



Halewood Ecumenical Parish

ST NICHOLAS' AND ST MARY'S CHURCH



Safeguarding children policy and procedures

The Church of England and the Methodist Church* recognise the unique status of children and young people within the Christian tradition. There is a particular responsibility to respect them as individuals, protect their vulnerability and nurture them. Jesus had a high regard for children and called his followers to identify strongly with children.

As Christians, we are therefore required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness.

The trust and dependency of children and young people must never be compromised or violated by those who work within the Church community. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people.

***ST NICHOLAS' AND ST MARY'S CHURCHES THEREFORE COMMIT THEMSELVES TO PROVIDING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL THEIR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.**

* We endorse and will implement best practice as contained in the Diocesan policy, 'Safeguarding children Policy and procedures (2011) and the Methodist policy* 'Safeguarding Children and Young People (2010)'.

* We accept the principles for protecting children outlined in the Department for Education Guidance 'working together to safeguard children (April 2013) and will seek to implement the best possible practice.

* The highest standards will be maintained in all contact with children and young people, and adult volunteers will be given appropriate training and support.

* The exploitation of any relationship for self-gratification will not be tolerated. Allegations of the abuse of children will be taken seriously and the appropriate authorities informed.

* We have clear procedures for supporting and supervising all our work with children and young people.

CHILDREN - IF YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS ABOUT YOUR TREATMENT HERE, PLEASE CONTACT THE UNDER 18s CO-ORDINATOR GILLIAN McIVER .

CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE AND GUIDANCE IS ALSO AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY BY TELEPHONING FREE OF CHARGE: **CHILDLINE ON 08001111**

ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH AND ST MARY'S CHURCH

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROCEDURES

Section 1-The Framework.

1. General

The procedures are the basis of good practice in these Churches' care of children and young people. All who work with children and young people should have a copy of these procedures and sign to implement them.

The HCC and Clergy Team have appointed **Gillian McIver** as the Under 18s Co-ordinator in the Parish to assist in the process of protection. Her role is to provide support to adults, to advise the HCC, work with the Clergy Team and to be a reference person for the development of good practice in Safeguarding children. She can be contacted on 0151 488 0957.

The Team Rector has been given lead responsibility for the oversight and support for children's work within the Parish and will work closely with the Under 18s Co-ordinator to ensure best practice in this area. (The HCC has also set up an Under 18s Leadership Group to provide support, direction and training to those involved in leading on the children and young people's work in the Parish. This group will normally meet annually)

2. Independent Advice

Our Churches fulfil their commitment to providing independent advice and support for children and young people by displaying the numbers of a local contact person and Childline in prominent places in the Church buildings

The role of the Independent Person is to provide an opportunity for children and young people to speak with somebody outside of the immediate situation about any concerns they might have.

3. Register of Roles and Adults

The Under 18s Co-ordinator will keep a register of the various roles and activities within the Parish undertaken with those under 18, and a register of those who have been authorised by the HCC to have access to these young people.

Young people from the age of 16 –18 years can become Assistant or Junior leaders, providing they sign a Self Declaration form and attend the Parish Safeguarding Training Course. However, they must not be classed as an adult leader as they cannot have that legal responsibility or work unsupervised and as such should be seen as an additional resource over and above the required staffing ratios.

HCC will authorise annually those who hold a current DBS Disclosure and have attended a Parish Safeguarding Training course within the last 3 years. The Clergy Team and the HCC reserve the right to withdraw or restrict such authorisation.

The HCC recognises the appointment procedures of the Scout and Guide movements (plus appropriate others) as being equivalent to the Parish procedures. All such leaders should hold a current DBS Disclosure through their appropriate organisation. HCC will authorise those leaders to work with children and young people in the Parish, providing that the Under 18s Co-ordinator has sight of their DBS Disclosure and they complete a Self Declaration form every 3 years. They must also attend a Parish Safeguarding Training course at least once every 3 years.

4. Declaration

All those to be authorised to work with under 18s are requested to complete a Declaration form concerning any past behaviour that might exclude them from working with under 18s. The Declaration form needs to be redone every 3 years.

In addition, all those authorised to work with children and young people will need to obtain an enhanced Disclosure certificate from the Criminal Records Bureau. All DBS checks need to be renewed every 5 years.

5. Roles and training

Those appointed to work with under 18s will receive an agreed role description and will be provided with support and training in their task.

All those who work with children and young people must attend the Parish Safeguarding Training course at least once every 3 years (or more regularly at discretion of the Incumbent). Failure to attend will result in HCC withdrawing authorisation for that person to work with under 18s in the Parish.

When new leaders are appointed they will have an induction meeting with the Under 18s Co-ordinator or the Incumbent, who will explain these procedures and ensure that the requirements for the appointment of new leaders have been met.

Newly appointed volunteers will be requested to undertake a three - month probationary period at the end of which they will meet with the person to whom they are responsible to review their work and make arrangements for the future.

An Induction Matrix will be completed by the U18s Coordinator for all new volunteers. Copies of completed forms will be passed to the group leader. See Appendix A

6. Special Needs

Particular care must be exercised with children or young people with special needs. Consult with the Under 18s Co-ordinator who will have access to specialist advice if this is appropriate. See page 11 in the Diocesan Safeguarding Handbook. See also Appendix B

7. Unsupervised Access

As a general principle, group leaders should ensure that programmes do not offer unsupervised access to under 18s. This requires careful planning in multi-room venues.

Where planned one-to-one working is essential to the role of an individual volunteer, it is a requirement that parents or guardians should be informed directly by the volunteer that the access of the worker is unsupervised and they should have the opportunity, without prejudice, to withdraw their child.

The HCC recognises that spontaneous situations do occur (unexpected home visits or offering lifts etc.) but volunteers should be aware of potential risks to themselves and the child. Such casual spontaneous actions create particular situations of temptation and, conversely, scope for false allegations.

The HCC therefore advises that particular care should be taken to:

- a) ensure that another adult is aware of the spontaneous activity/visit (retrospectively if need be)
- b) ensure that (if at all possible) another adult is present for home visits
- c) ensure that only normal 'daytime' rooms are used - not bedrooms or bathrooms
- d) ensure that lifts offered are by an agreed route and timescale and that any variation is fully explained at the time

IN SHORT: KEEP SUCH ACTIVITIES PUBLIC AND ACCOUNTABLE

Section 2-The Task. - Creating a safe environment.

1. Staffing

Whenever possible volunteers should not work on their own. Where this is absolutely necessary for confidentiality then it should be at known times agreed by parents or guardians, and other adults should be in the vicinity.

With groups it is advised that a minimum of two volunteers work together. Where the group is mixed then it is recommended that a female volunteer is present. This Parish is happy for family members to work together (provided there is another adult present).

Minimum ratios are recommended as follows: -

0-2 years	1 adult to 3 children.
2-3 years	1 adult to 4 children.
3-8 years	1 adult to 8 children.
8+	1 adult to 10 children.

Particular activities, vigorous sports, journeys or work with young people with special needs may require a higher ratio.

The key issues are adequate control, supervision and the ability to cope with an emergency in the event of injury or illness to a leader or group members.

If you are in doubt about staffing consult with the Clergy Team or the Under 18s Co-ordinator.

2. Insurance

These Churches have an insurance policy with Ecclesiastical Direct Insurance, St Mary's Nursery with Sterling Insurance and St Mary's Care Centre with Allianz Cornhill. Current certificates are displayed in: -

St Nicholas Church – in the entrance porch
St Nicholas Centre - in the foyer

St Mary's Church - in the Vestry
St Mary's Nursery – in the foyer opposite the Nursery office
St Mary's Care Centre - in the Centre Administrator's office

You must ensure that your group activities are covered by this policy. If not specific insurance cover must be taken out. Any specific activities, camps, etc. will almost certainly need special cover.

All activities, trips and events must be authorised by HCC (either at the HCC meeting or at the U 18s Leadership meeting) and should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. See Appendix C for details of cover.

A Risk Assessment must be completed for all activities, trips etc. outside of normal club activities. A copy should be given to the Incumbent or the U18s Co-ordinator. See Appendix D.

Authorised volunteers are welcome to work with children and young people in the parish until their 80th birthday. After that time they will not be covered by insurance and HCC will withdraw their authorisation.

3. Fire Regulations

There is a copy of the fire regulations and drill in: -

St Nicholas Church – in the entrance porch
St Nicholas Centre - at all exit doors, the kitchen and main foyer

St Mary's Church – in the Front Foyer and Rear Foyer;
St Mary's Nursery - in the kitchen by each serving hatch
St Mary's Care Centre – on exit notices around the room and just inside the door leading from the Church foyer

Please ensure you are familiar with the procedures in an emergency.
Hold a fire drill every 12 months.

The nearest accessible telephones are: -

St Nicholas' Church - in the St Nicholas Centre, and outside the Eagle and Child Pub, Church Road
St Mary's Church - at the corner of Wood Road, Leathers Lane.

4. First Aid

A simple first aid box is kept in: -

St Nicholas Church - vestry
St Nicholas Centre - kitchen and main foyer

St Mary's Church - crèche room
St Mary's Nursery - Nursery office and kitchen
St Mary's Care Centre – kitchen and office

All groups should also have their own First Aid kit
Try to ensure that at least one leader is a trained First Aider. The Halewood and Hunts Cross Team will aim to run 'First Response' courses at least once every three years.

Do not administer drugs except where it is essential, and then obtain the written consent of a parent or guardian, and agree in writing that the leader or HCC accepts no liability.

5. Accidents

Any accident, however small, should be logged by the leader and a copy kept. It should also be entered into the accident book, which is located in each First Aid Box. Parents/guardians should always be informed of any accident.

6. Booking Rooms

HCC has a policy which governs our work with children and young people. Those who use our premises agree to work within the guidelines of that policy, a copy of which is available from the Parish Office.

7. Supervision of Under 8s

If you are working with under 8s, consult with the Under 18s Co-ordinator to ensure that the requirements of the 1989 Children Act are being satisfied.

8. Registration and Parental Consent

When children and young people join a group an Information and Consent Form should be completed by the parent or guardian. This should include personal information about the child (e.g. name, address, date of birth etc.), emergency contact numbers and medical details. A new form should be completed for each child every September. If leaders are told verbally of any changes to the information held, then they should ask the parent or guardian to put them in writing. See Appendix E.

If your group is undertaking an activity outside of its normal range you should secure specific parental or guardian consent. (Specimen forms can be found at pages 28 -30 'Safeguarding Children'.)

The Information and Consent Form also asks permission for the child to be included when photographs or videos are taken of any activities. Any photograph/video has to be part of a group as part of an activity, with a leader present giving permission. Children should not be named or identified in any photographs/videos. If photographs/videos are to be displayed in public or on any website, then additional permission needs to be obtained. Mobile phones must not be used to take photos or videos.

9. Attendance

You should keep a proper record of attendance of members of your group and adults present. Each September, the register from the previous year should be handed to the Under 18s Co-ordinator for archiving.

10. Substance abuse

Alcohol should not be consumed by leaders during an organised activity, nor should those under the age of 18 be allowed to consume alcohol during an organised activity.

Adults and young people who attend an activity under the influence of alcohol should be sent home. Parents/Guardians should be contacted to collect the young person.

There is also a zero tolerance approach towards the use of drugs.

11. Smoking

It is now against the law to smoke in all 'enclosed' and 'substantially enclosed' public places and workplaces. All buildings for which HCC is responsible, and any other premises in which activities take place, must be smoke free. HCC is legally required to prevent people from smoking on its premises, and leaders of groups and activities have a responsibility to ensure that this is adhered to. HCC will ensure that no-smoking signs are displayed in all its buildings. Smoking is not allowed in vehicles in which children, young people or other leaders are present. If leaders must smoke during a break in an activity, they should do so out of sight of children and young people. If leaders want help to give up smoking, HCC will do what it can to support them.

12. Internet

Where children or young people have access to the Internet during a session, it should be only with an adult leader present.

13. Access to other media

For activities where children and young people have access to other forms of media e.g. videos, CDs, DVDs and printed materials, it is the responsibility of the leaders to ensure that under 18s are not exposed to inappropriate material.

14. Mobile Phones

Groups should have a policy regarding the use of mobile phones during activities (e.g. whether members are allowed access to phones). Leaders should be aware of potential problems related to voice, text and picture messages and ensure that members are not exposed or responsible for inappropriate material.

15. Social Networking Sites (Sns)

Social Networking sites create further issues which are not covered in previous sections. Again, guidance around consent, accountability, curfew and language should be followed in using social networking sites. Further guidance is available in the diocesan safeguarding policy.

16. Drivers

All who are asked to drive children and young people on any trips or activities must hold a current DBS Disclosure, have signed a Self Declaration form and attended a Parish Safeguarding Training course within the last 3 years. All drivers must be over 25 years of age and have at least 2 years driving experience. It is the responsibility of group leaders to check the driving licence and insurance documents of any person who is going to drive children or young people on any trip or activity. Checks should be made annually and leaders should keep a record that the documents have been seen. If the group leader is to be the driver, his/her documents need to be checked by either the U18s Co-ordinator or the Incumbent. See Appendix F

Groups transporting children under 12 years old by car should also be aware of the regulations regarding Child Seats and Booster Cushions.

17. Dealing with Incidents

The majority of behavioural issues can be dealt with through conversations between the leaders and the child, and may also involve the parent/guardian. However, a protocol has been agreed to assist in managing difficulties and dealing with incidents and should be used if matters cannot be resolved in this way. See Appendix G

18. Protection for Leaders

HCC is aware of its responsibility for the protection of children and young people, and also recognises its duty of care to the leaders/helpers of groups working with Under 18s. This includes:-

- Protection for leaders against malicious allegations.
- Support for leaders in case of criticism or complaints being made against them.
- Support for leaders when parents or other adults are felt to be hostile, abusive or threatening. HCC has a zero tolerance policy towards the abuse of employees or volunteers and will take whatever action it deems necessary to protect them, including informing the police.

Any incidents should be logged and independent written statements obtained from witnesses (other leaders, children/young people, parents/guardians). Copies should be passed to the Incumbent and U18s Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity. The Incumbent will make a decision as to how the matter should be dealt with, referring to HCC if necessary and/or the diocesan adviser .

19. Suspicion or Disclosure of Abuse

REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO BE A SPECIALIST SAFEGUARDING WORKER AND CAN ONLY BE EXPECTED TO ACT REASONABLY AND SENSITIVELY IF A SITUATION OF ABUSE OR SUSPECTED ABUSE ARISES.

- (a) If child/young person makes an allegation or discloses abuse to them, treat the matter seriously and do not minimise the situation e.g. comments such as “I’m sure that can’t be so” or “Are you sure that really happened?” should never be used.
- (b) Absolute confidentiality should never be offered.
- (c) The allegation might concern a person within or outside the Church community.
- (d) If the allegation concerns somebody outside the Church community a decision will have to be made as to whether the child/ young person is at immediate risk of serious harm, i.e. returning home after the session. If after appropriate consultation within the Parish, with Incumbent, Under 18s Co-ordinator and any other relevant person, it is considered that the child is at serious risk, contact the police directly.
- (e) Reassure the child and ensure that an adult remains with them. Do not question any further.
- (f) This situation is hopefully not going to be a common one but your group’s procedures will need to take into account the possibility of such an occurrence.
- (g) If the allegation concerns somebody within the Church community, the Incumbent should be informed immediately and the Diocesan Adviser contacted. Statutory authorities should be notified.
- (h) If the allegation is made against the Incumbent, the Wardens should be informed and the Under 18s Co-ordinator and the Diocesan Adviser contacted immediately. The Diocesan Adviser will co-ordinate contact with the statutory authorities.

Suspected Abuse

- (a) There may well be occasions when workers suspect that a child may be experiencing abuse.
- (b) The source of the abuse could be within the church context or outside.
- (c) Report your concerns to the Incumbent or Under 18s Co-ordinator who will consult with the Diocesan Adviser and also the statutory authorities.

NEVER KEEP YOUR CONCERNS TO YOURSELF-SHARE THEM.

Halewood Ecumenical Parish
Safeguarding Policy
March 2015.