperones present when children or young people are being taught, or during rehearsals
- Parents must sign a consent form which sets out the arrangements for the activity
- Safety must be the top priority in the bell tower or organ loft. Those responsible should be aware of the insurance requirements for the activity.

Late Collection of Children

Parents/carers should be made aware that it is not the church's responsibility to transport children home on behalf of parents who have been delayed. It is recommended that parents are provided with a staff/volunteer contact number in order that they can phone if there is a likelihood of a late collection. In cases of late collection, the Group Leader should:

- Attempt to contact the child's parent/carer on the contact number/s provided in the Registration/Consent Form
- Use the emergency contact name/number if necessary
- Wait with the child/young person, with other staff/volunteers or parents present if at all possible.
- NOT take the child home or to any other location without the permission of the parent or carer
- NOT send the child home with another person without the permission of the parent or carer.

There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency or where not giving a lift may place a child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to the Parish Safeguarding Representative and parent/carer. If the child appears to have been abandoned, statutory services must be contacted.

Unaccompanied Children

Children may begin attending church services or church activities without their parents' or carers' knowledge. In this event, the following is recommended:-

- Welcome the child/ren and try and establish whether their parents are aware of where they are
- Depending on the age and competence of the child, ring the parents, or ask the young person to ring, to gain their consent to allow the child to remain
- Complete a Registration Form as far as possible
- Make sure an adult recruited for work with children takes care of the child – this is particularly important during public worship where unknown adults may attend and attempt to befriend the child
- Give the child written information about the church service or activity to take home with a Registration Form

- If the child come regularly, endeavour to establish contact with the parents or carers
- Never take the child on outings or transport them without their parents/carers permission.

Use of Home Venues

No child or young person should be invited into the home of an adult who works or volunteers with them unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and the PCC.

It is advisable that activities for children and young people take place on church premises. In the event of leaders using their own homes for church activities, any activity which includes children under the age of 18, where their parents are not present, is subject to the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Furthermore:

- Rooms should be checked for physical hazards and be hygienic
- Bedrooms should not be used in any circumstances
- Two adults (preferably unrelated) should be present from before the first child arrives until after the last one leaves.

Holidays, Residential Trips and Overnight Events

No child under the age of 8 years can be taken away on Residential activities without his or her parent or guardian.

A detailed description of the holiday or trip should be presented to the PCC so that permission may be given, and the event covered by parish insurance.

The Group Leader is responsible for preparing the programme of activities, and should have researched or visited the venue in advance to check for suitability, including insurance, food and hygiene, first aid, accommodation and fire precautions. Written confirmation of the premises Employers and Public Liability insurances should also be obtained.

In addition, a risk assessment (*See Section 2C Health and Safety*) for all activities connected with the event should be carried out in advance, and on arrival to ensure that the environment is safe for all parties present. There must also be a suitably qualified first-aider on site at all times.

Both the Group Leader and a designated person 'at home' must have a list of all the children and adults present, including emergency contact details. The Group Leader must report all serious incidents to the designated person 'at home' who can act as the intermediary between the group, the church and parents.

The Group Leader should hold a pre-event meeting with parents/carers in order that they have full information about the trip before giving consent.

Accommodation

- Boys and girls must have separate sleeping and washing facilities which are private to them

- Mixed groups must have adults of both genders involved.
- Adults should have separate accommodation but in close proximity to the children/young people.
- Children must not be left alone overnight.
- There should be a rota of awake adults during the night at least until all the young people have settled down.

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Vulnerable Adults

The following guidelines apply whenever adults who may be vulnerable take part in church organised events and activities. These include:

- During worship
- Day trips or outings which are non-residential
- Holidays and Residential Events
- Home or Pastoral Visiting/Home Communion

Leadership and Supervision

One person must be designated Group Leader for every activity or event. It is the Group Leader's responsibility to clarify with the worker or volunteer their roles and responsibilities regarding their relationships with vulnerable adults with whom they may be in contact. Regular supervision for staff and volunteers will ensure their work is monitored and also offers the opportunity for them to raise any issues.

For specific activities or groups for vulnerable adults, a minimum of two adults must always be present, and one of these should be the designated Group Leader, however a risk assessment may well indicate the need for an enhanced level of supervision and staffing for a particular activity.

All regular leaders and helpers of activities with vulnerable adults should be recruited according to *Section 2A Safe Recruitment and Selection*, including taking up references and obtaining a CRB/ISA Check.

Running Activities and Events

Parishes are encouraged to create an environment where all vulnerable adults are encouraged to participate and contribute. The Group Leader should have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the event or activity, and should ensure that:

- The activity, event and transport arrangements are covered by insurance. This should include public liability
- The vulnerable adults and/or their carers are consulted in order to identify their specific needs, and how these can best be met
- Vulnerable adults are informed about the aims and objectives of any trips or activities and the dates, duration and details of venue and travel arrangements

Vulnerable adults are given choices about where they sit, and what activities they participate in, and offered assistance in such a way as to maximise their

- independence
- Vulnerable adults are given a chance to do things that other people might take for granted
- Vulnerable adults are given the best quality of support and protection
- The needs of carers are taken into consideration, and they are offered breaks and practical assistance if feasible.

Holidays, Residential Trips and Overnight Events

There should be sufficient staff to make the holiday safe and enjoyable, and always a minimum of two leaders on the trip. Careful consideration should be given to:

- The appropriateness of the venue/accommodation
- Length of journey and mode of transport
- Proximity to any necessary support facilities (i.e. hospitals, doctors, etc.)

Advice should be sought if a person has complex health needs, and agreements made in advance for administering medication and care plans for the duration of the holiday.

Home Visiting (including Residential homes)

There are some church activities where home visits are an integral part of the work. In these circumstances it is essential that the following safeguards are put in place to protect both the vulnerable adult and the worker/volunteer.

Wherever possible, workers should avoid lone working with a vulnerable adult.

- A risk assessment should be undertaken before visiting someone in their own home and if there are any concerns or risks, careful consideration should be given as to whether the visit is absolutely necessary, and whether another adult should be present
- The worker/volunteer should always carry a mobile phone on a home visit, and ensure that someone else within the activity/group knows about the arrangement, including times and location
- Don't call unannounced – call by arrangement, if appropriate telephoning the person just before you go
- Carry identification, or a note of introduction from your church at all times
- Rather than give out personal information, give those you visit a central contact point within the church
- Be clear about boundaries – keep to agreed limits on how much time you will spend with someone and how often you visit
- Be clear about what behaviour is acceptable – and what is not – from the vulnerable adult
- In the event of any problems, seek advice from the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

When churchwardens and others are undertaking annual health, safety and fire inspections of the premises, these inspections should also take account of health and safety issues which relate specifically to children and vulnerable adults. The Group Leader is responsible for ensuring that:

- The premises are appropriate for the intended activity, and that a risk assessment has been carried out
- A first kit and accident book is available on the premises
- Children and young people are briefed at the start of the event/activity and wherever possible involved in setting their own general behavioural guidelines or establishing a code of conduct for their behaviour
- Fire evacuation procedures are explained
- Transport and collection arrangements agreed with parents/carers on the registration record are adhered to
- No unauthorised person can gain access to the activity or event
- The appropriate ratio of adult supervisors to children is in place.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting staff, volunteers, children and vulnerable adults from harm, as well as complying with the law. It will help to focus on the risks that potentially could cause real harm. In many instances, straight forward measures can readily control risks, e.g. ensuring spillages are cleaned up promptly so others do not slip, or obstructions are moved so people do not trip. For most situations, that means simple, cheap and effective measures to ensure everyone is protected.

By carefully examining what could cause harm to people, consideration can then be given as to whether there are enough precautions in place, or where more could be done to prevent harm. There are five steps to follow in order to assess risks:

- Identify the hazards (i.e. something that may cause harm, such as electricity, an open drawer, trailing leads, etc).
- Decide who might be harmed and how (i.e. children, vulnerable adults, those with disabilities, including people in wheelchairs, partially sighted or blind, hearing impaired, mentally ill, etc., visitors, parents/carers, members of the public).
- Evaluate the risks and decide what to do about them (i.e. can you get rid of the hazard completely, or if not how you can control it so that harm is unlikely).
- Record your findings and implement them (write down the results of your risk assessment and share them with other workers to involve them in the process).
- Review and update if necessary (this should be done before any new or one-off activities begin). An example of a Risk Assessment template can be found on the HSE website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/riskassess.htm>

First Aid

It is expected that adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults should be aware of basic first aid techniques. Although it is not a specific requirement, it is strongly recommended that at least one of the leaders in a children's or youth group or group for vulnerable adults has attended a recognised First Aid course, and holds a current first aid certificate. First Aid courses are run by St John's Ambulance and the British Red Cross, and may be offered in your area. See www.redcross.org.uk and /or www.sja.org.uk for details of first aid courses.

Where First Aid is required, wherever possible, adults should ensure that at least one other adult is aware of the action being taken. Parents and carers should always be informed when first aid has been administered, and the incident noted in the Accident Book.

If the injury appears to be serious, the emergency services should be called without delay, and parents/carers contacted promptly. Group Leaders should have available contact details for the Accident and Emergency Departments of the local hospital, and any other out of hours emergency services.

Administering Prescribed Medication

When a medical practitioner has prescribed medication that must be administered during an event or activity, key points to remember are:

Depending upon the age/understanding of the child/vulnerable adult, they should be encouraged to self administer medical or treatment, and the Group Leader has a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that the self administration is carried out safely.

Parents of children who require regular prescribed medication to be administered must complete a written request, and establish a health care plan with the Group Leader in order to ensure the safety and protection of the child and adult who is working with them.

In an emergency, adult leaders/helpers should provide a general emergency response, e.g. call an ambulance. Where an emergency response requires the immediate administration of the child or vulnerable adult's medication to prevent serious illness or injury, this should be undertaken without delay, e.g. Ventolin for an asthma attack, etc.

Fire Safety

All leaders must be familiar with the fire regulations and fire-fighting equipment for the event venue. Leaders must ensure that all children, young people and/or vulnerable adults know where the appropriate fire exits, alarms and assembly points are and are given instructions on what to do if the alarm sounds. All leaders must know the whereabouts of the nearest telephone. Children and young people must not use fire-fighting equipment.

In the event of a fire alarm being raised, evacuate the building(s) move to the

appropriate assembly points and take a roll call of those present. Contact the Fire Service, and be prepared to give details of the location; the nature of the incident, number of buildings/people involved and any potential hazards.

Group Leaders should consider undertaking regular fire drills to ensure that adult helpers, children and/or vulnerable adults become familiar with the procedures, the location of the assembly points and any action to be taken.

The PCC is responsible for ensuring that all fire fighting equipment including emergency exit lighting and smoke alarms are inspected regularly and a record kept. Any deficiencies must be repaired as soon as possible.

Transport

There are a number of issues to consider if your parish has volunteer drivers including:

- Vehicle and driver safety
- Insurance
- Mileage rates and reimbursement of expenses
- Screening and Recruitment of volunteer drivers
- Personal safety

Checks on the Driver

It is recommended that all those who drive children or vulnerable adults on church organised activities should be over 25 years and should have held a full current driving licence for over two years.

Driving licences should be checked when the volunteer is taken on, and then at regular intervals, to check that the volunteer does not have any recent or serious driving convictions. Where a driver has penalty points on their licence, the PCC will need to decide on a case by case basis whether or not it considers the driver to be suitable for a volunteer driver role.

If the volunteer is regularly driving children and/or vulnerable adults, they must complete a CRB/ISA Application.

Checks on the vehicle

A MOT certificate should be requested from the driver if the vehicle is over three years old. The vehicle needs to be safe, and this can be checked by looking to see if the vehicle has any obvious defects and asking the driver what maintenance is carried out.

Cars must have front and rear seatbelts and all passengers must wear seatbelts. Drivers are responsible for ensuring that children under 14 years of age are restrained in the correct manner. Passengers aged 14 and over are legally responsible for ensuring that they are wearing a seat belt.

Sports cars, vans and off-road vehicles could well be unsuitable for taking passengers. The vehicle must be easy for the passengers to access.

Insurance

All cars that carry children and/or vulnerable adults should be comprehensively insured, and the owner of the vehicle is responsible for arranging this.

It is recommended that vehicle owners inform their insurance company in writing that they will be driving during church activities, otherwise the policy could be invalidated, which would result in the driver being personally liable for any damage or injuries sustained in an accident.

If the driver has an accident whilst transporting children and/or vulnerable adults during church activities, and there is a problem with the insurance for that vehicle, the parish could be held responsible, whether or not it owns the vehicle involved.

Voluntary drivers should not be paid anything more than expenses actually incurred, because it could invalidate the insurance policy if the drivers are making a 'profit'.

Transporting Children/Vulnerable Adults by Mini-bus

Churches which use mini-buses, should ensure that they are fitted with seat belts, and that all children and or vulnerable adult must have a proper seat, and use the seat belts provided.

When using a mini-bus, whether owned, hired or borrowed, all drivers must hold the correct entitlement on their driving licence or take the appropriate driving test.

In most circumstances, drivers must have a 'D1' entitlement on their driving licence to drive a minibus. Those who passed their driving tests before 1997 will have received this entitlement automatically, and their minibus licence will remain valid in the UK until the licence is next renewed.

Drivers who passed their tests in or after 1997 have only received Category B entitlement (cars and vehicles for up to eight passengers). Similarly, drivers who passed their car driving test outside the UK will not have D1 on their licence. Drivers without D1 may drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats provided the following conditions are met:

- It is driven on behalf of a non-commercial body for social purposes but not for hire or reward (i.e. if passengers are contributing to the costs of running the minibus in any way)
- The driver is aged over 21 and under 70 years
- The driver has held a car licence (Category B) for over 2 years
- The driver is providing his/her service on a voluntary basis and
- The minibus maximum weight is not more than 3.5 tonnes excluding any specialist equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers.

When driving a minibus under these conditions, no payment must be received other than out of pocket expenses; no trailer can be towed; and minibuses may only be driven in the UK.

Minibus/Small Bus Permits

If you own or use a minibus and your passengers contribute to the cost of their journey in any way, you will need a Small Bus Permit, commonly known as a Section 19 Permit. In practice, most 'not for profit' minibus owners or users will need a permit.

A permit allows you to carry groups of passengers, such as members of a youth group or a group that may have vulnerable adults, and their helpers. Permits are issued to organisations that are non-profit making and concerned with either education, religion, social welfare, recreation or other activities for the benefit of the community.

Why do Parishes need a permit?

Minibus Permits, enable many 'not for profit' voluntary and community organisations to operate minibuses legally. A minibus is classed as a vehicle with between 9 and 16 passenger seats, in addition to the driver. Parishes will need a permit if passengers are contributing to the costs of running their minibus in any way. The legal term for this is operating for 'hire and reward'. A permit allows the organisation to operate for hire and reward without the need to go through the process of obtaining a PSV Operator's Licence, as required by commercial bus companies. In practice, most voluntary and community organisations and schools require a permit in order to stay within the law.

A Fact Sheet on Mini-Bus Permits for Parishes can be found at the end of this Section.

Transport Safety

Driving a minibus requires additional skills in order to be able to handle the vehicle safely; it is not simply like driving a large car. Drivers of minibuses should be encouraged to take a MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) test organised by the Community Transport Association UK which promotes a nationally recognised standard for the assessment and training of minibus drivers. Both RoSPA and the CTA run these, and it is also worth contacting your local authority to find out if they run suitable courses.

Drivers should not agree to drive unless they are fit, free from illness, medication and alcohol.

Make sure the vehicle carries a fully equipped first aid kit and fire extinguisher and the driver knows how to use them. Drivers should know and understand what to do in the case of an emergency such as illness, vehicle breakdown or accident. Before leaving on a longer trip, arrangements should be made for a telephone contact point in the home base area.

Passengers should remain seated while the vehicle is moving and seatbelts should be worn. Keep doors closed until the vehicle has been brought to a complete stop.

Always park so passengers can alight on the pavement and not on the road. Where passengers have to exit from the rear of the minibus, they should be supervised until safely away from traffic hazards.

Escorts

It should be normal practice to provide escorts for passengers with mobility problems or special needs, and it is also good practice to take additional adults to help supervise parties of children on long journeys. Where specialist equipment is fitted, such as wheelchair restraints systems and passenger lifts, it is essential that both drivers and escorts know how to use them safely.

Information and communication technology are very much part of our every day social and working lives. The majority of families now have a computer in their homes and may use the internet for research, communicating with family, friends and colleagues and learning new things. For children and young people in particular, it is the norm to communicate electronically through mobile phones, e-mail and social networking sites such as Facebook.

Although these new technologies offer a wealth of new experiences and possibilities, we also need to be aware that they can be used inappropriately by men, women and young people. Adults who work with children and young people need to know how to make the most of these technologies but at the same time ensure they are used appropriately and responsibly, in order that children are protected and the integrity of workers safeguarded.

All communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit boundaries, and only for reasons related to the work of the church, so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.

Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny, and maintain a good and open relationship with parents and carers regarding communication with their children.

Social Networking and Chat/Messenger Sites

Social networking sites e.g. Facebook, have become increasingly popular for contacting people, discussing issues and advertising up and coming events. Adults need to be especially careful about those they accept as 'friends' on sites such as these, as they are essentially designed for peer-to-peer contact.

Many youth groups use social networking sites to share information, concerns and photographs. Young people often initiate these groups and promote them with their friends.

We would generally advice that social networking sites are not used for youth work at all, as the content of the messages and photographs available to be viewed may not be suitable for young people to see, and could be damaging to the adult worker's reputation and position as role model.

However, if an account is set up in the name of the church or youth group, it is essential that an adult leader becomes a member of it and oversees the content and activity. Other considerations to be aware of include:

- Leaders should maintain boundaries between their personal and professional lives by customising their privacy settings and avoiding uploading inappropriate personal information
- Events or parties at a private address should be reserved for the group's private area
- The guidelines on photographs in this section should be followed when uploading images
- Leaders should monitor conversations, images and the behaviour of members

- of the group and challenge, educate or intervene as necessary. There should always be an adult in view of the computer/s so children are not accessing inappropriate material.

E-Mails

When using e-mail to communicate with children and young people, workers should:

- Make sure the child's parents/carers know and have agreed to this method of communication
- Use clear, appropriate language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation
- Where possible, have a separate e-mail account for church activity communications, which can be accessed by other adults in the group as required
- Never use terms such as 'love' or 'xxx' to end the message
- Not forward chain e-mails to young people
- Make sure images, if sent, are appropriate
- Make sure that any hyperlinks do not lead to inappropriate content
- Always copy another adult into the e-mails, and save copies sent.

Mobile Phones and Text Messages

Most young people have a mobile phone, and with these also come text messages. The benefit of text is the ability to communicate and respond immediately in a given situation, but it is important to ensure that the content of the message can not be misinterpreted. When using mobile phones and texting to communicate with children and young people, workers should:

- Make sure the child's parents/carers know and have agreed to this method of communication
- Where possible, use a separate mobile phone from your personal one. This way all calls and texts can be accounted for via an itemised phone bill
- Only give out to young people contact details that the church has placed within the public domain
- Use appropriate language, and do not include words or phrases which could be misinterpreted
- Never use a kiss at the end of a text or within a signature
- Always copy another adult into the text message
- Be conscious of the time when sending messages or making calls, avoid late at night or early morning.

Computers

Where children and young people have access to computers as part of church activities, the Group Leader has a duty to ensure that:

- Measures are in place to ensure that the likelihood of children accessing inappropriate materials is reduced e.g. parental controls and software to filter out internet material

- Children and young people are aware that their personal details e.g. last name, address, school, passwords, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers are private and should not be disclosed unless approval is given by the Group leader
- Children and young people know that they should never send photographs and should be wary of chat-rooms
- Children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader about any e-mails or anything on line that makes them feel uncomfortable or bothers them
- Shopping and downloading (especially music and games) should be forbidden.
- Limit the time each young person is on the computer
- Always ensure that the PCs are running up-to-date antivirus and anti Spyware software whenever connected to the internet and perform a complete Virus and Spyware scan after each session using up-to-date and licensed tools.

Guidelines for Communicating Electronically

It is advisable for parishes to adopt an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy and make it available for anyone to look at, particularly parents and carers. The ICT Policy should include guidance on both fixed and mobile internet technologies including PCs, laptops, web cams, mobile phones, etc.

Not only parents/carers but also children and young people have the right to decide whether they want a worker to have their e-mail address or mobile phone number and shouldn't be pressurised in divulging information that they would rather keep to themselves.

Children and young people can find it easier to communicate via e-mail because nobody is physically present. This means the child or young person may be more willing to share personal and sensitive information about themselves or a given situation, than they would face to face. Whilst it is entirely appropriate to offer general advice and support, it should be recognised that text messaging and e-mail is not an appropriate response to a young person in a crisis situation or at risk of harm.

If you receive an e-mail or text message from a child or young person which causes concern, you should print it out and/or retain it on file and speak to the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers as soon as possible.

Safety Tips for Children and Young People

In view of the fact that children and young people can communicate very easily, they are vulnerable to individuals who may wish to harm them. Because workers are in a position of trust, they have a unique opportunity to help children develop personal safety skills. Opportunities should be provided to discuss the technology that children are using, and to adopt good online habits using the SMART rules:

SAFE Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information to people you don't know online.

- MEETING** Meeting someone from online can be dangerous. Never arrange to meet someone unless you are sure of who they are, and you have your parent's/carers permission.
- ACCEPTING** Accepting e-mails, IM messages or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they mainly contain viruses or nasty messages.
- RELIABLE** Someone online may be lying about who they are, and information found on the internet is not always reliable.
- TELL** Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried. You can also report online abuse to the police at www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Taking and Publishing Photographs and Videos

The church is committed to providing a safe environment for children and young people. Implicit in this, is the commitment to ensure that all published images represent participants appropriately, and with due respect, and are taken and displayed in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The key concerns regarding the use of images of children and young people relate to:

- The possible identification of a child when a photograph is accompanied by personal information
- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use in child pornography websites
- The taking of inappropriate photographs or recorded images of children and young people.

Data Protection Act

Fear of breaching the provisions of the Data Protection Act should not be wrongly used to stop people taking photographs or videos which provide many with pleasure.

Photographs taken purely for personal use are exempt from the Data Protection Act. Where the Act does apply, a common sense approach suggests that if the photographer has permission to take the photograph, this will usually be enough to ensure compliance. For more information about this or any other aspect of data protection, visit www.ico.gov.uk

Consent

When planning community celebrations or public events, e.g. the crib service, a church fete, at which parents may wish to take photographs and/or professional photographers may be present, those attending should be advised of this in advance. If they decide to participate in the event, their consent to photographs being taken will be assumed.

In all other circumstances, the consent of parents and carers must be obtained before taking and using images of children and young people, and a chance to opt out must be given. Consent need not be in writing if it is not proposed to publish the pictures in any way, but if they are going to be displayed on a notice board, used in a parish magazine or put on the internet, then specific consent should be obtained using the Photo Consent Form in Section 4.

Those taking photographs need to bear in mind that parents and carers may have good reasons for refusing consent, e.g. some children may have been involved in legal disputes, local authority care, or adoption, and their whereabouts may not be widely known. Parents and carers of the affected children will know this and will appropriately withhold consent without giving the reason.

Vulnerable Adults

For vulnerable adults, images should only be used for a purpose which is explained to them, and to which they give their recorded and preferably signed consent, i.e. they understand and agree. They should see the photograph before being asked to give consent. All images must respect the dignity of the person being photographed. If the vulnerable adult cannot give informed consent, the images should not be used, unless the individual cannot be identified from the photograph.

Storage of Images

Be clear about whether the image is to be retained for further use. Store the image securely, and ideally store consent forms with the image/s for future reference.

Good Practice Guidelines

- Pictures of children or vulnerable adults should not be taken without another adult present.
- The photograph/video should focus on the activity rather than a particular child, avoiding full face and body shots and taking into consideration the age of the children involved. All children and young people featured in photos or recordings must be appropriately dressed.
- Photographs submitted for publication where young people and/or vulnerable adults are recognisable and there is insufficient evidence that their consent has been obtained should not be published. Permission should not be assumed, even if images have been submitted by parishes for publication.
- If at a church-related event, children or vulnerable adults may use cameras to take photos of each other, or if parents or carers take photos of children other than their own, they should be advised that these can be used for personal use only, and should not be displayed in any publicly accessible space, including on internet or web-based communication channels such as Facebook.

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

Newspapers and other print media are bound by the Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice. Legitimate journalism is a 'special purpose' under the Data Protection Act which exempts it from the requirement of security, although there are numerous restrictions on photographing children.

If you are approached by a reporter, photographer or film-crew who want to use images of children from your parish or school, do emphasize that your policy is to obtain permission from the parents involved, and refer them to the Diocesan Communications Adviser.

The church aims to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and vulnerable adults, and requires all clergy and lay people to maintain the highest professional standards in their work and relationships with them.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that the following information cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered in this section, or which may contravene the guidance given. It is expected in these circumstances that adults will always advise their Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Representative of the justification for any such action taken, or seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Propriety and Behaviour

All adults working with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard their welfare and best interests. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of all those they come into contact with.

There may be times when an adult's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny because this may compromise their position within the church or indicate an unsuitability to work with children or vulnerable adults. Examples may include misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence. Adults in contact with children or vulnerable adults should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviour in places other than the church setting.

Physical Contact

A 'no touch' approach is both inappropriate and impractical, as physical contact is needed as part of expression and understanding of human relationships. However, when physical contact is made with children and/or vulnerable adults, this should never be abusive or intrusive, and the following good practice guidelines should be followed:-

- Not all children and young people feel comfortable about physical contact, and adults should therefore not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to use touch as a means of communication. All physical contact should be related to the child's or vulnerable adult's needs, not the adult worker's
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
- Touch should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child/vulnerable adult rather than the worker
- Children, young people and vulnerable adults are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity

- Children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they may need medical attention
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream, etc.), encourage the child and/or vulnerable adult to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the child's/vulnerable adult's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary
- If an activity, for example bell-ringing, requires physical contact make sure that the young person and/or vulnerable adult and their parent/carer are aware of this and its nature
- Some role responsibilities necessitate intimate physical contact with children, for example assisting with toileting. All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of a physical or intimate nature is required and depending on their abilities, age and maturity should be encouraged to act as independently as possible. When taking young children to the toilet, make sure another adult is informed, and that the same adult is not always undertaking the toilet trips
- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or vulnerable adult who is harming him/herself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parent/carer as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Parish Safeguarding Representative
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued
- Those working with children and vulnerable adults must always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny. Concerns about abuse should always be reported.

Where a child or vulnerable adult seeks or initiates inappropriate physical contact with an adult, the situation should be handled sensitively and care taken to ensure that contact is not exploited in any way. In these situations, it is the responsibility of the adult to deter the child or vulnerable adult and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with the Parish Safeguarding Representative.

Discipline

Although everyone has different thresholds of what counts as unacceptable behaviour, the following behaviours are never acceptable and should always be challenged and addressed, whatever a person's age, ability or mental health:

- abusive or threatening behaviour
- misuse of drugs or alcohol on church premises
- harassment and/or bullying.

Leaders should set ground rules for participating in activities, but avoid imposing too many rules.

Before making a rule, ask whether it is necessary, i.e. does it protect a child or vulnerable adult's health and safety? Too many rules may be difficult to enforce.

Leaders should involve children and young people in devising a written code of conduct for their behaviour. This will make the rules clear and easily understood and children are less likely to break rules that they have helped to establish.

Act quickly when a child or vulnerable adult presents challenging behaviour. Do not let a problem build up over time.

If an individual has a particular disability or mental health issue, leaders and helpers should try to gain a better understanding of the behaviour through working with and/or talking to the parent or carer.

Infatuations

Occasionally, a child or young person may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. These adults should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. They should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach.

An adult who becomes aware that a child or young person is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with their Incumbent or Parish Safeguarding Representative so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

Drugs and Alcohol Use and Children and Young People

The possession or use of illegal/unauthorised drugs during church activities is unacceptable, and should be dealt with firmly, promptly and fairly. Also, the use of legal drugs such as medicines needs to be managed appropriately.

Information about acceptable behaviour with regards to drugs and alcohol should be provided to children and young people when behavioural guidelines are being drawn up for the church event and/or activity. This should include possible responses to drug/alcohol related incidents and that parents and carers will be informed of any such incident/s. In certain circumstances the police may also be informed.

An incident is likely to involve suspicions, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving unauthorised drugs and/or alcohol. This may include:

- Drugs/Alcohol found on church premises/during church activities
- A child or young person is found in possession of drugs or alcohol
- A child or young person is found to be a recognised source of supply of drugs on church premises/during church activities
- A child or young person is thought to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- A child or young person discloses that they are misusing drugs/alcohol

Dealing with Medical Emergencies

In any incident involving drugs and/or alcohol, the church must place the utmost priority on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning medical help before addressing further issues. If the Group Leader is in doubt they should seek medical assistance immediately. Unless they are unconscious, a child or young person may be intoxicated but no medical emergency may exist, and it is recommended that arrangements are made with a parent/carer for the child or young person to be collected or escorted home.

Confiscation and Disposal of Illegal Drugs

The Group Leader should take temporary possession of any substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of protecting the child or young person from harm, and to prevent an offence being committed in relation to that drug. The substances should be stored securely, and arrangements made for its disposal without delay. An adult witness should be present when confiscations occur and a record should be kept of their details. The Police may also need to be informed.

The Group Leader should not attempt to analyse or taste unknown or confiscated substances. If requested, the police can advise on analysis, formal identification and disposal of illegal drugs.

Confiscation of Other Unauthorised Drugs

Parents and carers should always be informed of any incident where unauthorised drugs such as alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (such as lighter fuel, glue or aerosols), and medicines have been confiscated, and given the opportunity to collect anything that has been confiscated.

Investigation and Evaluation

The Group Leader should judge the nature and seriousness of each incident, and this may involve informing and consulting others as necessary e.g. the Police. Factors that should be taken in consideration include:

- Is the drug legal or illegal?
- Is this a first or subsequent incident?
- What quantity of the drug was involved?
- Does the child or young person admit or deny allegations?

Options available to the Group Leader when responding to the needs of those involved in a drugs related incident may include:

- Re-emphasis on behavioural guidelines
- Drug education
- Closer supervision
- Referral to an external agency (in liaison with parent/carer)
- Removal from the event/activity
- Permanent exclusion

2E Confidentiality

The Group Leader and other leaders/helpers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality to a child or young person who is involved in a drug-related incident or discloses drug use. Advice should be sought from the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers in such cases.

Incident Recording

The Group Leader should make a full record of every drugs related incident in a specific incident book. This should be stored securely.

In any incident involving drugs, the Group Leader must inform the child or young person's parent/carer and explain how the incident was managed and agree a way forward.

Use of Alcohol at Church Events

If alcohol is to be sold, it is a legal requirement to obtain a licence. For the majority of events in churches and church halls, a temporary event notice may be appropriate and these are available from licensing authorities such as district councils.

Where a licence is granted, alcohol must not be sold to a person who is or appears to be under the age of 18 years. The exception to this is where the young person is aged 16 or 17, and is accompanied by an adult and is having a table meal. The only alcohol they are allowed to consume is wine, beer or cider. A person under the age of 18 can work as a waiter/waitress and deliver drinks to the table.

If alcohol is provided but not sold, no licence is needed. However, it is good practice to follow the same restrictions as in the guidance for licences above.

Don't be afraid to ask for proof of identity if a person appears to be under 18. At youth groups and activity events with young people neither youth leaders nor young people should consume alcohol, as leaders should be aware that they are role models for young people at all times.

Problem Solving Procedures for Paid Workers and Volunteers

It is generally advisable to have a separate disciplinary and grievance procedure for volunteers and paid workers. There may be a concern that having a problem solving procedure may contribute to the creation of a contract with volunteers, giving them access to employment rights. This risk has to be weighed up against the difficulties that could arise from not having clear procedures in place should any problems arise, therefore, it certainly makes sense to distinguish between the grievance and disciplinary procedures that apply to paid staff when creating problem solving procedures for volunteers.

While the involvement of volunteers is, by and large, a positive experience for everyone involved, it is important to bear in mind that sometimes things can go wrong, and the volunteer may have a complaint about another volunteer, a

member of staff or the church. Similarly, the volunteer's performance may have declined, or someone may have complained about his/her work, attitude or conduct.

Having a problem solving procedure helps to create consistency, and demonstrates the parish's commitment to good practice. While employees have grievance and disciplinary policies, volunteers are not covered by employment or equal opportunities legislation. In fact, volunteers only have the same legal rights as the general public (e.g. Health and Safety and Data Protection), so having a policy in place helps to ensure that volunteers are treated fairly and are not discriminated against. All complaints should be resolved openly, fairly and quickly to:

- Protect volunteers
- Minimise any disruption to staff, church users and other volunteers
- Protect the reputation of the church

A template of a Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure is given at Section 4. This procedure is recommended to PCC's who do not have a problem solving procedure for volunteers. A separate policy for paid workers should also be introduced.

If a complaint or grievance relates to or includes an allegation that a child or vulnerable adult has been harmed or is at risk of harm, or that an adult or another child may have caused harm to a child or vulnerable adult, it must be dealt with in accordance with the Diocesan procedures for handling allegations of abuse, outlined in Section 3A.

Retention and Storage of Records and Data

In common with most organisations, parishes need to keep records in order to provide an efficient and effective service in safeguarding vulnerable people. All parishes involved in child and vulnerable adult protection work have a duty under the Data Protection Act 1998 to:

- Keep information about individuals confidential and in a secure place
- Keep information for specific legal purposes
- Ensure that the information is accurate and up-to-date
- Keep information for no longer than required for legal purposes

Records include all information held either electronically (including e-mail correspondence) or in paper format, which include 'sensitive personal data' about an individual.

What counts as 'Sensitive Personal Data'?

The following may be counted as sensitive personal data, but the list is not exhaustive;

- Personal details (home address, phone number, date of birth, health needs, including that stored on parish databases, and on registration forms for activities)
- Recruitment information for paid or voluntary workers (application forms, references)
- Criminal Record details (Confidential Declaration forms, outcomes of CRB disclosures)
- Employment information for paid and voluntary posts (contracts of employment, appraisal notes, details of disciplinary or grievance cases)
- Photos, video or audio tapes
- Consent forms relating to activities and events
- Signed agreements with offenders
- All logs of events or incidents, including entries in incident and accident books and relating to specific allegations or concerns about a child or vulnerable adult

Storage and Access

Sensitive personal data should never be left unattended where others, who have no right to access it, may find it. Paper records should be kept in a locked cabinet or room with keys available only to those who have a legitimate need to access the information. Electronic records should be password protected or encrypted.

Personal details relating to specific activities, e.g. registration and parent consent forms, should be available to leaders of the activities at all times that the activity or event is operating.

If an adult who works with children is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from the Incumbent, Parish Safeguarding Representative or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

How long should records be kept?

One of the principles of the Data Protection Act is that personal data should not be kept for longer than the purpose it is required for. Guidance outlining how long parish records should be retained can be found on the Retention of Records Fact Sheet provided at the end of this section.

The Diocese as Umbrella Body destroys CRB disclosure certificates 6 months after the date of issue. It is illegal for the parish to retain a copy of a CRB Disclosure if this is shown by the applicant.

Any records which are no longer needed to be retained should be destroyed securely, i.e. by incineration or shredding, in the presence of another adult worker. If not shredded immediately, all confidential records must be held in a secure plastic bag, labelled as confidential and locked in a cupboard or other secure place.

Normally, personal information should not be held for longer than 6 years after the subject's last contact with the parish. Exceptions to this period will occur when:

- The record needs to be retained because the information is relevant to legal action that has been started
- The record is required to be kept longer by law
- The record is archived for historical purposes (e.g. where the parish was party to legal proceedings or involved in proceedings brought by a local authority)
- The record consists of a sample of records maintained for the purposes of research
- The record relates to individuals and providers of services who have, or whose staff, have been judged unsatisfactory
- The record is held in order to provide, for the subject, aspects of his/her personal history (e.g. where a child might seek access to the file at a later date and the information would not be available elsewhere).

Right of Access to Personal Records

The law requires that any living person who is the subject of personal information held and processed by the organisation may access records containing information about him/her. The general principle is that as much information as possible should be shared with the individual. However, there are some restrictions and conditions attached to the legal right of access, for instance, in the interests of protecting the rights of other individuals to privacy and for the prevention of crime. Therefore all information must be removed which might identify a third party. In addition, information containing serious allegations, such as child abuse is entitled to be held back, if revealing the information would compromise an investigation into those allegations.

Dealing with Requests for Access

A formal request for access to personal records should be made in writing. The maximum period, in which a response must be provided to any request for

personal access to records is forty days, however, a response should be given as soon as practically possible. The forty-day period commences at the point a written request has been received, and where any further information necessary to confirm the identity of the person making the request has been obtained.

Access should normally be provided on church premises and the case-file should not be removed from its location.

If any other person is mentioned in the record and disclosure would allow him or her to be identified, the person's consent must be obtained before disclosure.

Where the church does not hold the personal information requested, the applicant should be informed of this as quickly as possible.

Any notification of refusal to disclose personal data should be given as soon as possible and in writing, even if the decision has also been given in person. The reason for the decision to refuse access should be recorded and explained to the individual unless there is good reason not to do this.

Information to be Disclosed

All data held about the individual requesting access should be disclosed, unless the data is subject to any exemptions. Information disclosed must be that held at the time the request was received. The individual has the right to comment on inaccurate data, and such information should be corrected if it is proved to be wrong. If the individual wishes to query or comment on a judgement or opinion about him/her, a written record of the query/comment should be appended to the original recordings.

In the event of a request to access personal data, which results in uncertainty about what information should be made available, you should contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers for advice.

The PCC should ensure that they have adequate insurance, including Public Liability (third party) insurance to cover all their activities both on and off site. It should also make sure that the policy includes legal protection insurance to cover legal costs resulting from allegations made against its' employees or volunteers.

Parishes may be insured through a number of different companies whose policies will be subject to various terms, conditions and exceptions. However, the majority of PCCs, parish groups, etc. will be insured with Ecclesiastical, who have made the following statement in respect of those policies they have issued for churches and halls in use for worship, youth groups and activities.

'Under such policies, Public Liability (Third Party) insurance, where in force, will operate to protect the interests of the insured where they are found to be legally liable for accidental death of, or bodily injury to, a third party or accidental loss or damage to third party property, subject to the policy terms, conditions and exceptions.

The policy will provide an indemnity to the insured if they are held legally liable for an incident leading to accidental bodily injury or illness as a result of abuse.

It is not Ecclesiastical's intention to provide an indemnity to the perpetrator of an incident of abuse'

This statement clearly only applies to policies issued by Ecclesiastical. Where parishes are insured with another company, the position of that company should be clarified.

Conditions

Insurance policies require the insured to take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring. Failure to take such precautions may prejudice the insurance arrangements in force.

In view of this, PCC's are recommended to follow the Church of England's current and ongoing guidelines in safeguarding, through adopting these procedures and ensuring that they are implemented robustly within the parish.

It is also a condition of a policy of insurance that any incident or allegation is notified to the insurer immediately. Failure to comply with this requirement may prejudice any cover provided by the policy.

Public Liability insurance indemnity limits should be kept under regular review.

Further information can be obtained from Ecclesiastical Insurance Group. Tel: 0845 777 3322. E-mail: churches@ecclesiastical.com. www.ecclesiastical.com

Hire of Church Buildings

This applies to all activities and events which take place in church buildings or grounds, which are not run directly by the PCC, and where the PCC has a formal or informal hiring agreement with the organiser.

Regular and one-off bookings are included, as are all kinds of lease, and arrangements for payment, i.e. commercial rents, subsidised rents, or those who pay no rent at all. It applies to all events and activities which may include children and vulnerable adults, as well as those which are specifically set up for children and vulnerable adults.

Examples of activities included are children's parties, Scouts and Guides, wedding receptions, and sharing agreements with independent churches.

All Bookings

Parishes need to ensure that they are complying with the requirements of their insurance company. The hiring body is required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and carries full liability insurance for this.

In any booking of church premises for which the PCC is responsible a clause should be incorporated which includes the following statement:

'You are required to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring, and that you carry full liability insurance for this. You must provide us with a copy of your policy schedule confirming the extent of your cover and that it is in force at the time of the hiring. You must also make your own arrangements for insuring any property you or your group may bring to the building'

Accidents and Incidents

In addition to the provision for making good any loss or damage to the building and contents, the agreement should draw the attention of hirers to the fact that they are primarily liable for any accident or injury which arises out of their activities whilst using the premises. A first aid kit and accident book should be located on site, and hirers are required to complete details of any accident or incident occurring during their occupation of the premises which did, or could, give rise to injury. Details should be completed as soon as possible after the accident or incident, but in any case before the premises are vacated by the hirers.

Use of Alcohol

Establish whether or not alcohol is to be sold at the event. If it is, the hirer is responsible for applying for a temporary event notice which should be seen by the PCC representative before the event. Consideration should also be given to whether conditions need to be imposed on the involvement of young people in the event, and to incorporate these into the hire agreement.

One-off Bookings

Whilst it is not reasonable to expect all helpers to obtain vetting checks for a one-off booking i.e. a children's birthday party, you may wish to advise the organiser of the numbers of helpers required for the numbers of children expected.

If the hirer has contravened the parish booking arrangements, you have the right to refuse future bookings by that person.

Most Church & Hall policies issued by Ecclesiastical include an 'Indemnity to Private Hirers' extension which covers any person organising a private, social event (i.e. a birthday party) up to three times a year against legal liability for injury, or damage. There are exclusions, notably the use of Bouncy Castles or the like, Sports Events and Fireworks. If in any doubt, check with Ecclesiastical or your insurer the extent of your cover.

Regular Bookings

The hirer should be asked to complete the Form for Regular Hirers of Church Premises (See Section 4) which can be incorporated into the standard lease or agreement.

The responsibility for implementing safeguarding procedures rests with the hiring organisation, however reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that these are being practiced. They should be provided with a copy of Section 2B Running Activities and Events and asked to comply with this.

Ensure the hirer updates their information at least annually, for instance on renewal of the let, or on invoice. Groups such as Scouts and Guides have very well developed procedures of their own, consistent with Diocesan procedures, however, it is good practice to ensure that they are checked from time to time to ensure they are following good safeguarding practices.

CRB Checks

CRB checks can only be obtained through the Diocesan Umbrella Body for paid and voluntary workers who are deployed directly by the PCC for church run activities.

For one-off bookings, hirers would not be expected to obtain CRB checks. However, If potential regular hirers of church premises require CRB checks for their leaders and helpers and do not have access to an umbrella body themselves they should contact the CRB Registration Team Tel: 0870 9090 822.

Website <http://www.crb.gov.uk>