

Bishop Hannington Church

Procedures for the Implementation of Child Protection

Bishop Hannington Church is committed to implementing the House of Bishops' Child Protection Policy 'Protecting All God's Children' (2004) and the Diocese of Chichester Policy, Procedures and Good Practice document for the prevention of Child Abuse (2002). It applies to all activities, regular and occasional, involving children and young people.

1. Responsibilities of the PCC

1.1 The church has a significant children's and young people's ministry. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) accepts its responsibility to make all reasonable endeavours to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people within the church's care. For the purpose of this policy the use of 'children' should be taken to include children and young people who are under 18 years of age.

2. Mission Statement

2.1 As part of the mission of the church, the PCC is committed to:

- Listen to, relate effectively and value children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within church activities
- Encourage and support parents and carers
- Ensure that children's and youth workers are given support and training
- Having a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Maintaining good links with statutory child care authorities
- Supporting victims of abuse, and encouraging them in their faith

3. Diocesan and Parish Policies

3.1 The PCC recognises that many children today are the victims of neglect, and physical, sexual, spiritual and emotional abuse. It is also well aware that churches are far from immune from such dangers and may indeed be targeted by offenders against children. Accordingly, the PCC has formally adopted the Diocesan Policy for the Care and Protection of Children (2002), the Parish Child Protection Policy Statement (2006) and the Procedures for Implementation (2006) contained in this document.

4. Child Protection Representatives

4.1 The PCC will appoint a Child Protection Representative and a Deputy Child Protection Representative. They will have an overview of all the children's activities at, and connected with, the church, taking responsibility for the implementation of child protection procedures and liaising as necessary with the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection. These appointments will be made known to the clergy and staff and congregation and these people will be identified as a point of contact for adults or children who have any concerns connected with child protection issues. For the purpose of this policy, the use of Child Protection Representatives can be taken to include the Deputy Child Protection Representatives unless explicitly stated otherwise.

5. Vetting Staff and Volunteers

5.1 All adults, whether through their position as a member of the clergy, staff or congregation at Bishop Hannington or of any external organisation or their role as a volunteer, have to undergo checks as to their eligibility before they are engaged in any regular or occasional activity involving children. They will be required to complete the following procedures.

- 5.2 **The Information Form (appendix 1)** requires all prospective workers to provide personal data and the names of two appropriate referees
- 5.3 **The Declaration Form (appendix 2)** asks for information about health, Criminal Record, orders of civil courts and other conduct for those who will work with children or hold the Bishop's Licence.
- 5.4 **CRB Checks.** They are also required to undergo checks by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) in order to obtain an *Enhanced Disclosure*, which, overrules the 1974 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
- 5.5 **Parish Agreement.** The Chichester Diocesan Board of Finance acts as the Church's umbrella body for disclosure requests from the Criminal Records Bureau according to the parish agreement dated 21/01/04 and, through the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection, provides training, support and information.
- 5.6 **Disclosure Application Forms** are obtained from and returned to Church House, Hove which deals directly with the CRB on behalf of the Diocese. After processing by the CRB, replies are sent both to the applicant and to Church House, which informs Bishop Hannington of the outcome. The CRB will indicate the period of time for which the disclosures are valid.
- 5.7 **Validation.** The Disclosure Application must be signed off under Section X of the form by an approved Validator in the Church who has undertaken CRB training. These will be one of the Child Protection Representatives or Church Administrators, to whom proof of identity and residence must be shown.
- 5.8 **Portability.** CRB disclosures already obtained for paid or voluntary work with other agencies or organisations are not transferable (or 'portable') to youth and children's workers at Bishop Hannington, unless the disclosure has been obtained through the Diocese of Chichester for the same kind of work within the last two years.
- 5.9 **Blemished Disclosures**, i.e. checks that reveal information, which may indicate that a person is ineligible or unsuitable for work with children, are assessed by the Bishop's Advisor and the Vicar who will inform the applicant of their decision.
- 5.10 **Records and Renewals.** Records of CRB disclosures are kept in confidence both by Church House, Hove and at Bishop Hannington. Currently all existing disclosures are to be considered valid until further instructions are issued by the Criminal Records Bureau, which is undertaking a major overhaul of the system to cope with its rapid expansion. The self-declaration forms (appendix 1 and 2) are kept in a secure place in the Church. They must be renewed every THREE years. It is our duty to keep up to date and accurate records for every adult in the church who has contact with children through their role or through some activity. The records are also held on a spreadsheet within the church's electronic information system. Any incidents verbal or physical (including 'near-misses') and concerns over any dangers (present or potential) which threaten to put at risk the safety of children in the church **MUST** be reported to the Vicar, the Wardens or the Child Protection Representatives and kept on permanent record. Each of them should also be aware of and have on record names of any perpetrators of abuse within the congregation.
- WARNING.** Records are not infallible. Only 5% of people charged with an offence against children are actually convicted. CRB disclosures do not include adults under surveillance, suspicion or investigation. Many incidents of child abuse go unreported.

6. Recruitment

- 6.1 **Checks and considerations** regarding the protection and welfare of children are a critical factor in the selection and appointment of staff and volunteers. The level of access to and involvement with children should be clearly defined in the specifications for each appointment.

- 6.2 **Any offer of employment** or voluntary work involving contact with children shall be subject to receiving satisfactory references and a clean 'Enhanced CRB Disclosure' and to satisfactory completion of a trial period of six months of appointment.
- 6.3 **The PCC** may invite or nominate people to help with children's work provided they have been a part of the congregation for at least six months.

7. Induction

- 7.1 The church has a duty to provide newly appointed children's workers an induction into Child Protection and Welfare as determined by the Child Protection Representatives and approved by the PCC.
- 7.2 **Essential Reading.** Everyone involved with work with children and young people at the church should, as part of their induction, receive and be familiar with the following documents:
- The Parish Child Protection Policy Statement
 - The Policy Implementation Procedures (this document)
 - The Diocesan Good Practice Guidelines (appendix 5)
 - Recognising signs of abuse and neglect (appendix 3)
 - How to respond to a child who wants to talk about abuse (appendix 4)
- 7.3 **Senior Staff and Children's Group Leaders** should in addition have access to and be familiar with:
- Protecting all God's Children (CofE House of Bishops 2004)
 - The Care and Protection of Children (Diocese of Chichester 2002)
- These are available from the Church Office and the Child Protection Representatives.
- 7.5 **The Child Protection Representative** will meet with newly appointed staff and volunteers to go through the key documents, ensure their understanding of basic procedures and best practice and to discuss the responsibilities and expectations of their individual role where matters of children's safety are concerned.
- 7.6 **Children's Leaders** may also be part of the induction process regarding welfare issues to do with the location, activities, age-range and individuals specific to their group.

8. Training and Support

- 8.1 All children's and youth workers should attend Child Protection Training within twelve months of their appointment and every three years thereafter.
- 8.2 **The Training Programme** is organised for the Diocese by the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection, Tony Sellwood. The calendar of training seminars is posted on the Diocesan website (www.diochi.org.uk), in BH Church Office, and is obtainable from our Child Protection Representatives or by email from Tony Sellwood (Sellwood@ukgateway.net).
- 8.3 **Training Events (2006-2007)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Church** (held at BH on 25 November 2006) is aimed at all people working with children and the PCC. A training booklet and a Certificate of Attendance are issued.
 - **Criminal Records Bureau Revisited** useful for Child Protection Representatives, clergy and administrators.
 - **Threat or Challenge?** To consider implications when child sex offenders become part of the congregation.
 - **Workshop for Child Protection Representatives**
These events usually take place at Church House, Hove and are repeated elsewhere in the Diocese.
- 8.4 **Support.** The PCC and the Child Protection Representatives have a duty to monitor and support all those who have some degree of responsibility for children's welfare within Bishop Hannington. The Bishops Advisor, Tony Sellwood is our first point of contact within the Diocese. Tony is also a Senior Social Worker for West Sussex and a respected

authority in this field of Children's Welfare. He will inform and advise us as individuals, in small groups or as a whole church, as well as our sister churches and church plants. Tony can be contacted on 01903 732307 or 0773 0420333 or at Felton, 35 Southfields Road, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 6PA.

The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) is an independent Christian Charity with whom BH is registered. It offers a range of support services, including useful training resources (Tel: 0845 120 4550).

9. Risk Assessment

- 9.1 Every activity involving children and the place where it is held are subject to a risk assessment of the potential obstacles and dangers to children's Health, Safety and Security (HSS) in and out of church.
- 9.2 **A whole church HSS audit** (including the church hall) should be conducted by the Wardens and Child Protection Representatives both of each area of the building and of the full range of activities in overview where children are present, from regular services to occasional events such as holiday clubs.
- 9.3 **The Children's activity leaders**, in conjunction with their team, should carry out a HSS risk assessment, which has a bearing on the choice, planning and organisation of each activity, the suitability of the location, the staffing ratio and the use of materials and equipment.
- 9.4 **Other organisations or parties** wishing to use the church premises for activities involving children will be required to complete a risk assessment covering Health and Safety and Child Protection.
- 9.5 **Risk Assessment Forms.** Team leaders should obtain forms from the church administrators and complete one assessment a year for groups which meet regularly. An activity (such as a one-off event) which presents risks not included in the groups annual assessments must be covered by a separate form.

10. Health, Safety and Security

- 10.1 **The Bishop Hannington Health and Safety Policy** applies to every activity in the church including children's work. The Child Protection Representatives and all the children's group leaders must be familiar with the policy and have a duty to ensure that their helpers know the procedures especially in the case of fire and accident, access to First Aid equipment and to people trained in First Aid, and measures to ensure the safety of electrical equipment. The focus of the risk assessment will naturally be on prevention.
- 10.2 **Extra health and safety precautions for children** should include:
 - Careful supervision of activities involving glass, craft knives, scissors, or other sharp objects
 - The avoidance of glue, pens and other materials containing strong solvents
 - Wariness in offering food which may provoke allergic reactions
 - Caution in permitting stunts or extreme acts which might cause injury if they go wrong
 - Keeping children out of the kitchen unless closely supervised
 - Keeping children away from electrical equipment and cables wherever possible
 - Not allowing children to carry heavy objects, sit on stacks of tables and chairs, to jump on or off furniture, or throw objects across the room
 - Call parents immediately if children are unwell, have an accident or are clearly distressed
 - Only give medication to children expressly with their parents' consent
- 10.3 **Security.** The following procedure (see appendix 5) should be regarded as standard for children's groups meeting on the main church site but may be varied at the discretion of the group leaders of older children meeting offsite in consultation with the Child Protection Representatives, provided security is not compromised.

- A register should be taken and kept on record of all children present
- Frequent or long-term absence might be an issue of care but should only be investigated if there are other grounds for concern
- At the end of the activity, children, at least up to the age of 11 should only be released to a known and authorised parent, guardian or foster carer. Any other person (e.g. relative, friend or partner) must have their parents' explicit permission.
- Leaders and helpers of groups for older children (if not collected) should be kept informed by parents if they are satisfied that their children are able to make their own way home in safety
- Collecting children from or taking them home by car should follow the procedure laid down in the Diocesan Policy under 'Transport'
- Younger children (under 11) should be escorted to and from the toilet but their privacy should not be invaded whilst washing or toileting
- Be sure that children do not wander off on their own or out of sight, especially not outside the building
- Ensure that doors and windows are secure (locked if necessary) and access is restricted to authorised people (e.g. church wardens)
- Photography should not be allowed except with parents' permission

11. Behaviour

11.1 It is vital to children's sense of security that their activities are led by responsible adults in a firm, calm and controlled manner and that young people are treated with the respect and dignity befitting their age.

11.2 **Encouraging Positive Behaviour.** The following procedures will help to create a secure, happy environment:

- Choose, plan and organise activities that are appropriate to the age, abilities and character of the group and designed to engage their undivided attention
- The timing and variety of activities are important. Encourage participation (more "hands on", less talk from the front)
- Using the whole team of adults to divide the children into small groups often makes children feel more secure and involved, hence better behaved
- Treat children equally – avoid 'picking' on any one child, showing favouritism or excessive attention
- Intervene immediately in any instance of bullying, ridicule, and threatening or aggressive behaviour.
- Ensure that no game is allowed to become physically rough, sexually provocative or excessively boisterous.
- Discourage the use of foul or aggressive language

11.3 **Sanctions.** Most children will feel more secure if they know there are boundaries and sanctions for overstepping them. Here are a few suggestions if they do:

- A firm, calm reprimand will check most minor misbehaviour
- Avoid overreacting: shouting at, embarrassing and humiliating a child may make matters worse
- Don't touch or strike a child in anger. Stay calm and in control if, in exceptional circumstances, you need to use physical restraint
- Talking/listening to a child one-to-one (but not out of sight of others) can be very effective in changing their behaviour
- Isolating or excluding a child for a time from the group may provide temporary relief
- Parents should be involved if bad behaviour recurs; you can ask them to collect their child during the service if necessary.

11.4 **Prayer** is a powerful influence. **Praying to God** for His guidance and inspiration in our work; **praying with children** to create a calm, positive and focussed atmosphere; and **praying for children** with emotional and behavioural difficulties in the hope of bringing God's blessing and grace upon their lives.

12. Recognising and responding to abuse

12.1 An outline of how youth and children's workers and volunteers can recognise and should respond to possible cases of abuse can be found in appendices 3 & 4 and will be made available to all workers when they start. If abuse is suspected to have occurred, the certain actions should be taken.

12.2 Concerns are to be reported as soon as possible to Children's Child Protection Representative who acts on the behalf of PCC in referring all allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. Allegations or suspicions of abuse should be notified to the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection. The Children's Child Protection Representative and their deputy will be identified regularly in the church newsletter.

12.3 If the suspicions in any way implicate either the Children's Child Protection Representative and/or the deputy Children's Child Protection Representative, then the report should be made directly to the incumbent who, in turn will notify the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection.

12.4 If the suspicions in any way implicate the incumbent then the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection should be contacted as a matter of urgency.

12.5 Where any adult has any cause to suspect abuse he/she should not discuss the suspicions with anyone other than those nominated above.

12.6 It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection. However, we expect that members of the church will use the process outlined in this document and the Diocesan Child Protection Policy. If, however, you feel that the Children's Representative or Deputy has not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the statutory services direct. We hope by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of the church to effective child protection.

12.7 Concerns about physical injury or neglect.

Where the Children's Representative is made aware of concerns about a physical injury or symptoms of neglect, the Children's Representative will:

- speak to the workers involved with the child
- advise the parent / guardian to seek emergency medical help where this is needed and abuse is not suspected.
- where the parent / carer is unwilling to seek help, if appropriate, the Child Protection Representative will offer to go with them. If they still fail to act, the Child Protection Representative should, in cases of real concern, contact Social Services or the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection for advice.
- contact the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection or social services for advice in cases of deliberate injury or where concerned about the child's safety. The parents should not be informed in these circumstances
- once a child has talked about abuse, the worker and leader, ideally in consultation with the Child Protection Representative, should consider whether or not it is safe for the child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact the social services and / or police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.
- where the Child Protection Representative is unsure whether or not to refer a case to Social Services, then advice from the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection be sought. This advice will be confirmed in writing.

12.8 Allegations of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations of suspicions of sexual abuse, the Child Protection Representative will:

- Inform the vicar or, during a period of interregnum, the wardens.
- Contact the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection on 01903 732307.
 - *and in an emergency* the Brighton and Hove Social Services Department. Contact the Central Area team (based in Bartholomew Square, Brighton) on 01273 294470 or 0769 939 1462 (out of hours only)

NB The Children's Representative will not speak to the parent (or anyone else) until advised by Social Services that it is appropriate to do so.

- Once a child has talked about abuse, the worker and leader, ideally in consultation with the Child Protection Representative, should consider whether or not it is safe for the child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact the social services and / or police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.
- If, for any reason, the Child Protection Representative is unsure whether or not to follow the above, then advice from the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection will be sought and followed. The Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection will confirm the advice given in writing.
- Under no circumstances will the Child Protection Representative attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse. The role of the Child Protection Representative is to collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to the Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989. Whilst allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the Child Protection Representative the absence of the Child Protection Representative or Deputy should not delay referral to the Social Services Department and the Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection
- Exceptionally, should there be any disagreement between the person in receipt of the allegation or suspicion and the Child Protection Representative as to the appropriateness of a referral to the Social Services Department, that person retains a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the Social Services Department, and should do so without hesitation.
- The PCC will support the Child Protection Representative in their role, and accept that any information they may from time to time have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

13. Outside Groups

The PCC also have a duty of care towards outside groups using the church premises. This means that they will be informed of the procedures they should follow and that the following clause is incorporated into any booking form that is used: 'You are required to ensure that children are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any injury, loss, damage or harm'.

14. Staffing Levels

These are as recommended in the Diocese Good Practice, namely:

0-2 years	1 person for every 3 children
2-3 years	1 person for every 4 children
3-8 years	1 person for every 8 children
Over 8 years	1 person for the first 8 children and then one extra person for every extra 12 children.

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

If groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with doors open one person per group is allowed. Young people aged between 14 and 18 may help with groups but should be supervised by an adult helper who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and the child protection procedures are followed.

Adults asked to help on a very occasional basis may be seen as visitors but must be responsible to an appointed worker.

15. Insurance

The PCC has Public Liability and Third Party Insurance up to £5 million to cover all activities both on and off site, provided they are deemed to be part of the work of the church. The policy includes Legal Protection Insurance to cover legal costs resulting from allegations made against its employees or volunteers. In such cases the insurers would expect the good practice laid down in the Diocesan and House of Bishops' policies to be implemented as closely as possible.

16. Parents

- 16.1 It is absolutely essential that, when parents entrust their children into the care of the Church, they can be sure that the children are in safe and secure hands. 'Parent' here means the legal parent, guardian or foster-carer. A relationship of trust between youth workers and parents will help children to be safe and more secure in church. The following points are important:
- 16.2 Youth workers and parents should recognise and know each other.
- Regular communications between them will provide an opportunity to air any issues concerning the care and protection of their children.
 - Youth workers need to know who has legal custody of the children; if they are looked after, fostered, adopted or whose parents are separated or divorced (where a court ruling about access may be in force).
 - It is the responsibility of parents to keep youth workers informed of any factors which might adversely affect their child's welfare, eg family breakdown, illness, bereavement, stress, learning difficulties.
 - Parents should be welcome to stay in the group, especially in Scramblers and Climbers, if their children are feeling insecure; they should not, however, become involved with other children unless agreed by the group leader.
 - Parents should be called if their children are sick, have an accident, appear distressed or if their behaviour intimidates other children.
- 16.3 While the vast majority of parents are pleasant and supportive, a few may pose a threat to the protection and security of children in our care in such ways as:
- Displaying inappropriate attention to or interest in other children
 - Touching a child in an undesirable manner
 - Aggressive and intimidating behaviour towards children or adults in the presence of children
 - Use of foul and abusive language
- Prompt intervention will be required but every effort must be made to avoid provoking an ugly confrontation in public. The Child Protection Representatives, Wardens and the Vicar should be informed at once. If there is a suspicion that a parent may be guilty of child abuse then the procedures outlined in Section 12 should be followed.

17. Publicity and Awareness

- 17.1 The profile and awareness of the Church's commitment to and provision for Child Protection need to be raised in the eye of the whole congregation and especially parents and children. The following simple steps could get things moving:
- Displaying the Parish Child Protection Policy Statement in all areas of the church where children's activities take place and in the foyer.
 - An annual newsletter to parents and a leaflet for all new parents of children joining a group
 - Occasional announcements in BH News or during the news spot in church services
 - The Child Protection Representatives making themselves and their work better known to the congregation
- The message that BH is strong on Child Protection should serve both to reassure families in our church and to discourage potential offenders against children.

18. Transport

- 18.1 The Diocesan Policy contains detailed guidelines for the safe transporting of children by private car and minibus. These cover parental consent, insurance, roadworthiness, passenger numbers, escorts, convictions and endorsements. Drivers must consult these guidelines, preferably giving a signed undertaking, before driving children anywhere.

19. Off-site activities, Holiday Clubs and Missions

19.1 The essential measures for Health & Safety and Child Protection apply equally to these one-off events. There may be several new or one-off helpers involved in Holiday Clubs and Missions who may need to be briefed on the church's Child Protection procedures. Off-site activities will require additional insurance, parental consent and a named person back home as a contact in case of emergency.

20. Sister Churches and Church Plants

20.1 The PCC of Bishop Hannington has a duty to ensure that its sister churches and plants at Holy Cross, Goldstone and Aldrington have signed the Parish Child Protection Policy Statement and are implementing the procedures and good practice advocated in the Diocesan Policy and Guidelines. The Child Protection Representatives will need to monitor their provision from time to time and be ready to exchange information and advice with their counterparts whenever appropriate.

This document will be revised in November 2007

Revised and updated November 2006