



Woodbridge Group of Churches

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction

The Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) of the churches within the Woodbridge Group take very seriously their responsibility to safeguard and to protect the welfare of children and young people with whom ministers and the members of the church come into contact.

The PCCs have a legal and a moral duty of care to young people under the age of 18 years and will always listen to and value the contributions of those children with whom it comes into contact.

This policy is derived from, and takes account of, the latest versions of the Bristol Diocese Safeguarding Policies, to be found on the Bristol Diocese website, at www.bristol.anglican.org.

2. Legal background

The legislative framework for the child protection system in England is the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. A 'child' is defined in the Children Act 1989 as a person under the age of 18.

3 Our responsibilities

All members of churches in the Woodbridge Group are committed to following legislation, guidance and good practice in order to:

- care for, nurture and minister to all children.
- safeguard and protect all children and young people when they are vulnerable, and
- establish safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse.

Specifically, in order to do this, we will:

- carefully select and train all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures.
- respond without delay to every concern raised which suggests that a child or young person may have been harmed, co-operating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with him, or her, an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.
- seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

- seek to offer pastoral care and support, including supervision and referral to the proper authorities, to any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or young person.

4 Procedures

In working with children or young people, PCCs will implement and abide by the following procedures.

4.1 Ministers, lay or ordained

- All ministers leading worship in our church or our community must have an enhanced DBS check completed for the role they are engaged in, and renewed within the last 5 years.
- All ministers regularly leading worship within our community are expected to abide by their obligations in respect of disclosure of criminal convictions.
- Admission and licensing of lay ministers will be overseen by Bristol Diocese.

4.2 Adults having direct and/or significant contact with children

- The PCCs must ensure that any persons having direct or significant contact with children holds an enhanced DBS check, renewed within the last 5 years.
- All persons working with children in our church – whether paid or unpaid - are expected to abide by their obligations in respect of disclosure of criminal convictions.

4.3 Other members of the church

All PCC members, as charity trustees, will have DBS clearance.

Other PCC members, and members of the congregation, are not normally expected to have DBS clearance. For this reason, the PCC must ensure that church members are not placed in vulnerable positions with children. This means that one-to-one, private situations should at all times be avoided.

4.4 Referral of suspected or actual abuse

- Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect, or spiritual abuse. Organised abuse involves a group of abusers and/or a group of children.
- If any minister, any person having significant contact with children, any member of the PCC or any member of the church congregation suspects that a child is being abused, or has a child disclose abuse to them, he or she should address their concerns about suspected abuse to the Parish Safeguarding Officer appointed by the PCC, and to no-one else.

4.5 Allegations and Complaints

- The welfare of the child should be the first responsibility.
- Any allegations and complaints made against PCC members, ministers or members of the church should, in the first instance, be referred to the Parish Safeguarding Officer appointed by the PCC, and to no-one else.

- Where cases are referred to the police, criminal or civil courts then the PCC will co-operate in full with the appropriate authorities.
- Where it is found that a member of the church has been wrongfully accused and has been exonerated, every support will be provided to the individual to enable them to resume their church life.

5. Statement of Responsibilities in relation to Child Protection

5.1 The PCC

- Will have overall responsibility for child protection issues
- Will appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) for a period of one year, renewable annually at the APCM
- Will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to cover Child Protection issues and that these documents are available for consultation in a public place (normally inside the church, clearly labelled)
- Will ensure that recruitment is carried out in accordance with safe recruitment practices
- Will ensure that the name and contact details of the PSO are displayed in a public place and that it is clear that any concerns can be referred to them.

5.2 The Parish Safeguarding Officer

- Will keep abreast of legislative and other developments in child protection issues
- Have an enhanced DBS certificate, valid for the period of the appointment
- Undertake such training as is necessary for the performance of the role
- Keep in a safe and secure place a confidential record of child protection issues and incidents which arise in relation to the safeguarding of children and young people

5.3 All members of the church including all ministers and members of the PCC

- Are expected to abide by their obligations in respect of disclosure of criminal convictions.
- Are expected to keep themselves safe, by avoiding one-to-one contact with children and young people.

Adopted by PCC at a meeting of the PCC held on (date)

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 (signed) (dated)

APPENDIX I

Contact details

Parish Safeguarding Officers, Woodbridge Group of Parishes

Brinkworth, Dauntsey, Lea:	Heather Lee	07553 608358
Garsdon:	Katie White	07771 894055
Great Somerford	Janice Vincent	07714 334880
Little Somerford	Tina Schafroth	07772 778341

APPENDIX 2

Categories, Definitions and Indicators of Harm

Type of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
Physical Adults and Children	Non-accidental harm to the body. From careless rough handling to direct physical violence. Unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions.	Hitting, slapping, pinching, shaking, pushing, scalding, burning, dragging, kicking, physical restraint, locking an individual in a room or a car.	History of unexplained falls or minor injuries, bruising which is characteristic of non-accidental injury – hand slap marks, pinch marks, grip marks, bite marks, scalds, flinching, reluctant to undress.
Sexual Adults and Children	Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without capacity and/or consent. Individual did not fully understand or was pressured into consenting. Note: A child under 16 years old can never consent to any sexual act	Coercion to be involved in the making or watching of pornographic material. Coercion to touch e.g. of breasts, genitals, anus, mouth, masturbation of either self or others, penetration or attempted penetration of vagina, anus, mouth with or by penis, fingers and or other objects	Pregnancy in a women unable to give consent, difficulty in walking or sitting with no apparent explanation, torn, stained or bloody underclothes or bedding, Bleeding, bruising to the rectal and/or vaginal area, bruising. Behavioural changes, sexually explicit behaviour, explicit language, self harm, obsession with washing, fear of pregnancy may be exaggerated
Emotional Adults and Children	Behaviour which has a harmful effect on an individual's emotional well being or development, causing mental distress undermining their self-esteem and affecting individual's quality of life. Wilful infliction of mental suffering by a person in a position of trust and power.	Shouting, coercion, bullying, blaming, insulting, ignoring, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, harassment, humiliation, depriving an individual of the right to choice and their privacy, dignity, self-expression, deprivation of contact, undermining self-esteem, isolation and over-dependence. Failure to provide a loving environment for a child.	Loss of interest, withdrawn, anxious or depressed, frightened, avoiding eye contact, irritable, aggressive or challenging behaviour, unexplained sleep disturbance, self harm, refusing to eat, deliberate soiling, unusual weight gain or loss

Type of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
<p>Neglect</p> <p>Adults and Children</p>	<p>Failure of any person who has responsibility for the charge, care or custody of an adult at risk or child to provide the amount and type of care or treatment that a responsible person could be expected to provide.</p>	<p>Fail to meet basic needs including food, environment, access to health care and education, failure to provide for social needs.</p>	<p>Unwashed/ dirty appearance, clothes too small/big, untreated sores or infections, isolation.</p>
<p>Financial</p> <p>Adults</p>	<p>The unauthorised taking (theft), deprivation or misuse of any money, income, assets, funds, personal belongings or property or any resources of an adult at risk without their informed consent or authorisation.</p>	<p>Misuse of power of attorney or appointeeship. Money and possessions stolen, misuse or misappropriating money, valuables or property, possessions or benefits, undue pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, denying the adult at risk the right to access funds, unauthorised disposal of property or possessions, being asked to part with money on false pretences.</p>	<p>Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, Power of Attorney obtained and misused when a person lacks or does not lack mental capacity to understand, unexplained withdrawal of money with no benefits, person lacking goods or services that they can afford, extortionate demands for payments for services</p>
<p>Organisational</p> <p>Adults</p>	<p>Involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide safe, appropriate and acceptable standards of service to adults at risk.</p> <p>Mainly relates to health and social care provision but aspects may be relevant to Church settings</p>	<p>Lack of individualised care, inappropriate confinement or restriction, sensory deprivation, inappropriate use of rules, custom and practice</p>	<p>Whistle blowing policy not in place and accessible, insufficient employees training and development.</p> <p>Organisational standards not meeting those laid down by regulatory bodies, service users not treated with dignity and respect, diverse needs not recognized and valued in terms of age, gender, disability, ethnic origin, race or sexual orientation, services not flexible</p>

Type of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
Discriminatory Adults	Exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity to some groups or individuals.	Verbal abuse, harassment or similar treatment, unequal treatment, deliberate exclusion from services such as education, health, justice and access to services and protection, harmful or derisive attitudes, inappropriate use of language	Repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment and criminal justice
Modern Slavery	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.	Adult or Child trafficked into UK or between places in UK for purpose of sexual abuse or labour. Adult or Child forced to work as domestic servant. Adult or child forced to work as sex worker, farm labourer, car cleaner.	Individual may not have their passport or Identity documents. They may not have access to or contact with friends and family. May never be left alone, live in poor conditions, not be able to leave of own free will. May have no access to funds. May not know where they are or who they are with.
Self Neglect	A wide range of behaviour involving neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.	May not react to or appropriately fulfil needs for health care, food, warmth. May live in an environment that is an environmental or fire risk and not take any measure to reduce risk or inadequate measures.	Environment which is poorly maintained, dirty, animal infested, cramped to the degree that it places the individuals wellbeing at risk. May have untreated or inadequately treated physical health issues.

Type of Harm	Definition	Examples	Indicators
Domestic Abuse	<p>In 2013, the Home Office announced changes to the definition of domestic abuse:</p> <p>Incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. Age range 16+</p>	<p>Includes: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence; Female Genital Mutilation; forced marriage.</p>	<p>Appears to be afraid of partner / of making own choices, behaves as though she/he deserves to be hurt or mistreated, low self-esteem or appear to be withdrawn, appears unable or unwilling to leave perpetrator, makes excuses for or condones the behaviour of the person alleged to have caused harm, blames abuse on themselves</p>
Spiritual Abuse	<p>Inappropriate use of religious belief or practice</p>	<p>The misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching or intrusive healing or deliverance ministries which may result in various types of harm.</p>	<p>Could be any of the above.</p>

Some Additional Information:

Child Sexual Exploitation: All children and young people can be at risk of sexual exploitation. This includes boys and girls of any age. This is a form of sexual abuse. Whilst young people can give consent to sexual acts from the age of 16 (so long as they have the capacity to do so) they continue to be at risk of sexual exploitation beyond their 16th birthday. **Any concern that a child or young person may be at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation must be reported immediately to the Parish Safeguarding Officer.**

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another

or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

Female Genital Mutilation: Female genital mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. It has been estimated that over 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) in the UK each year, and that 66,000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM. However, the true extent is unknown, due to the "hidden" nature of the crime. The girls may be taken to their countries of origin so that FGM can be carried out during the summer holidays, allowing them time to "heal" before they return to school. There are also worries that some girls may have FGM performed in the UK. **Any concern that a child of adult who may be vulnerable may be at risk of FGM must be reported immediately to the relevant Local Authority or directly to the Parish Safeguarding Officer without delay.**

Terrorism and Extremism: Any person may become drawn into extremism or sympathy with such views and into terrorism. This will often happen through contacts made via the internet but a culture that supports this can develop in any community, group, school or faith organisation. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places duties on certain bodies, not including Faith Organisations (excepting where such an organisation runs a school or other relevant premises) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Everybody should be alert to any indication that a person or group may be developing or has developed an interest or ideology that may include harm to others. **Any concern related to this whether for a child or adult must be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Officer without delay.**