



THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD
SHEPHERD, KIRK SANDALL &
EDENTHORPE



Barnby Dun
Parish Church
Showing God's love to others by following Jesus

THE CHURCH OF ST PETER AND
ST PAUL, BARNBY DUN

Safeguarding Policy for Youth and Children's Work

This statement was adopted at the Parochial Church Council meetings held on Tuesday 9th and Thursday 11th November 2021. This policy will be reviewed annually.

It is the goal of our children's and youth work **to glorify God through working with parents to make mature church-based disciples who will live and speak for Jesus throughout their life.**

To glorify God

The earth and all within it are made for God and his praise (Romans 11:36; Revelation 4:11). The church and its ministries therefore exist primarily for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 6:20; 10:31; Isaiah 60:21). Having the glory of God as the chief end of the youth and children's work means we have:

- A duty of care for each young person, regardless of age, nationality, gender, sexuality, or background for they are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).
- A duty clearly and unashamedly to teach young people God's word without underestimating either the ability of children to understand the things of God or the power of the word of God in the lives of those who hear it.

Working with parents

When the Bible speaks of young people and their education it speaks primarily to parents. The home is where the young person spends the majority of their lives and has the largest effect on the people they grow up to be. It's therefore vital that our youth and children's work aids and equips parents in their role in bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). In practice doing this will include:

- Keeping parents informed about the content of the sessions their child attends.
- Leaders being approachable to parents and open to discuss the sessions.
- Providing training on relevant issues facing parents
- Recognising situations where parents are not Christians and providing support and encouragement in those situations.

Mature church based disciples

In the great commission Jesus challenges us to make disciples, not just converts (Matthew 28:19ff; Colossians 1:28). Our children's and youth work therefore needs to be engaging and fun, but far more than merely entertainment. It is to be accessible and welcoming to those of all faiths and none but designed unashamedly to introduce young people to Jesus and then nurture and encourage them in following him. The Bible shows us that the main place for growth is church (Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 1:2). Jesus welcomed children into his company and into the company of adults (Mark 10:13-16). As a result, one key aspect of the youth and children's work is that the young people begin to own, enjoy, serve and be a part of the main gathered congregation of the church family. In practice doing this will include:

- Teaching the Bible in every meeting or group
- Resourcing and equipping the leaders of each group to understand and teach the Bible
- Providing an opportunity at each age range to have a group designed to get deeper into the word of God and a group to invite friends to.
- Allowing children to be children whilst their faith grows in maturity (Ecclesiastes 12:1; Colossians 1:28).

Live and speak for Jesus

At the heart of Christian maturity is a desire to take up our cross and follow Jesus (Matthew 16:24; 1 John 5:2; John 14:15). This desire is nurtured through a living relationship with the risen Lord Jesus. It sees sin as abhorrent, grace as astounding and, out of love, seeks to live a life which pleases God (Romans 8:12-17). This is as true of the faith of a 3-year-old as it is of a 53 or 83-year-old, but may be expressed differently. At the heart of our response to God's grace is a call and desire to share Jesus with others. Young people must be given both the space to enjoy a personal relationship with Jesus and the resources to speak of Him to their friends. In practice this will include:

- Leaders setting godly examples of mission and maturity. To this end all leaders are required to adhere to the youth and children's leaders agreement.
- Training for speaking about Jesus and opportunities to invite friends.
- Support and encouragement to practically live as a Christian at their stage of life.

Throughout their lives

This vision for young people seeks not to divorce the child from the adult they will grow into. Statistics show that between 61% and 88% of confessing 18-year-olds are not Church attenders by the time they turn 30, and this trend is only growing. As a result, it's vital that our youth and children's work links discipleship with regularly meeting with Christians of all ages, serving the church and being served. It is also important that the leaders share not only the Gospel, but also their lives with the young people (1 Thessalonians 2:8). This will show young people that Christian faith is not a children's activity but a life-long relationship (Philippians 1:6). The effects of this are wide ranging but will include:

- Encouraging older youth to be involved in the morning services
- Working with the service leaders, music team, and preachers to ensure that, as far as is possible, the content and style of services are accessible for young people
- Encouraging parents to see church as a positive thing, being willing to serve as well as be served
- Ensuring all-age services are of the highest quality and offering resources to preachers
- Delivering teaching about the church within the children and youth curriculum
- Teaching young people to submit to, treasure, be passionate about, feed on, love, share and handle the Bible for themselves. In short: to be set on fire by God's word.

Statement of Aims in Safeguarding

Our aims are:

- To help young people in their Christian discipleship through a programme of learning in church and in school and thereby to deepen their Christian faith
- To offer young people opportunities to engage with, think and learn about the Christian faith in different contexts.
- To enable young people to experience the love of God
- To encourage a strong Christian fellowship
- Help young people realise their full potential physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.
- To encourage young people to take a full part in the Church's life and worship.
- To provide a safe meeting place for young people
- To encourage young people to become responsible adults.
- To provide indoor and outdoor leisure activities for young people that are safe, and risk assessed.
- To uphold everyone's equality in the sight of God.

This document covers the work of the parish with children and young people, in its services and in the groups meeting throughout the week. This includes activities such as:

- 1-to-1 Bible Studies (Various ages, days and times)
- Coffee mornings (Various ages, days and times)
- Messy Church (Various ages, 2nd Saturday in the month, 15:00-17:00 @ Barnby Dun Community Hall)
- Children's Church (Various ages, Sunday 09:15-10:30 @ Barnby Dun Sunday 11:00-12:15 @ COGS)

This policy also covers any work undertaken outside of the church buildings but under the umbrella of the PCC.

Policy Statement

This PCC adopts the policy statement of the Diocese and will display it prominently in all church premises. The PCC expects all church workers to follow its Safeguarding Children Policy and will display it in a prominent place. Special measures are in place regarding 1-to-1 Bible Studies.

Introduction

We are committed to pursuing high standards in caring for children entrusted to us. This document sets out general principles and guidelines for all those involved in working with children at the churches in line with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy (*'Protecting All God's Children'*) and the Diocese of Sheffield's Safeguarding Policy.

Application of the Policy

- All new workers, whether paid or voluntary, working for church-based organisations, will be informed of the policy by the Safeguarding Children officer or the group leader. They will be expected to accept the policy and guidelines and work according to their requirements.
- All new members of the PCCs will be required to accept the policy and guidelines.
- The Standing Committee of the PCCs will oversee the Policy, and it will be placed on the Agenda of the PCC at least annually for review.
- The PCCs will appoint a Parish Safeguarding Officers and will inform the Church House administrator of their details. The appointed **Parish Safeguarding Officers are Deborah George (COGS) and Helen Acton (Barnby Dun)**

Church Premises

- Any organisation booking the use of church premises will be informed of the need to observe the policy via a statement on the Booking Form. They should be expected to confirm they have a Safeguarding policy and appropriate insurance.
- Individuals booking church premises for private functions will have the policy drawn to their attention and accept their responsibility for protecting children at that function.

Recruitment

- The PCCs will follow the recruitment process included in the Safeguarding Children Policy. References, the Confidential Declaration and DBS disclosure via the Diocesan system will be obtained. Appointment to any post, paid or voluntary, will not be made until these processes are complete.
- All appointments will be made on a conditional basis until the completion of a satisfactory probationary period.
- All those working with children and young people will follow the good practice guidelines in the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy and Guidelines (see appendix B for the policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders).

Registration and Parental Consent

- All groups will keep a register of those attending each session.
- Parental consent forms, including emergency contact details, must be completed for all participants, and must be available to group leaders whenever the group meets. This applies to all groups, whether meeting on church premises or elsewhere.

Insurance

- The PCCs will ensure that there is adequate insurance cover for all activities for children and young people.

Fire Regulations and Security

- All group leaders will be aware of fire regulations and the positions of fire extinguishers. They will be vigilant as to the presence of anyone on the premises during the meetings of the groups.
- They should know who to contact in an emergency relating to the building.

Ratios

The Diocese guidelines of ratios of adult helpers to children will be followed at all times. On no account should an adult be by themselves with any age group.

Age group	Staff	Children
0-2 years	1 for every	3
2-3 years	1 for every	4
3-5 years	1 for every	8
5-8 years	1 for every	8
Over 8 years	1 for the first 8 children and then 1 for each additional 12	

General Guidelines for Relating to Children

General Attitude to Children

We want to treat the children in our care with respect and dignity. Therefore, we will want to:

- Avoid ridiculing, scapegoating, or humiliating children.
- Avoid showing favouritism to any particular children.
- Be aware of speech, tone of voice and body language and the effect that it has on the children.
- Treat each child as an individual and do not make comparisons between children (whether peers or siblings)
- Work hard to encourage the children, highlighting their strengths and where appropriate giving them responsibilities.
- Except for duly authorised, trained and DBS-checked volunteers, it is the church's policy that only female volunteers and those with parental responsibility for children present are allowed to help with crèche groups.

Physical Contact

Physical contact is a normal part of many relationships. There is no reason to avoid appropriate physical contact with children in our care. However, we need to ensure that such contact is neither inappropriate nor misunderstood. Therefore, we will want to:

- Keep everything public – avoid physical contact in any place or context that is not open and in sight of others.
- Remember that you will be stronger than most children.
- Avoid engaging in rough games or behaviour or in any activity that puts the child at unnecessary risk of injury.
- Avoid engaging in any activity or game that could be considered sexually provocative or stimulating.
- Avoid touch which is inappropriate to the age of the child – touch should be related to the child or young person's needs, not the workers. Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child or young person, rather than the worker.
- Respect the child – allow them to decide how much physical contact to have with others and in most cases allow them to initiate.
- All children and young people are entitled to personal privacy and the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in circumstances such as a medical emergency.
- Encourage each other to avoid behaviour that might be perceived to be inappropriate. This will usually mean raising our concerns with fellow leaders either on the spot (if urgent) or after the event. Where we have concerns that behaviour is inappropriate, we may need to take further action – see below.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream etc), encourage the child or young person to do what they can themselves but, in their best interests giving appropriate help where necessary.
- 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.
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported.

Toileting

Only female volunteers are to take children to the toilet. Helpers should generally wait outside for the child. If the child needs help in the toilet the leader can go in with the child, but the door should be kept unlocked.

Crèche

Nappies may need to be changed during crèche. As a general principle, nappies must be changed by parents/carers, however, if you are female, the parents have given you permission, and you are comfortable doing so, then please follow these guidelines:

- Tell another leader you are about to change a nappy.
- Use the changing mat in crèche (unless an older child expresses discomfort or unease about being changed in public).
- Tell parents after the service that you had to change their child's nappy during crèche.
- Wash your hands afterwards using the sink in the toilet.

Some of the children in our younger groups may ask for help when it comes to toileting – in these instances it is best to get parents from Church, as a Group leader it is not your responsibility to help the children use the toilet, that remains with their parents. If a parent has asked you to help their child, and you are comfortable doing so then that is acceptable but do observe the guidelines above and remember that if you are uncomfortable helping a child use the toilet then you do not have to.

Discipline

From time to time, children will engage in unacceptable behaviour and as responsible leaders, we must be ready to discipline them. Our fundamental principle is to discipline out of a love and concern for the individual and group rather than just anger or irritation on our part.

Dealing with unacceptable behaviour

- Act sooner rather than later – be observant and do not let situations get out of control.
- Ensure that you understand the situation as fully as possible – give the children involved opportunity to explain.
- Pinpoint the behaviour that you find unacceptable.
- If appropriate, mention positive behaviour and encourage them to extend it.
- Avoid raising past (and possibly unrelated) behaviour in general terms – e.g. 'What's wrong with you? You're always so selfish'.
- Explain to the child the implications of their behaviour for other individuals and the group as a whole.
- Ask them to respect other individuals and the group.
- If they refuse, lay down clear and specific rules and explain what will happen if these rules are not kept.
- Ensure that you carry out the action that you have indicated.
- Judge your response accordingly and escalate your sanction if children continue to misbehave – for example:
 - General request to behave acceptably.
 - Specific rules (e.g., 'please don't climb on the table')
 - Separate child from others
 - Have the child sit in a particular place (e.g., in front of you or next to another leader)
 - Speak to their parents later.
 - Send them out / take them to their parents now.

After the Event

- Reflect on why the child may be behaving in this way.
- Reflect on whether there is something that can be changed in the structure of the club that would help remove the opportunity or temptation for unacceptable behaviour (e.g., are the children bored?)
- Discuss persistent unacceptable behaviour with other leaders and decide on a consistent course of action.
- Reflect on whether you should alert the child's parents and ask their advice.

General Guidelines

- As leaders take a collective approach to discipline – do not side with a child against another leader or allow children to play leaders off against each other.
- If you have concerns about the approach taken by a leader do raise your concerns but do not do it in front of the children – either take them aside there and then (if it is urgent) or speak to them afterwards.

- Be wise in deciding whether to discipline a child in front of others or whether to take them to one side.
- DO NOT use physical punishment (e.g., smacking)
- DO NOT shout, use a change in tone instead.
- Stop abusive peer activities (e.g., ridiculing, bullying, name-calling) at the earliest opportunity and make it clear that they will not be tolerated.

What to do if a child makes inappropriate advances or engages inappropriate behaviour

- Tell the child that their language or behaviour is unacceptable, even if this is embarrassing for you or for them.
- Tell the Group Leader or Parish Safeguarding Officer of the incident, again, however embarrassing the incident might be.
- Agree with the Group Leader or Parish Safeguarding Officer what action should be taken to help the child and to minimise the chance of a recurrence.
- The Group Leader or Parish Safeguarding Officer should file a brief written record of the incident ideally within an hour (and within 24-hours at the absolute most).

Health & Safety

We must be careful to ensure the safety of the children in our care.

- Ensure that you have access to a telephone and first aid kit in the place where you are meeting.
- Take special care with children when:
 - crossing the road
 - ascending and descending stairs
 - where hot liquids are present (e.g., kitchen)
- Ensure that after the group has finished, the children are supervised until they are picked up by their parents.
- Ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of parent's contact details.
- Ensure that you are familiar with any specific medical requirements of the children in your care – these are detailed on the Parent's Declaration forms stored in the Children's folder.
- Do not allow children with infectious illnesses to attend the group.
- Ensure that there is a route of escape in event of a fire.

Food and Hygiene

- We will ensure basic hygiene in the preparation of food and drink.
- If any group is involved in the preparation or selling of food, at least one leader should have completed the food hygiene and food safety course to ensure good practice is followed.

First Aid and Accidents

- Each group will have at least one adult present who has attended a basic course on first aid.
- There should be a properly stocked first aid kit accessible to each group.
- In the event of any accident, an incident and accident report form should be completed. This should be kept securely in a marked file. Parents should also be informed of any accident.

General Precautions for the Care of Children

We must take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety and comfort of the children who are entrusted to our care. Although the process can seem a little excessive it is designed for the benefit of all concerned and is not meant to be offensive.

Selection of Leaders

All those who will come into contact with children at the churches will be asked to complete a Confidential Declaration form and Job Application form before so doing. These forms ask for information regarding both past experience in working with children and any potential cause for concern (e.g., past convictions, allegations). The forms also ask for the names of two referees (these referees must satisfy certain conditions). The information collected will be used to assess an individual's suitability for work with children.

All individuals will need to complete such a form in order to be involved in working with children at The churches. They may be asked to fill in a form again in subsequent academic years whilst they continue to be involved.

At least one reference will be taken up, with the referee being asked to complete a standard 'Referee's Declaration'.

All those who will be leading or helping with children's clubs will also be asked for a DBS disclosure. This must now be a DBS specifically for children's work at The churches. While an application for a DBS disclosure is being processed, a new helper may join in with a children's club but only if they are under the supervision of an experienced, DBS checked leader.

Only once the Parish Safeguarding Officer is satisfied that suitable scrutiny has taken place will the individual be able to take up a position involving work with children. In addition, it will be our general practice not to have a single individual alone with a group of children for a prolonged period of time.

Occasional helpers with the crèche, including mothers of the children in the crèche, will not be expected to produce a DBS disclosure, but there will always be a Supervisor in the Crèche who has satisfied the Parish Safeguarding Officer in this way. Occasional helpers will never be left in sole charge of a child or group of children.

Examples of those who will need to satisfy the Parish Safeguarding Officer include:

- Children's Church Group Leaders and Helpers
- Crèche Supervisors
- Children and Youth Group leaders
- Holiday Club Helpers
- Helpers with the children's programme at occasional events such as a Weekend Away

The rota for each of these activities will take these principles into account. This therefore has a bearing on which individuals are available to cover for a leader who is unable to make a particular club. The Parish Safeguarding Officer should therefore be informed of all such swaps **in advance** where possible.

Parental and Child Information

Prior to a child being involved in a Children's Group, we will ask those responsible for the child to complete a 'Parent's Declaration'. This form asks for information about the child (e.g., name, age, medical condition) and about the parent (e.g., contact information). The form also requests the parent's consent for their child's involvement. This form must be completed at the beginning of the club/activity.

Registers

We need to keep accurate records of the attendance of children and adults. Registers will be provided for this purpose.

Incident Record Forms

Should any out of the ordinary incident occur (e.g., accident, injury, allegation of abuse), an incident record sheet should be completed by those either involved or responsible for taking action. This form asks for information regarding the incident and what action was taken. Incident report forms can be found in the vestry desk drawer.

After completing an incident report form, please return it to the Parish Safeguarding Officer. An annual review will be completed by the PSO to determine where there are trends of incidents occurring.

Maintaining Records

Information collected as detailed above will need to be carefully stored for possible referral in the future. Information stored securely in a lockable filing cabinet in the church vestry includes:

- Completed Leader's Declaration forms
- Completed Referee's Declaration forms
- Completed Registers
- Completed Incident Record forms

Information stored in the Children's Folder includes:

- Completed Parent's Declaration forms - with the emergency contact details.
- Registers currently in use.
- A copy of this policy and guidelines

These records will be kept indefinitely.

Training

We want to be able offer children the best possible care. We are committed to improving the leadership we offer to them. Therefore, we are committed to a continued pattern of training in teaching and looking after children (including the areas described in this document).

Photography

Images count as personal data under the General Data Protection Rules 2018. Therefore, before photographs of any kind are taken within children's groups the church requires consent in writing from a parent/guardian. If a photograph is taken by a Group Leader on their mobile phone for the purposes of a game/activity, this must be deleted immediately after use.

Phone & Social Media Contact

If Social Media, e-mail, or text messaging is used to contact children then the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- **Social Media:** Keep everything public and accessible to all users. Ensure that any social media is moderated and that there is appropriate access and password verification. If using Facebook, Twitter etc. ensure that the page you are using is one used for professional work purposes and not a personal page. Before sending any messages, please think how it could be interpreted by the recipient.
- **Text messaging:** Take extra care when using ensure that you save text messages as text files so that a record exists.

Leaders should not store contact details for young people on personal devices such as mobile phones and should refrain from contacting them via private messages.

1-to-1 Arrangements

1-to-1 bible studies are to be encouraged as a wonderful way of discipling young people, but leaders must be extra vigilant in these scenarios. The following guidance must be followed:

- Meetings must always take place in a public venue or with another leader present.
- Young people must always feel comfortable with the leader and know they are freely able to leave.

Travel Arrangements

Parents must be reminded that it is their responsibility to transport children to and from groups. Leaders must never be left alone with a young person, including car trips, or walking them home (unless parental consent has been explicitly granted). Where groups are being transported, the driver must ensure that suitable car seats are provided, and parental consent has been obtained.

Abuse and Neglect

Sadly, abuse and neglect do occur. Without being paranoid, we need to recognise this and to be alert to the possibility of abuse or neglect by either those within or without The churches. An explanation of abuse and neglect and some signs that might be associated with them are given at the back of this document. The following sections detail what action should be taken if abuse is alleged or suspected.

What to do if a child begins a conversation regarding inappropriate behaviour

The aim is to ensure that the child is given the opportunity to make the statement they want to make, as clearly and as fully as possible. This is **not** the time to investigate or to judge the matter. If possible, try to have another adult present whilst the child speaks (perhaps by delaying the conversation) However, do not prevent the child from speaking if this is not a possibility or if it would unduly inhibit the child.

Things to Do.

- **Provide an environment in which the child can explain clearly and fully the nature of their complaint.**
 - Give the child time to talk freely and without fear of being overheard.
 - Give the child your full attention.
 - Try to be sympathetic and to reassure the child that it is right to speak with you, e.g., 'Thank you for telling me'.
 - Stay with the child until you feel they have said everything they want to say.
- **Explain**
 - Explain to the child what you will do next in a way that they can understand and assure them that you will let them know what happens.
 - Find out whether they would be happy to speak to another adult about what they have said.
 - Try not to leave them in a distressed state.
- **Follow Up the Incident**
 - Write down as fully as possible the content of the conversation (include what you said and any observations of how the child appeared). Do this as soon as possible (ideally within an hour)
 - Speak as soon as possible to a 'responsible person' as explained in the next section.
 - Do not speak to anyone else about the matter at this stage.
 - If the child needs urgent medical attention, ensure that they receive it as soon as possible.
 - Ensure that the child is kept informed of what is happening.
 - Until further action is taken, where there is continued contact with the child, try to ensure that this is as normal possible. Only discuss the issue further if the child raises it.
- **Remember**
 - that the child may want the abuse to stop but still love the abuser
 - that the child may think that you are able to stop the abuse without anything else happening to that the child may have been bribed or threatened not to talk
- **Pray**

Things to Avoid.

- **Promising secrecy or confidentiality:** If pressed, explain that you will need to tell other responsible adults for the benefit of the child.
- **Investigating:** Be very careful not to put words into the child's mouth and don't press for information. Avoid asking questions except where it is absolutely necessary to clarify a point of detail.
- **Judging the situation:** Do not pass judgment on the child or the matter being presented. Rather just collect information. Even if they appear to you to have acted unwisely or to have broken a rule, at this stage avoid anything in your words or manner that is reproachful towards the child, e.g. 'Why didn't you tell me earlier?'
- **Embellishing details:** When making a disclosure to a Responsible Person (see below) try to recount only the facts the child confirmed to you, not what you suspect to be the case, this is important for the report to be accurate.
- **Panic or shock:** Try to retain your composure. Avoid appearing shocked or saying anything that might make the child feel more embarrassed about talking to you, e.g. 'I can't believe it!' 'Are you sure that this is true?'

What to do if you receive an allegation of, or suspect abuse of any kind

Children and young people should have the opportunity to raise any concerns about any health and safety or protection matters.

If you suspect, or any allegation is made to you (by a child or an adult), that some form of abuse has taken place (whether in the context of the churches activity or elsewhere), please contact one of the 'responsible persons' listed below as soon as possible. In normal circumstances those nearer the top of the list should be approached first. However, if one or more of the individuals is implicated in the suspicion or allegation, please contact one of the other 'responsible persons'. If all are implicated, you will need to contact a responsible external agency (e.g., Diocese of Sheffield Safeguarding Office, Social Services, NSPCC).

- The Parish Safeguarding Officers: **Deborah George (COGS) and Helen Acton (Barnby Dun)**
- The Minister: **Tom Brown**
- Pastoral Workers: **Deborah George (COGS) & Margaret Ottewell (Barnby Dun)**
- One of the Church Wardens: **Christine Rose & Lynn Shaw (COGS)
Colin Naylor (Barnby Dun)**

The action the 'responsible person' will take depends on the exact nature of the suspicion or allegation. In all cases they will:

- Ascertain from you the precise details of the allegation or suspicion (they may ask you to fill out an 'incident report' form)
- Inform other 'responsible persons' if necessary and appropriate.
- Keep a written record of information collected and decisions made using the 'incident report' form.

In addition, they will take the following action:

In the case of a suspicion or allegation of sexual abuse:

- Limit their investigation to clarifying specific details.
- Refer it to the Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- If it is urgent contact the Social Services Duty Worker, Police Child Protection Team or Sheffield Diocesan Safeguarding Officer for advice ensure that you then inform the Incumbent and the Parish Safeguarding Officer that this has been done.

In the case of a suspicion or allegation of other serious forms of abuse:

- Contact the Social Services Duty Worker, Police Child Protection Team or Sheffield Diocesan Safeguarding Officer for advice on the appropriate action to take.

In the case of physical assault:

- Ensure that medical attention has been received.
- Ensure that the police have been alerted.

If, at any stage, you feel that the child is in imminent danger, you should contact the police or Social Services immediately.

If you are not satisfied with the action that has been taken, then you retain a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the Social Services Department and should do so without hesitation.

What are abuse and neglect?

Abuse

Abuse involves potentially or actually causing harm to a child. It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- i. **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. It may also involve frequently frightening a child or making them feel in danger or persistent rejection or humiliation.
- ii. **Physical Abuse:** Causing physical harm to a child.
- iii. **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or potential involvement of a child in sexual activity or sexually inappropriate behaviour (including the production or use of pornographic material), whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes deliberately causing a child to look at such material or activity.
- iv. **Domestic abuse:** Domestic abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse has an impact on children because: they are at an increased risk of physical injury (by accident or because they attempt to intervene); they are greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent; exposure to parental conflict can lead to serious anxiety and distress; children in violent households are more likely to be exposed to other forms of abuse.
- v. **Spiritual abuse:** Within faith communities harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice, including the misuse of leadership authority or discipline, oppressive teaching, obtrusive/healing, and deliverance ministries (including abuse linked to belief in spiritual possession) or rituals, any of which may result in children experiencing physical, emotional, or sexual harm.
- vi. **Group leaders should also be aware that other forms of abuse can occur:**
 - Stranger abuse
 - By electronic communication, including internet abuse, or texting.
 - Bullying – including by electronic communication
 - Fabricated or induced illness
 - Abuse of disabled children
 - Deliberate self-harm
 - Allegations of possession by evil spirits
 - Child trafficking – including county lines
 - Sexual exploitation
 - Forced marriage
 - Peer abuse – including sexual abuse such as upskirting, etc.
 - Online abuse – including being drawn into extremist groups, pornography or online gambling, etc.

Neglect

Neglect involves a persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs. This includes failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, or appropriate medical care. It also includes failure to take reasonable steps to protect a child from potential or actual harm.

General Observations

- Abuse may be spontaneous or organised. Organised abuse involves one or more abusers and a number of abused children.
- Most cases of abuse or neglect involve those already known to the child rather than complete strangers.
- Abuse may be inflicted by other children.
- Children with special needs are especially vulnerable to abuse.

What signs are there of abuse?

Abuse and neglect of children can be difficult to spot. However, any of the following observations may be a sign of abuse or neglect. However, in many cases, there will be another explanation.

General Indicators / Indicators of Emotional Abuse

In general, **changes** in a child's behaviour or mood, either suddenly or over a period of time, may be significant. Such changes may be particularly important where a child becomes more **withdrawn** or more **aggressive**. Examples of such changes are listed below.

Mood

- Anxiety or depression
- 'Frozen watchfulness'
- Loss of ability to learn or concentrate.
- Obsessions, phobias, or fears
- Loss of self-esteem

Behaviour towards others

- Excessive attention seeking
- Truancy, running away or withdrawal.
- Aggression
- Stealing or Lying
- 'Clinginess'

Lifestyle

- Loss of appetite
- Eating disorders
- Severe sleep disturbances and persistent tiredness

Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Reluctance to reveal parts of the body (e.g., remove a jumper when hot)
- Repeated urinary infections or tummy pains.
- Marks of injury, especially injuries which:
 - have not received medical attention.
 - are not consistent with the explanation provided.
 - occur to the body in places not usually exposed to falls and other accidents.

Guide to Injuries

- Bruises, especially:
 - those in or around the mouth
 - those of different colours (indicates injuries of different ages)
 - those from fingertips, especially on arms, chest or face indicating tight gripping or shaking.
 - those from belt, implement, hand.
 - those around earlobes (also signs of tears)
 - those to head or soft tissue areas of the body
- Bite-marks
- Burns and scalds, especially:
 - those with a clear outline – in particular, circular (e.g., cigarette burn) or linear (e.g., from hot metal rod)
 - those of a uniform depth over a large area
 - those caused by friction (e.g., from being pulled across a carpet)
 - those surrounded by a clear water line (e.g., from immersion or pouring of hot water)
 - those surrounded by splash marks (e.g., where hot liquid has been thrown)
 - those that have caused scars (indicating previous burns)
- Fractures, especially:
 - Any fracture on a child under one year
 - Any skull fracture on a child under four years
- Cuts, scratches

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Level of sexual knowledge inappropriate to the child's age
- Indication of sexual activity through words, stories, drawing, games, or behaviour

- Inappropriate sexual behaviour towards adults or other children, especially where surprising given the age of the child.
- Pre-occupation with sexual matters and requests for sexual advice
- Allusions to unusual practices (e.g., unusual bed-sharing arrangements at home)

Neglect

- Under-nourishment
- Failure to grow.
- Constant hunger
- Stealing food
- Untreated illness

Each person involved in leading activities within the church community will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

The Rev’d Tom Brown, Vicar	/	/2021
Mr Colin Naylor, Churchwarden of Barnby Dun	/	/2021
Mrs Christine Rose, Churchwarden of COGS	/	/2021
Mrs Lynn Shaw, Churchwarden of COGS	/	/2021

APPENDIX B: POLICY STATEMENT ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the PCCs:

- a. complies fully with the [DBS Code of Practice](#) and undertakes to treat all applicants for voluntary or paid positions fairly.
- b. undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- c. can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that the churches are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended).
- d. can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- e. 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 dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- f. has a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all DBS applicants at the start of the recruitment process.
- g. actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.
- h. selects all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- i. only submits an application for a criminal record check to the DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts, and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- j. ensures that all those who are involved in its recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences, and that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g., the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- k. ensures that at interview, or in a separate discussion, an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- l. makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the [code of practice](#) and makes a copy available on request.
- m. undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Further information regarding conviction information

On the 29 May 2013, legislation came into force that allows certain old and minor cautions and convictions to no longer be subject to disclosure. In addition, employers will no longer be able to take an individual's old and minor cautions and convictions into account when making decisions.

All cautions and convictions for specified serious violent and sexual offences, and other specified offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, will remain subject to disclosure. In addition, all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended, will remain subject to disclosure, as will all convictions where an individual has more than one conviction recorded.¹

Further guidance for applicants:

Any applicants may find guidance and criteria on the UK Government Disclosure and Barring Service website which explains the filtering of old and minor cautions and convictions which are now 'protected' so not subject to disclosure to employers. This can be found at www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-filtering-guidance

¹ See Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013; and Police Act 1997 (Criminal Record Certificates: Relevant Matters) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013 See Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013; and Police Act 1997 (Criminal Record Certificates: Relevant Matters) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013.