



**The Diocese of
Oxford**

**BETTER
SAFE THAN
SORRY**

Part 2

*Induction and practice pack
for those working with
children and young people*

January 2000

FOREWORD by the BISHOPS of the DIOCESE

During the past twenty years we have become increasingly aware of how extensive is the incidence of child abuse. It is a sad reflection of today's society, but one which must be faced with honesty and courage.

Modern research has revealed that most child abuse occurs within the family circle and is committed by parents or other trusted adults. Abuse by strangers is statistically uncommon. Abuse within institutions is, however, well documented.

In the past the Church has not been exempt from this general social problem and there is irrefutable evidence that, from time to time, abuse of children has occurred within the context of church activities. Such incidents are both deeply contrary to the Gospel of Christ and bring shame upon the Christian community. They cause incalculable damage to all involved.

The Church of England, along with many other parts of the Church, has adopted a formal policy on protecting children from abuse. It forms part of the wider commitment to nurturing and supporting our children. There is no single way to prevent abuse but there are ways of making it far less likely to occur. These include:

- Guidance for parishes and for those working with children and young people in order to decrease opportunities for abuse or of accidental injury.
- Procedures to be followed in parishes when appointments are made by church wardens and the PCC, whether they are of volunteers or paid staff, clergy or lay. By careful recruitment parishes can seek to prevent known previous abusers from gaining access to children for whom they are responsible. Checking criminal records and other related databases is only part of the process. It is essential to seek further references.
- Providing information on recognising the signs of possible child abuse and on how best to respond to its discovery or disclosure.
- Procedures to follow where abuse is suspected or has been disclosed.
- Continuing support and training for those who work with children.
- Educating children and young people in the ways they can protect themselves.

In the Diocese of Oxford, we are determined both to protect our children and young people, as far as we possibly can, from harm, and to do everything in our power to promote their well being. This can be achieved only by team effort involving diocesan staff and every parish playing their part. This will also require working in partnership with parents, schools and other agencies.

This fully revised document has been built upon 6 years experience and extensive consultation and we warmly commend these Guidelines to all those who are responsible for, or who work with, children and young people. These Guidelines are based on the *Children Act 1989*, the Home Office document *Safe from Harm*, and the *House of Bishops Policy on Child Protection 1999*. As well as building on the original Better Safe than Sorry, it is hoped that these new revised Guidelines will expand the House of Bishops' policy, make it more accessible and place these important issues into the wider arena of good practice.

We acknowledge our thanks to the Diocese of London for allowing us to use substantial parts of their Child Protection Guidelines.

In the Diocese of Oxford we commit ourselves to –

- *the physical, emotional and spiritual well being of all children in our care;*
- *take seriously all allegations or suspicions of child abuse;*
- *handle allegations or suspicions of child abuse in accordance with these Guidelines.*

We are fulfilling this commitment by –

- *providing these Guidelines;*
- *reviewing them regularly in the light of usage and comments;*
- *inviting the Archdeacons at their visitations to ensure that each parish's Child Protection Policy is firmly in place;*
- *requesting our Adviser for Child Protection to monitor the effectiveness of the working of the Guidelines;*
- *as a diocese, providing information on training opportunities in child protection;*
- *reminding parishes of the availability of the Diocesan Children's and Youth Advisers, and the Bishops' Adviser for Child Protection.*

We cannot emphasise too much the importance of work with children in every parish. Although child *protection* is at the heart of these Guidelines, this must not be seen as overshadowing the importance of promoting the welfare of children in our Church communities.

To deny children the opportunity to enter into the Christian experience in a safe and loving church environment is also a form of spiritual abuse. We are deeply grateful for the generosity and commitment of so many volunteers who work throughout the Diocese so that our children and young people may grow and flourish in their Christian faith.

BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY PART TWO

CONTENTS

Area Covered		Page no
Introduction		5
Openness and Accountability	Confidentiality	6
Making Appointments	Children and Young People in the Parish Good Practice	7
What can you expected of your PCC?		8
Guidelines on Appropriate Behaviour		9
Definitions of Child Abuse		11
Pointers to the Possibility of Abuse		13
When Abuse is Disclosed or Suspected	Responding to what the child tells you	15
	Making a referral to Social Services	16
	Action by the Bishop	17
Better Safe than Sorry - Requirements under the Children Act 1989		19
First Aid equipment		21
Taking Children and Young People out	Day Trips	22
	Sleeping on Church Premises	23
	Overnight Stays and residential activities	24
	Insurance	25
Health and Safety Checklist		26
Appendices	[A] Child's Registration Record	27
	[B] Sample Consent Form	29
	[C] Good Practice Guidelines in Counselling situations	30
	[D] Sample Location Specific Plan	31
	[E} Contact Addresses	32

INTRODUCTION by the DIOCESAN TASKFORCE for CHILD PROTECTION

These Guidelines are intended to help parishes make sure that the Church is a safe place for children, young people and those who work with them. Not all the material is relevant to every circumstance, and we have laid it out to help you find what you need, whether you are a member of the PCC, or someone who works with children or young people.

This document is based on the revised House of Bishops *Policy on Child Protection 1999*, a copy of which was sent to every parish in May 1999

The House of Bishops' policy recommends that each Diocesan Bishop appoints a representative known as the Bishop's Adviser for Child Protection [BACP]. The role of the BACP is to:

- ensure good practice is observed throughout the Diocese
- advise the Bishop in individual cases
- provide advice and consultancy to parishes, clergy and diocesan staff

The BACP is not employed by the Diocese, and may not always be immediately available because of work and other commitments. He will however, make very effort to be quickly available to give advice or consultation.

Parishes should **not** refer general questions about the diocese's work with children and young people to the BACP – they belong with the full-time Diocesan Youth and Children's Adviser. However, the BACP is always willing to discuss specific child protection concerns. (*see contact details below*)

The primary contact for implementation of these Guideline remains the responsibility of the Diocesan Youth and Children's Adviser's based at Diocesan Church House, Oxford, who act as a working link with the Senior Staff of the Diocese. They are supported by the Diocesan Taskforce which comprises representatives from Parents and Children Together (PACT), the Diocesan Board for Social Responsibility, the BACP, and a member of the Senior Staff.

KEY CONTACTS

Diocesan Children's Adviser	Jenny Hyson	01865 208255 email: childofficer@oxford.anglican.org
Diocesan Youth Adviser	Andrew Gear	01865 208253 email: youthofficer@oxford.anglican.org
Bishop's Adviser on Child Protection	Hugh Valentine	020 7790 1884 or if urgent 01702 534610 email: hwjv@globalnet.co.uk

OPENNESS and ACCOUNTABILITY

Strive to create an atmosphere of openness within the parish where information and news about its work in every area is discussed and shared. In relation to work with children it is helpful to emphasise that we are *all* responsible for their care and nurture. Gossip and rumour-mongering are to be discouraged as inconsistent with the Christian life, yet 'whistle-blowing' is not. Where responsible adults know or have reasonable grounds to suspect serious misconduct or potential risk in relation to work with children, they must report it.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality, and the trust it fosters, is a vital element of many relationships and can make a great contribution to relationships between children and adults. Having a relationship with a grown-up who listens, encourages and affirms can be hugely valuable to a child. Such a relationship will allow for 'good' secrets. This truth is seriously violated when the keeping of secrets is used by an abuser. "This is our special secret and you must not tell anyone" is a phrase heard by many children caught up in abusive encounters and relationships.

Children should know that adults may be trusted not to betray confidences and the highest level of confidentiality should be maintained at all times in relationships with both adults and children. You should, however, make it clear to children and young people that there are certain circumstances - where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer harm - in which other people will need to be told so that the child can be protected.

It is important not to agree to a blanket confidentiality in any counselling or discussion. (Confidentiality in the context of sacramental confession is not covered in these guidelines). If an allegation has been made against someone it is very important that as few people as possible know whilst the allegation is being investigated. This protects both accuser and accused.

MAKING APPOINTMENTS

Children and Young People in the Parish

Church members contribute to the life of the church in different ways. In today's busy world it is often difficult for people to take on new responsibilities, but especially in the care and nurture of children and young people a long term commitment is important. The PCC is responsible for all parish activities and must satisfy itself that everything is being done to provide a safe environment for its children and young people. It is also responsible for making sure, as far as possible, that no false accusations can be made against staff and volunteers. Therefore, all those now working with children and young people must be **carefully selected, supported and trained**.

Your PCC will have identified the groups of children and young people who are covered by these guidelines.

Good Practice - Taking Reasonable Care

Good practices are those which ensure reasonable care and caution are exercised and which minimise future risks. Appointments are an area where good practice should be routinely followed. They will not always identify people who may become a risk but they form part of a sensible network of checks and balances. They form one of the four elements of good practice in the area of child protection within parishes:

- Effective, clear **APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES**
- Explicit and shared **STANDARDS**
- Clear, reliable **SUPERVISION ARRANGEMENTS**
- Access to appropriate **TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

Good recruitment and vetting procedures will include:

- Clarity about **WHAT THE POST INVOLVES** and **THE KIND OF PERSON** to occupy it
- Effective **INTERVIEWING**
- **MAKING REFERENCES WORK** by asking specific questions of the referee rather than a general 'please tell us about X'
- **CHECKS** against certain registers/sources (see below)

Some people are troubled by the checks and procedures being recommended on the ground that they go too far - especially for volunteers. They are, however, justified by experience, and are now nationally agreed procedures within the Church of England. Responsible adults offering their services will appreciate the reasons behind the checks and will not be personally offended.

It is recommended that where additional volunteers are recruited for, say, Activity Days or Holiday Clubs, that it would be expected that these people should be asked to complete the National Protection of Children and Young People Confidential Declaration (*see page 17-19 of the House of Bishops Policy on Child Protection 1999*).

WHAT can you EXPECT of your PCC?

In law the PCC has a duty of care towards its children and young people. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that all those who are working with children and young people are properly recruited, supported and trained in their work.

As a children or youth worker you will be undertaking an important ministry and it is important that you are aware of what you can expect from your PCC and what they can expect of you. The following checklist should help you to clarify the process. It is important to recognise that these procedures have developed in order to ensure protection for the worker as well as the protection of the children and young people in their care.

Recruitment:

- Have you seen a job description?
- Have you been asked to fill in an Appointment /Declaration Form?
- Have you given the names of two people who will act as referees?
- Has the Incumbent/Church wardens had sight of your birth certificate?
- Have you been interviewed?
- Do you know to whom you are accountable?

Support:

- Do you meet with other children's workers?
- Have you agreed how often you meet to discuss the work that you have been asked to do?
- Do you know what resources are available to you?

Training:

- Have you identified any training needs that you might need to help you in your work with children or young people?
- Have you been given a copy of the Better Safe than Sorry Induction and Practice Pack for those working with children and young people?
- Have you seen the completed checklist on health and safety matters?
- Are you aware of the procedures to follow in the event of a disclosure of abuse?

Are you familiar with:

- The recommended ratio of adults working with a group of children?
- The use of Registration and Consent Forms?
- How to recognise signs of child abuse?

GUIDELINES on APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR when WORKING with CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE

The House of Bishops' policy on child protection requires all clergy and lay people to maintain the highest professional standards in their work and relationships with children and young people. The following recommendations provide a framework within which children should be safe from harm and adults protected from false allegations or temptation. Be prepared for your colleagues to remind you if you forget one of these guidelines, and be prepared to help a colleague by advising them in return. The more trusting and open the relationships between workers, the safer children and young people will be.

- ✓ Do treat all children and young people with respect
- ✓ Do watch your speech, tone of voice and body language
- ✓ Do learn to control and discipline children without physical punishment, even if you have the parents' explicit permission for this. This will set a far better model for children themselves to follow.
- ✓ Do ask parents' permission if you need to see a child on his or her own, make sure another adult is present nearby and that the child knows this.
- ✓ Where possible there should be a gender balance amongst leaders and helpers
- ✓ Have the *Childline* and NSPCC Helpline numbers displayed amongst other information.

- ✗ Don't invade a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting.
- ✗ Don't play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- ✗ Don't be sexually suggestive about or to a young person even in fun.
- ✗ Don't touch inappropriately or intrusively.
- ✗ Don't scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person.
- ✗ Don't show favouritism to any one child.
- ✗ Don't allow children to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.
- ✗ Don't give lifts to children or young people on their own. If this is unavoidable ask the child to sit in the back.
- ✗ It is advised that adults never invite a young person to their home alone. Invite a group, make sure that someone else is around and that the parents know where the young people are.
- ✗ Don't permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.
- ✗ Don't allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should be accompanied by a known person.

Taking and Evaluating Risks

It has already been said that ‘child abuse’ has become highly emotive. There are reports of some clergy who have decided to avoid having anything to do with children and who avoid all occasions of touching or encouraging children. This is an understandable but regrettable response. It also conveys unhelpful messages to children. Follow the ‘best practice’ guidelines in this document, but don’t ‘shut off’ to children and young people. Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are all needed by children and young people as part of their coming to understand human relationships.

What to do about inappropriate advances

Children or young people can sometimes make suggestive approaches to an adult. They may have a ‘crush’ on an adult or they may act inappropriately following previous abusive experiences. Sometimes inappropriate physical contact can happen accidentally. It is vital that the adult takes responsibility to:

- Tell the young person that their language or behaviour is unacceptable and also tell their leader and parish priest about the incident, however embarrassing this is.
- Record the incident. This may be a necessary safeguard if accusations are made later. The worker with their leader and parish priest should decide on what measures will be taken to help the young person and prevent a re-occurrence.

DEFINITIONS of CHILD ABUSE

A child or young person under eighteen years is regarded as abused where he or she has suffered from, or is believed to be at significant risk of, physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. *Most child abuse is committed by someone known to them and trusted by them, either within the family, among their friends, or in the local community.*

Church workers and the whole Church community should be alert to signs of stress affecting the care and parenting of children and should feel able to offer help and friendship to parents to prevent a situation escalating to the point where a child is at risk.

The phrase 'child abuse' has become highly emotive. This can cloud our thinking and actions. A helpful approach is to begin with what children *need* in order to have the best chance of growing up well:

Children Need

Love, affection and encouragement

Physical care and nurture; protection from physical dangers

Security and control which is firm, clear, consistent and kind

Nurture of their minds and their spiritual and faith development

These needs vary with the age of the child and 'good parenting' will adjust to this.

Child Abuse is generally classified as one (or a combination of) the following:

Emotional

Physical

Neglect (and 'failure to thrive')

Sexual

Emotional Abuse

A child is emotionally abused when there is persistent rejection and humiliation which adversely affects emotional and behavioural development. It can include threats, verbal attacks, taunting, shouting and rejecting behaviour. *All* child abuse is likely to have an emotional abuse element. Children may experience emotional abuse (or emotional neglect) because of the effect of domestic violence between adults in the home.

Physical Abuse

Physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child, or failure to protect a child from danger, including danger from cold and starvation. For example, not providing adequate clothing, food or medical care and leaving a child alone and unsupervised.

Sexual Abuse

Actual or potential involvement of a child or young person in sexual activity. This covers the whole range of sexual behaviour, including vaginal and anal penetration, fondling, masturbation and oral sex. It includes involving a child in watching (or participating in) sexually explicit pornographic material.

Organised abuse

This generally refers to any abusive practice which is planned or exercised by two or more people operating together.

Children with Special Needs

Children and young people with disabilities (physical, sensory and/or learning disability) are especially vulnerable and need special care and protection.

Abuse by other children and young people

It should be remembered that children and young people can also abuse. They will need help too. They may themselves have been abused when younger. More is becoming known about children who abuse other children and informed specialist help is more readily available.

POINTERS TO THE POSSIBILITY OF ABUSE

It is recommended that PCC's arrange for everyone working within the parish with children attend introductory training in child protection. The Children's or Youth Adviser may be able to provide details of courses.

This summary gives a brief outline of some of the signs and symptoms that should alert you to the *possibility* of child abuse.

Physical abuse

The first evidence of abuse may not be an obvious severe injury.

Bruises

- in or around the mouth
- fingertip bruising on arms, chest or face indicating tight gripping or shaking
- bruises of different colours indicating injuries of different ages
- two simultaneous black eyes without bruising to the forehead
- bruising showing the marks of a belt or implement or a hand print
- bruising or tears around the earlobes
- bruising to the head or soft tissue areas of the body

Bites

- human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped and can leave a clear impression of teeth

Burns and scalds

- burns with a clear outline are suspicious
- circular burns from cigarettes
- linear burns from hot metal rods or electric elements
- burns of a uniform depth over a large area
- friction burns from being pulled across a floor
- scalds producing a water line from immersion or pouring of hot liquid
- splash marks around the main burn area caused by hot liquid being thrown
- old scars indicating previous burns

Fractures

- any fracture on a child under 1 year old is suspicious
- any skull fracture in the first 3 years is suspicious

Female circumcision

- this is illegal in the United Kingdom and is regarded as abusive.

Neglect

This is often difficult to identify but leads to the physical and emotional harm of a child. The signs and symptoms include:

- failure of a parent to provide adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, medical care or supervision
- failure of a child to grow within the normally expected pattern, they may show pallor, weight loss and signs of poor nutrition
- failure of parents to provide adequate love and affection in a stimulating environment
- a child may look listless, apathetic or unresponsive with no apparent medical cause
- a child may be observed thriving when away from the home environment

Emotional abuse

Again this is difficult to identify. It is the result of ill-treatment in the form of coldness, hostility and rejection; constant denigration or seriously distorted emotional demands; extreme inconsistency of parenting. Some of the signs and symptoms are as follows:

- low self-esteem
- apathy
- being fearful and withdrawn or displaying "frozen watchfulness"
- unduly aggressive behaviour
- excessive clinging or attention seeking behaviour
- constantly seeking to please
- over-readiness to relate to anyone, even strangers

Sexual abuse

Can be suspected based on physical signs, the child's behaviour or following a direct statement by the child. It is often investigated because of a combination of these signs.

Signs of possible sexual abuse

- a level of sexual knowledge inappropriate to the child's age
- sexually provocative relationships with adults
- sexualised play with other children
- self harm, mutilation, or suicide attempts or threats
- recurrent urinary tract infections
- sudden onset of soiling or wetting
- truancy, running away from home
- uncharacteristic difficulty in learning, poor concentration
- recurrent abdominal pain
- promiscuity
- requests for contraceptive or other sexual advice
- severe sleep disturbance
- change of eating habits
- social isolation and withdrawal

WHEN ABUSE is DISCLOSED or SUSPECTED

There are clear guidelines for when an incident of abuse is disclosed;

- If the child or young person needs urgent medical treatment or immediate protection call the appropriate emergency services - police or ambulance – or take the child to the nearest accident and emergency department. Tell the hospital staff of your suspicions. The Bishops Adviser on Child Protection should be informed without delay.
- If the child is not in immediate danger or you are not sure whether child abuse is involved, discuss your concerns with the BACP.
- If a specific incident of child abuse arises in the parish, the highest degree of confidentiality must be adhered to
- Keep careful notes of all that happens, showing dates and times and what exactly was said.
- Resist the temptation to become defensive about the person being accused or about the institution of the Church.

Responding to what the child or young person tells you

Some General Points

In working with children and young people you come to know them well. They may feel enough trust to be able to tell you about unhappy things that are happening - at home, at school or at church. This is both a privilege and a responsibility.

- Remember that the child may want the abuse to stop but still love the abuser.
- The child may think that you are able to stop the abuse without anything else happening.
- If a child asks to tell you something in confidence ALWAYS tell them that that will depend on the circumstances. You may have to tell someone else if they are being harmed.
- If it is possible, try to have another adult present whilst the child speaks, but do not prevent the child from speaking if this is not a possibility or if it would unduly inhibit the child.

Some Useful Tips

- Give your full attention - the child or young person needs to know they are being listened to attentively.
- Allow the child to talk, but don't press for information
- Tell the child that they are not to blame for anything that has happened
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell
- Let the child know that you will have to tell other people so that the abuse can stop.
- Try to explain what will happen next in a way that the child can understand.
- Reassure the child that you will support them in what may happen later.
- **As soon as you can, write down as carefully as possible what the child has said, how they said it and how they appeared emotionally. Write down what you said too. Keep these records securely, and indefinitely.**



ALL SITUATIONS OF ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE BISHOP'S ADVISER FOR CHILD PROTECTION WITHOUT DELAY, AND THEIR ADVICE SOUGHT. HIS NUMBER CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 5

Making a Referral to Social Services

If it is agreed that a referral should be made to your local social services office (part of your local Council's services) keep in mind the following:

- Give the social worker as much detail as possible: descriptions, dates, times, and what was actually said.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion; and between what you have seen and what others have told you.
- It is wise to follow up your contact with the Social Services by a letter confirming what you have said to them (give a copy of your letter to your parish priest who will send a copy to the BACP).
- Be prepared to have further discussions with the social services/police investigation team.
- Continue to support the child.
- ***You will need support for yourself*** - don't be afraid to ask for it from others in the parish who know what is happening or from your clergy or the BACP.

NB Every citizen is free to report suspicions of child abuse directly to the Social Services or Police, or indirectly through services such as Childline or NSPCC. These guidelines suggest proceeding (except in emergencies) through the Bishop's Adviser (BACP) but this suggestion does not prevent you from a more direct course if you believe the circumstances warrant it: the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.

Social Services Departments and the Police

It is the duty of the social services department of the local authority, under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, to investigate "where there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm."

After you have made a referral the social services department will decide what to do. In cases of child sexual abuse and sometimes in other forms of child abuse they will decide this in consultation with colleagues in partner agencies (police, health, education). There will be cases where a decision is taken *not* to proceed with an investigation.

If social services decide to investigate they will gather information from people that know the child: for example school and GP. In the majority of cases they will interview

the parents (though there are some circumstances of suspected sexual abuse where a decision will be taken *not* to interview - or inform - the parents at that first stage).

- They may interview the child. This may be in the form of a video interview if it is considered that court proceedings might be a possible outcome. The child is always interviewed by specially trained staff.
- If the investigation concludes that the child or young person has suffered and/or is likely to suffer significant harm, it will be decided at a multi-agency child protection case conference whether the child needs protection and how that can be achieved.
- The child's name may be placed on the Child Protection Register.
- The police will decide, together with the Crown Prosecution Service, whether a criminal act has been committed and whether a person should be charged with an offence and taken to court.
- If the case is taken to court the child, depending on age and understanding, may have to be a witness, unless the person pleads guilty. There are special provisions to help a child through this process.

Action by the Bishop

These duties will apply in all cases where the allegations or suspicions concern clergy, church leaders, church officers and others holding prominent or influential positions within the local church. Also in all cases where the alleged or suspected abuse is believed to have taken place within the ambit of the church (for example, on church premises or through church activities).

- The Bishop will ensure that any necessary arrangements are made for the emotional and spiritual support of the child and its family, the accused person and his or her family, and the parish community.¹
- The Bishop will inform the Diocesan Director of Communications who will handle media relations. *All* media contacts must go through the Director of Communications.
- The Bishop will make sure that the Diocesan Registrar and the parish's insurance company have been informed.
- During child protection investigations it is normal practice for the accused or suspected person to be withdrawn from any contact with children or young people.

¹ These arrangements will be subject to very careful consideration, not least because of the need to avoid contaminating any evidence. For example, it is essential that the person responsible for the pastoral care of the accused person and his or her family should have no contact with the person who offers pastoral care to the person making the allegation or the victim of the alleged abuse and his or her family. *HoB 1998 Annex 1 para 41*

At the conclusion of an investigation

- The result of an investigation may be inconclusive or it may be concluded that the allegation was unfounded. There may or may not be a prosecution, or it may be decided that a person's behaviour has been ill-advised and foolish rather than criminal.
- In the case of clergy and accredited lay ministers, the Bishop “should give precise guidelines in writing as to how the individual’s ministry should be defined and monitored”. (*House of Bishops Child Protection Policy 1999 paragraph 50*) The Bishop may need, after taking advice, to put restrictions on a person's future employment, or to require them to undertake counselling before resuming duties.
- In the case of a paid employee or volunteer, the PCC will need to consider the future deployment of the person, taking advice from the BACP.
- The appropriate Archdeacon will be responsible for informing the Department of Health Consultancy Service of any information that should go on to its register, and of informing any other register or party as necessary.
- Allegations may be shown to be unfounded or malicious. In these cases the appropriate Archdeacon, in consultation with the BACP, will find appropriate means to make clear that the person has been exonerated.

BETTER SAFE than SORRY

Registration Requirements Under the Children Act

The Children Act 1989 introduced new regulations and recommendations for statutory and voluntary bodies that run facilities for the under eight's. Although only certain groups have to register with the local authority, the recommendations of the latter should be considered by all groups wishing to provide a safe and secure environment for children and young people. Contact the Registration & Inspection Unit of your local council's Social Services Department for further information and advice.

Registration

Groups that meet for more than two hours in any one day or for total of more than six days a year, e.g. a holiday club or course, must register with the local authority. Local authorities are asked to encourage and advise groups so that they can be registered. Registration includes standards for leaders as well as premises, and tries to ensure that children do not come into contact with unfit people who may also be using the premises. Even if your group does not need to register it is advisable to follow as many of the requirements as possible.

Staffing levels

These are the minimum required staffing levels for children's groups. For some activities a higher ratio of children to adults will be necessary.

0 - 2 years	1 leader for every 3 children	1:3
2 - 3 years	1 leader for every 4 children	1:4
3 - 8 years	1 leader for every 8 children	1:8
over 8 years	1 leader for the first 8 children and then one extra leader for every extra 12 children	

Each group should have at least two adults and it is recommended that where possible a gender balance between workers is maintained.

Premises

Space

At least 2.3 square metres of unencumbered space per child. Some local authorities give a maximum number of children permitted in any one room.

Toilets

1 toilet and 1 hand basin per 10 children is ideal. Try not to use roller towels.

Play area

A safe outdoor area is recommended if children meet for more than four hours. A quiet area is also useful.

Warmth and cleanliness

Meeting places should be warm, well lit and well ventilated and of course kept clean.

Food Preparation

If you regularly prepare food for children on the premises the facilities will need to be checked by the environmental health officer and a Food Handling and Hygiene certificate is required. Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.

Special Needs

Welcome children and young people with special needs to your group. Try to make the premises and toilets accessible to people with disabilities.

Health and safety

- It is advised that the premises on which the youth or children's activities take place has a Locations Specific Plan (*see appendix D*). This should be clearly displayed alongside the fire notice in each room where activities take place.
- The contents of the Location Specific Plan should be covered, along with the relevant Fire Notice during volunteer and staff induction.
- Adults should be aware of the fire procedure. Fire extinguishers must be regularly checked and a fire drill carried out. Smoke detectors should be fitted. Emergency exits must be clearly marked and never locked shut. Fire Notices should be displayed in every meeting area and corridor.
- Buildings should be checked by Fire Officers.
- There must be access to a telephone (possibly a mobile) on the premises.
- A First Aid kit should be available on any premises used by children or young people. An accident book should be kept with the kit and all accidents recorded in it.
- Children with infectious illnesses should not attend your group.
- No smoking should be permitted in the areas where there are children.
- Alcohol and/or recreational or illicit drugs should not be used by those having children and young people in their care.
- Children should not be able to leave the premises unsupervised.
- Children and young people should not be allowed to walk to or from your premises along dark or badly lit paths.
- Parents must sign a Consent Form before children or young people are taken off-site for activities. A specimen form can be found in Appendix B.
- When taking children or young people off-site a detailed programme and list of contacts should be left with someone in the parish.

Administration

- A register must be kept and be available at all group meetings. As well as attendances, it should include up to date information on parents' contact numbers and any specific medical information on the children or young people. See Appendix A for sample registration form. Activities planned to take place away from church premises must have the permission of the PCC in order to be covered by insurance.

FIRST AID EQUIPMENT

All premises used by children should have a First Aid kit. Its contents should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals. All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge and the parish should encourage access to First Aid training.

A suggested minimum for a First Aid kit

2 x small wound dressing; 1 x large wound dressing; 1 x eye pad; 4 x triangular bandages; 2 x non-stick dressing 5cm x 5cm; 2 x non-stick dressing 10cm x 10cm; 1 reel of low allergy adhesive tape; 4 x safety pins; 5 x pairs of disposable latex gloves; 2 x conforming bandages 6cm; 1 x resuscitation shield; 20 x wrapped adhesive dressings (plasters); 2 x crepe bandages 5cm; 1 x disposable apron; 1 x sealed eye wash; 1 x Emergency Aid Card; 4 x individually wrapped cleaning wipes (non-alcoholic); an Accident Report Book.

HIV/AIDS

Good hygiene should ALWAYS be practised. Disposable latex gloves and a disposable apron should always be used when dealing with broken skin, body fluids and faeces.

Confidentiality regarding a child's HIV status should always be maintained.

TAKING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OUT

Day Trips, Weekends and Holidays - General Safety Rules

DAY TRIPS

Plan well in advance:

- Make sure you have enough adult help.
- Organise travel arrangements adequately:-
- **Coaches:** Talk to the company and make sure they are covered by full insurance. Also limit of passengers (**do not exceed this**). Children should be seated at all times and those aged under 18 must wear seat belts.
- **Private Transport:** Must have correct insurance to cover passengers. **This is VERY important.**
- **Inform parents fully of all arrangements in writing.** At least one meeting is important. Also, remember if you alter any arrangements notify parents in writing of change. Parental consent is necessary to take children (under the age of 18 years) anywhere, even for just a few hours. All details must be on the form they sign, so that they are fully aware of everything they will be doing. The Parental consent form should also include all relevant information concerning health, (see Appendix B).
- All volunteers should also complete the health information details.
- On the trip each adult should have a list of the children who they will have charge of, even if you all intend to stay together. It is also essential that adults and children know that they must return with the adult they came with if travelling in groups. This way you can avoid anyone going astray – especially small children. With very little children it is a good idea to put labels on them saying who they are and who they are with.
- **Swimming and Special Activities:** If swimming, the swimming baths require ONE adult in the water with every THREE children under the age of EIGHT.

If they will be taking part in any special activity check before going that there are qualified, trained and skilled people in charge and that the establishment has appropriate insurance cover.

TRIPS OUT SHOULD BE FUN

SLEEPING ON CHURCH PREMISES

This article is concerned with the safety of people who sleep on Church premises, for example during a weekend celebration or short break. It is printed with the permission of the Methodist Church Division of Education and Youth, who were advised by the Methodist Church Property Division.

- Only ground floor accommodation is considered suitable for sleeping accommodation.
- There should be at least two separate routes leading from the sleeping accommodation and out of the building. A room with two exit doors leading into a corridor from which the only exit could be impeded with smoke and fire could not be considered acceptable.
- External doors should be left unlocked. If for security purposes this is impracticable, the fastening should be a simple tower bolt type. Check exit doors for ease of opening.
- Exit routes and doors should be clearly indicated.
- In order to minimise the spread of smoke and fire should an outbreak occur, all doors should be kept closed, particularly during the night hours.
- Portable heating appliances should be sited in positions in which they would not impede exit doors and routes should they catch fire. Always turn them off during sleeping hours.
- An outbreak of fire often causes a power failure. It is therefore necessary for Supervisory Staff to have hand lamps.
- Smoking should be forbidden in the sleeping accommodation.
- A Nominal Roll of occupants should be prepared and hung just within the main exit door. Occupants should be instructed to meet at a pre-determined assembly point in the event of an outbreak of fire and a roll call should be taken.
- Anyone discovering a fire should raise the alarm by shouting “FIRE”.
- The Supervisory Staff should be aware of the nearest telephone, or it is recommended that a mobile telephone be available. The Fire Service should be called to all fires, using the “999” facility.
- Do not park cars where they would obstruct exit routes or access for fire appliances.
- Supervisory Staff should know the exact location of the fire fighting equipment and how to operate it. Only carry out Fire Fighting when it is obvious that it is safe to do so.

OVERNIGHT STAYS AND LONGER RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Overnight stays and residential activities can be good fun for everybody – even the leaders.

- It is helpful to make sure that at least one adult is in charge of specific aspects of the programme. For example, Cook – First Aider – Putting to bed – Preparing for meals – Activities etc. These jobs will vary, taking into consideration building, type of programme etc. The person with overall responsibility must check that the person designated as the First Aid officer holds an appropriate, valid certificate. The person responsible for catering may need to hold a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.
- Check the insurance cover of any building you will be sleeping in. There is usually a limit on numbers it accommodates. If you exceed these insurance can be invalid.
- Check the building and know where water, electricity, etc can be turned off. Know the fire drill for the building, and make sure you have a fire drill as soon as possible after entering the premises. Know where the fire extinguishers are. A Location Specific Plan (*see Appendix D for a sample*) should be displayed alongside the Fire Notice in each room
- Church halls and rooms used for sleeping larger numbers of people MUST have TWO means of exit.
- Know where the nearest hospital and doctor is and inform local doctor if you are sleeping there. Also good idea to notify local police. This applies even if you are sleeping in any building, even if only for one night, and even if it is your own church. Also it is helpful to inform the fire brigade.
- Ensure that parents/guardians have returned a health form stating any special dietary requirements and current medication, eg. asthma, diabetes, allergies. Also giving the name and telephone number of the child's doctor.
- Residential activities must have safety rules – boundaries: eg. letting adults know where you are: no entering kitchen without asking the cook.
- It is not appropriate for a male member of staff to sleep in the same room as female children or young people. Neither is it appropriate for a female member of staff to sleep in the same room as male children or young people.
- Make sure the children have correct clothing for whatever activity they are taking part in. It is useful to issue a 'kit' list for residential activities.
- Where outdoor activities are concerned either leaders should have the appropriate qualification, or if the activity is being provided by a outside organisation, then the leaders should check that this organisation is registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority and have appropriate insurance.

Current guidelines suggest that for any camping or hill walking activity the basic qualification which should be held is the Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA) or an equivalent, for example a scout or guiding qualification.

INSURANCE

The Diocese of Oxford offers an Insurance Scheme for Parish Children's & Youth Groups, but with the advent of the Ecclesiastical Insurance Groups new ParishGuard policy, most parishes should be able to provide adequate cover under this policy. Those parishes still insured under the old ChurchGuard policy should check their cover directly with EIG. Details of the Diocesan scheme are available from the Diocesan Youth Adviser

There are some important points to note with regard to Insurance:

- Never assume that Insurance cover is adequate; always check! ***If in doubt ask!***
- Public Liability cover needs to be for at least £5 million in respect of any one claim.
- If you use your own vehicle for transporting young people you need to ask your insurers whether your policy covers this. Never carry more people than your vehicle is supposed to carry!
- There are specific requirements for Employer's Liability. If someone receives remuneration for their work with children and young people they are regarded as employees.
- Remember that the PCC (as the insured party) must:
 - agree to the specific activity taking place
 - have accepted responsibility for that activity
 - records in its meeting its acceptance of responsibility.

HEALTH and SAFETY CHECKLIST

Many churches already have ways of making sure that children and young people are safe. The check list below may be of help to you:

	YES	NO
A. Is there a designated First Aider with up to date training available during all activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there an up-to-date First Aid Kit available both on the premises and for activities away from the premises?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all accidents recorded? How?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Do regular fire drills take place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are fire notices displayed informing people what to do in case of fire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are fire appliances suitable and serviced regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the local Fire Prevention Officer visited the premises?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Is there suitable access and provision made for disabled people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Is a register kept of all those in attendance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Registration Form been completed for each child/young person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are Parental Consent Forms obtained for day trips and residential activities)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>(For samples see Appendices A & B)</i>		
E. Are adult/child ratios appropriate for the group and for the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the places where children/young people meet safe and secure from unwelcome people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is it possible for children/young people to 'slip' outside without leaders noticing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Is this check list reviewed annually?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a copy of this checklist been filed with the parish office?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDICES

[A] Child's Registration Record

Model format for recording information on children. Please note that some adults may have literacy needs and so may require assistance in completing this form.

This information needs to be updated annually - we recommend this occurs in September at the beginning of a new school year.

DETAILS OF CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

<p>NAME <i>Please underline the first name the child is called by</i></p> <p>Date of birth</p> <p>National curriculum year group</p> <p>School</p> <p>Group being attended</p>
<p>ADDRESS</p>
<p>TELEPHONE CONTACT</p> <p><i>Parent's home</i></p> <p><i>Parent's work</i></p> <p><i>Of another close relative/friend (give their name and relationship)</i></p>
<p>Whilst in our care it is important we know whether your child -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suffers from any allergies• is on any medication• has any health condition we should know about <p>Please also tell us of any particular likes, dislikes or fears your child has.</p> <p>Registered GP (name, address and telephone number)</p>

<p>YOUR DETAILS</p> <p>Parent/Guardian <i>name</i></p> <p>Address</p> <p>Signed.....Date..... </p>

NOTE: It is advisable that some wording is included concerning the responsibility of the Parish for those young people who leave the group during the meeting/event etc. This will be particularly important for those parishes engaged in “open” club style youth work. It is recommended that parents be requested to indicate their consent, for example:

We consent to our child leaving the premises / group during the evening without adult supervision, and / or to going home without an adult accompanying them. We accept that the group leaders are not responsible when our child leaves the group / premises.

We require that (name of child) remains within the premises / group at all times and is not allowed to leave the premises unless accompanied by his / her parent (s) or one of the following adults who have our permission:

.....
.....
.....

[B] SAMPLE Parental Consent

I give permission for my child (*name*)

--

to attend (*event or club*)

--

and to take part in any organised activities such as swimming, sports etc. (*any specific activities being undertaken should be listed*)

If it becomes necessary for my child to be given urgent medical treatment and I cannot be contacted by telephone or any other means to authorise this, I hereby give my general consent to any medical treatment judged to be necessary and urgent by a medical practitioner and I authorise the leader in charge to sign any document required by hospital or other authorities.

Signed.....Date.....
.....

Does your child suffer from any on-going or recurring illness?	
Have they ever had a contagious illness, or direct contact with any contagious illness, within the last four weeks?	
Does s/he take any regular medication?	
Any phobias, disabilities or known allergies?	
Has s/he been immunised against tetanus within the last 10 years?	
Any special dietary requirements?	
Any other information we should know of?	

Details of parents/next of kin and of how to make contact:

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE (HOME)

TELEPHONE (MOBILE)

TELEPHONE (OTHER)

IF NOT AVAILABLE, CONTACT:

[C] Good Practice Guidelines for Clergy, Readers and Others in Pastoral and Counselling Situations

The history of ‘professional’ helping relationships, particularly those involving the sharing of highly personal information by people at vulnerable points in their lives, is littered with accounts of things going wrong. Anyone undertaking this type of work *must* have undergone some preparation and training and *must* adhere to the highest standards of conduct.

Some dioceses have issued valuable guidelines for clergy, Readers and others undertaking pastoral care and counselling.²

The following points are not, by any means, exhaustive. We hope they will be of use.

- Always be clear, with yourself and the person you are helping, about the purpose, style and time scale of what you are offering.
- Consider the limits of your competence or availability and explain these clearly.
- If seeing someone regularly do so at set times and always with an explicit finishing time.
- Think about what is an appropriate and sensible venue, for example somewhere public.
- If you feel vulnerable or that you are getting into an unsafe situation, decide immediately what you must do to restore safety and to be in control.
- Keep confidential notes of the meetings. These should be written up immediately following sessions. Let at least one colleague know of the work you are doing. Keep meetings to ‘office hours’ wherever possible. Late evening meetings in your home or the other’s home are to be avoided.
- Be mindful of age, gender and sexual orientation and sexual attraction. If, as the ‘counsellor’ or ‘helper’ you find yourself eagerly looking forward to the next session beware, and seek advice or consultation.
- Use physical comfort with utmost caution.

² The Greatness of the Trust: Report of the Working Party on Sexual Abuse by Pastors *Diocese of Oxford* 1996; Code of Ministerial Practice *Diocese of Oxford* 1996; Tend My Flock: Good Practice Guidelines in Pastoral Care *Diocese of Norwich* 1997

[D] Sample Location Specific Plan

Location Information for: Hill End Residential Centre

Address: Hill End, Eynsham Road, Farmoor, Oxford OX2 9NJ
Telephone: [01865] 863510

A. Injury / Illness information:

Ambulance Telephone: 999
Medical Centre: Details supplied by Hill End office on booking in.
Directions from Location: “ “ “ “ “ “ “ “
Casualty Dept.: John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Headington. OX3
9DU
Directions from Location: Tel [01865] 741166
Turn Left out of Hill End
Take first left up slip road to join A420. At roundabout
take first exit (A34)
Take first exit and follow signs to Witney
At roundabout by Mobil garage, take 2nd exit – Oxford
Ring Road
Follow signs for London and High Wycombe
After next roundabout the ring road becomes a dual
carriageway
After approx. 1.5 miles take the slip road on left and cross
over A40
Enter built up area. Turn left at mini roundabout opposite
Mobil garage
Straight over next roundabout and up the hill
At another roundabout turn left into the hospital grounds.
Follow signs for Casualty.

Note: You will need to take at least £2 in change to cover parking.
The drive should not take more than 40 minutes, but rush-hour can increase travelling
time considerably. It might be better at these times to seek advice from the medical
centre or call an ambulance if you are concerned.

B. Fire Information:

Designated Meeting Place: Details supplied by Hill End office on booking in.
Alarm Type: Fire Bell

C. Severe Weather Information:

Severe Storm Gathering Point: The dining-room.

[E] Contact Addresses

OTHER AGENCIES

Social Services Department

See under the name of your local authority in the telephone directory or phone Directory Enquiries - 192.

Police

See telephone directory for your local police station.

NSPCC

Child Protection Helpline - 0800 800 500

Christian Child Care Network

A Helpline for people facing child care or family problems. Will also seek to link callers with Christian resources - 0181 559 1133

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service - 01322 660011

Parentline

A national Helpline for parents under pressure - 01702 559900 - local numbers in Yellow Pages.

Child Line - 0800 1111

Christian Survivors of Sexual Abuse - A support group for women who have been sexually abused. BM - CSSA London WC1N 3XX