

Cowley Church Community

# **Safe and Sound**

Child Protection Policies and  
Guidelines

June 2016

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## Child Protection Policy

### 1. The Child Protection Co-Ordinator

- a) The church will designate a person to be responsible for implementing this child protection policy and responding to concerns.
- b) There will be at least one deputy co-ordinator to assist the coordinator in implementing this policy and in responding to concerns.
- c) The co-ordinator and deputy coordinator should attend child protection run by CCPAS (Churches Child Protection Advisory Service) training at least once.

### 2. Appointment of Workers (Paid)

- a) All paid staff of Cowley Church Community must have a DBS check completed before appointments are made.

### 3. Appointment of Workers (Voluntary)

- a) All prospective helpers with children's and youth work will first read and agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the church child protection policy. (See signature page at the end of this document)
- b) The church will normally contact a prospective helper's previous church to ascertain suitability to work with children and youth.
- c) All prospective helpers with children's and youth work over the age of 16 will be DBS-checked for their suitability to work with children and youth.
- d) The Child Protection Co-ordinator will accept a photocopy of a DBS check only if it has been issued within the past 6 months.
- e) DBS checks will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the house of the Child Protection co-ordinator. These will be destroyed every 3 years, when a new DBS check will be sought.

### 4. Good practice for supervision of children and youth

- a) No child shall regularly be allowed to attend Mini-CCC, mid-week youth clubs or Holiday Club without a consent form signed by at least one parent or legal guardian.
- b) It is the responsibility of parents to see that children are collected from Mini-CCC, Holiday Clubs or Youth Clubs.
- c) A record of consent forms and any information concerning medical conditions is to be filed and kept on church premises.
- d) A register is to be kept of all children and workers attending Mini-CCC, youth groups and Holiday Clubs.
- e) The ratio of adults to children shall be as follows:

Ages 0-3 years	1 adult: 3 children
Ages 3- 11 years	1 adult: 6 children
Ages 11-16 years	1 adult: 8 children
- f) For Mini-CCC, at least two adults in each class is the ideal. When that is not possible, the door to each classroom will be kept open to ensure visibility and accountability between different classes.

- g) An adult worker shall never be left alone with a child. If only one child is present for a group they should join with another age group or return to church. Where a child wishes to talk to an adult in confidence, the adult must ensure that another adult is present.
- h) No person under the age of 16 is to be left in charge of a group of children.
- i) The discipline policy should also be enforced to ensure children are kept as safe as possible.
- j) Helpers should not change children's nappies but should seek assistance from the child's parents. Helpers are able to help the under 5's to use the toilet if needed but should tell another adult where they are.
- k) Photos are not to be taken in the children's teaching sessions without parental permission.

## **5. Safety**

### **a) First Aid:**

- All accidents are to be recorded in the accident log book held at The Venue.
- A first aid kit and accident log book shall be kept on the church premises.
- An experienced first aider will be present for children's activities that are off site or overnight.

### **b) Building Safety:**

- The elders and any deacon for buildings will ensure the sites used for Church meetings are safe for children.
- All products that could be potentially harmful to children are to be kept in a secure location.

### **c) Accident prevention:**

- No child should be allowed unsupervised access to the back yard or the kitchen at The Venue, Barns Road.

## **6. Supervision of workers**

- a) The Mini-CCC co-ordinators shall ensure that at least three meetings are held each year for workers to discuss all issues relating to children's activities.
- b) The leaders of youth groups will meet at least three times each year to discuss all issues relating to youth activities.
- c) Elders will be informed of any child protection issues arising at these meetings though if appropriate, names will be kept confidential.

## **7. Reviewing the child protection policy**

The child protection co-ordinators will conduct an annual review of the child protection policy and how it is being implemented.

## Good practice for working with Children

This policy draws heavily upon the Safe & Secure document drawn up by CCPAS to help churches identify and practice healthy working relationships with Children. They identify key areas of good working practice and state that **every** church worker should understand what child abuse is and what the possible signs of it are, as well as knowing how to respond appropriately and safely to allegations.

This is why we have included this more informative section on definitions of abuse and signs of abuse, as well as a discipline policy in our child protection policy.

### 1. Definitions of Abuse

(The following definitions of child abuse are as stated in the joint government departments' document, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' published in 2006.)

#### a) Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

#### b) Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

#### c) Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate

care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**d) Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

## 2. Signs of possible abuse

### Signs Suggesting Physical Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Neglect - under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc that do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse
- Changes in routine

### Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia
- Bed wetting and soiling

### Signs Suggesting Emotional Abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Also depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

### **3. Responses to disclosures or concerns of abuse**

#### **How to respond to a disclosure**

- a) If a child tells you of abuse, ensure that you allow the child to tell his or her story unaided. Do not classify behaviour or question their story.
- b) Try to ensure that you react calmly to any allegation of abuse.
- c) Tell the child you will need to let someone else know - don't promise confidentiality.
- d) Make notes of any allegation of abuse as soon as possible.
- e) Inform the child protection co-ordinator(s) immediately of any allegations of abuse, passing on any appropriate written record.
- f) Ensure that any information told to you by a child is kept confidential and only communicated to the Child Protection Co-ordinator(s).

#### **What to do if you suspect abuse**

- a) If a child behaves in a manner that leads you to suspect he or she is the victim of abuse, allow the child to explain their behaviour unaided, if possible.
- b) Try to react calmly to any inappropriate behaviour or any witnessed abuse.
- c) Make notes of any inappropriate behaviour or witnessed abuse as soon as possible.
- d) If you suspect, based upon inappropriate behaviour, that a child is a victim of abuse, inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator(s) as soon as possible, passing on any written record.

After any allegations of abuse, witnessed abuse or suspected abuse the Child Protection Co-ordinator will keep a written record. If appropriate, the Local Authority Multiagency Safeguarding Hub will be contacted. Advice may also be sought from CCPAS.

If you believe that a child is in immediate danger inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator(s) immediately, passing on any written record. If it is not possible to speak to them that day please contact the police directly.

As of June 2016 the Child Protection Co-ordinator is Mary Guest (07879632092).

Deputy Co-ordinator is Elizabeth Hawkes (07764 746834).

CCPAS Helpline 0845 120 45 50

## Discipline Policy

This policy seeks to preserve a happy, safe and helpful learning environment for all members. The church seeks to be a loving and grace filled community and it is vital that all children attending the church have the opportunity to experience this.

### Mini-CCC

1. We expect age appropriate good standards of behaviour at all times which are governed by the following principles:
  - all members of Mini-CCC must show respect for all others. This includes both adults and children.
  - There must be no hurting of any other persons. This includes hitting, throwing objects at others, wresting or verbal taunts.
  - All members of Mini-CCC must respect the purpose of the meeting and co-operate with its leaders. The purpose of Mini-CCC is to worship God and to learn about him.
2. Standards of behaviour will be enforced by the leaders of Mini-CCC in the following ways:
  - First by role modelling respectful and patient behaviour and praising and encouraging positive behaviour when it is seen.
  - Leaders will discuss bad choices and with regard to a child's age, try to help them learn from their mistakes.
  - Bad behaviour will result in a warning. Some groups may operate a red/yellow card policy.
  - Anyone who receives three warnings in a morning will automatically be asked to leave Mini-CCC for the rest of that morning. If their parent or guardian is in the building they will be taken to them. If not they will be asked to sit with a responsible adult for the remainder of the morning or taken home.

### Youth groups

1. All members of youth groups must show respect for all others. This includes both fellow members and youth leaders.
  - Anti-social or offensive behaviour will not be tolerated. This includes:
    - Hurting other people, eg hitting, throwing objects, fouling during games.
    - Aggressive behaviour or bullying eg. Name calling, mocking other members.
    - Unwillingness to respect the purpose of the group or trying to deliberately stop others doing so.
2. Standards of behaviour will be enforced by the Youth Leaders in the following ways:
  - Bad behaviour will result in a warning. Some groups may operate a red/yellow card policy.

- Anyone who receives three warnings in a session will automatically be asked to leave the group for the rest of that session. If their parent or guardian is in the building they will be taken to them. If not they will be asked to sit with a responsible adult for the remainder of the time or taken home.
- In cases of particularly bad behaviour a member may be removed without warning, and/or suspended for a number of weeks.

## Guidelines for the behaviour of adult workers

- a) All workers should recognise that their position places them in a position of trust with regard to the children attending Mini-CCC, mid-week clubs and Holiday clubs. Each worker is to ensure that they do not abuse this position of trust and that they uphold this position of trust at all times.
- b) All workers are required to ensure that they do not behave in any way, physically or verbally that could be offensive to any child or adult.
- c) All workers must treat all children and young people with dignity and respect. This includes respecting personal privacy.
- d) All workers are to ensure that all interactions between themselves and any child should be such as to ensure that no reasonable person observing that interaction could construe its nature as abusive.
- e) Guidelines on touch:
  - Keep everything public.
  - Touch should be related to the needs of the child and not to the needs of the adult worker
  - Touch should be age appropriate and initiated by the child, not the adult worker.
  - All activity that is or could be construed to be sexually stimulating to the child or the adult worker is to be avoided.
  - Children have the right to decide on the degree and amount of physical contact they have with others, except with regard to necessary medical treatment.
  - Each adult worker is responsible for monitoring the conduct of others. If a worker has any concerns regarding the conduct of another worker, (s)he should report this to the Child Protection Co-Ordinator(s).

It is vital that all those working with children in Cowley Church Community have read this policy and take personal responsibility for seeing it implemented in the church.

Please sign this form and return it to the child protection co-ordinator(s).

I confirm that I have read and understood this child protection policy and will do my best to see it implemented within church.

Signed.....

Date.....