

# Welcome Baptist Church



*Safe to Grow*

Child & Young Person

Protection Policy

May 2014

## SAFE TO GROW

### INTRODUCTION

The leadership of the Welcome Baptist Church recognise the importance of its ministry to children and young people and it's responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the church's care.

The leadership are committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people and recognising they are made in the image of God, as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Undertaking proper care in the recruiting, supervision and training for all the children/youth workers within the church.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers.
- Supporting those affected by abuse in the church.
- Speaking out against abuse.
- Appointing a Child protection officer and deputy

It is the responsibility of each one of us to promote the welfare and protection of children and young people, by providing an environment where "everyone has the right to feel safe"

It is important that everyone follows this policy and these guidelines. They aim to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people, and provide reporting systems for any abuse uncovered or suspected.

### A few myths.....

- "It couldn't happen here"
- "We're desperate for helpers and leaders"
- "We don't want to put anyone off"
- "We won't have enough young people in our group to worry about it"

## **A few facts.....**

- Any child could be abused.
- Any adult could be an abuser.
- People who abuse children can be devious and may be drawn to places where they have easy access to children.
- Churches are often seen as easy targets.

This policy is not about mistrust, but rather about our responsibility as Christians to:

***... take pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.***  
(2 Corinthians 8:21).

What we mean by abuse:-

“Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

The Welcome Baptist Church should hold a trusted position in this community. Therefore, all youth/children workers are expected to follow these guidelines so that we know how to:

- protect children and young people from abuse
- act responsibly if abuse is discovered, disclosed or suspected.

### **Policy statement on children, young people and the church**

This policy will be distributed annually at the Church AGM, normally held in May where progress in carrying it out will be monitored.

A Child protection officer has been appointed and a deputy.

Should you have any concerns or queries regarding Child protection please contact them directly.

Their details are as follows

Child Protection Officer, Caroline Adams

Tel 01435 813040

Deputy, Chris Roche

Tel 07771 995877

- As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.

- It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people, whether paid or volunteers.
- The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people, and to providing supervision.
- The church is committed to taking the issue of abuse seriously and to following the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its publication **Safe to Grow** (revised edition).
- Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations, and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the church's agreed procedures and Good Practice guidelines and has signed to say they have received and read them.
- As part of our commitment to children and young people, the church has appointed - Mary Dicker as the Children's Advocate Her name, address and phone number is publicly displayed.
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## **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE**

### **Purpose**

The policy is formulated both to avoid abuse occurring and to assist youth & Children's workers to respond appropriately if abuse is disclosed or discovered.

### **Guidelines for you, the worker: -**

It is not sufficient to care for our children or young people, we must be seen to be beyond reproach. To avoid misunderstanding or unfounded allegations, here's a very helpful thing to remember:

- Always let other leaders know where you are and what you are doing.

- Never let yourself get into a situation where you are alone with a child or young person.
- If a child or young person asks to speak to you about a private matter, you may not withdraw to a place out of sight of others. Use a quiet corner of a public room, but in full view of others.
- Never promise to keep anything told to you by a child or young person secret. You must make it clear that, if it is in *their* best interests, it may be necessary to speak to someone who can help.
- Never initiate physical contact with a child or young person.
- **Inappropriate** physical approaches must be rejected firmly but kindly. Reject the action, not the person.
- Be especially careful when involved in activities involving physical contact. Lose the game rather than be at risk of accusation.
- In the event you are using your own vehicle to transport children or young people all drivers must sign up to the drivers agreement. See back pages for this agreement. An A4 copy for you to sign is available from Chris
- If a child or young person tells you about abuse, do not prompt them in order to gain further information. You may repeat what they have said in the form of a question, but it is vital that you are not seen as having given them ideas.
- If a child or young person calls at your home, ensure that you are appropriately dressed to receive them. Do not invite them in if you are alone.
- Do not engage in inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form.
- Avoid making arrangements to meet children or young people outside church organised activities. Unless it is part of one to one contact work. In this situation make sure you are not alone with the child or young person.

## **ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPERVISION OF ACTIVITIES**

### ***Club nights at the church***

- All leaders present are responsible for supervision of activities. In particular, at least one leader must be present in each room where youngsters are. Particular care must be taken to ensure the safety of the young people in all activities.

### ***Meetings at other venues***

- **The same responsibilities exist as for evenings at the church. See above.** Additionally leaders must look out for unexpected or unknown dangers. Be extra

vigilant in public places. In the event you are using your own vehicle to transport children or young people all drivers must sign up to the drivers agreement. See back pages for this agreement. An A4 copy for you to sign is available from Chris

### ***Day Trips***

- Day trips are activities outside the normal meeting times, but not involving an overnight stay. Details of day trips must be provided to the parent/guardian/carer from whom a signed permission slip which includes authority for medical attention must be obtained. A method of contacting the parent/guardian/carer (preferably by telephone) in the case of emergency must also be obtained.

### ***Camps, holidays etc. involving overnight stay***

- **All the provisions of meetings in the church, at other venues and day trips apply.** In addition, sleeping arrangements appropriate to the location must be made. Under no circumstances must a leader sleep in the same room or tent with one individual young person.

### ***Risk assessments***

Risk assessments must be carried out for all of our youth & Children's activities.

For groups meeting in the church building a risk assessment can be kept on file detailing the risks of the "normal" activities that usually take place. This does not need to be done for every game that is played, common sense is the key tool here.

For all trips out side of the building such as park visits, weekends away and summer camps a risk assessment must be completed and kept on file.

A new risk assessment must be filled in if the details of the event change.

For example if a group go bowling and the details do not change the same risk assessment can be used with just the date changed.

(In this case it is your responsibility to check that no details have changed. If they have the Risk assessment needs to be amended.)

A copy of a risk assessment and how to fill one out is included in the "Files and Documents" pages in the back of this booklet.

### ***Ratios***

An important aspect of any risk assessment is ensuring that you have a suitable ratio of staff to children and young people. A number of factors will come into play in assessing the ratio for any particular activity or group:

**These ratios are detailed in the "Files and Documents" pages at the back of this book**

### ***The age of the children and young people***

- Generally speaking the younger the children the higher the ratio should be of adults to children.

## Special needs

- Do any of the children have special needs that will require additional support?
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## Behavioural issues

- Do any of the children or does the group as a whole present challenging behaviour that can be difficult to control?
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## The venue

- If your buildings are large and sprawling and it is difficult to contain children and young people while on the premises it may be necessary to have additional personnel
- Activities that take place away from the church premises normally require a higher ratio of adults to children than those that take place inside.
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## Covering for emergencies

- How will you manage if someone has an accident and needs immediate medical attention?
- If one of your workers is likely to be 'on call' is there sufficient cover in the event that he/she is called away?
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## Gender balance

- If you have a mixed group of children and young people it is ideal to try to ensure that you have both male and female workers present. This becomes increasingly important for older age groups.
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## Recommended minimum ratios

The following table represents recommended minimum ratios of adults to children. This should be your starting point in calculating appropriate ratios for your groups and activities. If any special factors emerge within your risk assessment you should increase the recommended number.

## *Discipline*

- The methods of imposing discipline are limited to verbal warnings and exclusion of a young person from present and/or future activities. In general a verbal warning should be issued in cases of unacceptable behaviour. If this is ignored, a ban from one or more future meetings should be imposed. This should be accompanied by a letter to the parent/guardian/carer explaining the conditions of the ban and the circumstances under which it was imposed.
- If behaviour is considered detrimental to the safety of others, then the person should be asked to leave immediately. In cases where a person refuses to leave, physical expulsion should not be used. In extreme cases it may be necessary to

call the police. Physical intervention is only permissible in order to prevent damage to a person or property. Such intervention must only be at a level sufficient to prevent the damage.

## **GOOD PRACTICE WITH COLLEAGUES**

If you see another member of the team acting in ways which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or your team leader about your concerns. (If you feel your team leader is not demonstrating good practice, speak to the Child protection officer). Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all team members to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

**These measures have been put in place in order to protect workers from false accusation**

## **PROCEDURES IF ABUSE IS DISCOVERED OR DISCLOSED**

### **Recognising and Responding to Abuse**

The following behavioural signs *may* be indications of child abuse. They should not be considered in isolation, but an overall picture should be formed.

#### ***Recognising physical signs***

- any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- injuries which have not received medical attention
- instances where young people are kept away from the group inappropriately
- bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- cutting/slashing/drug abuse



### ***Indicators of possible sexual abuse***

- any allegations made by a young person concerning sexual abuse
- young person with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or who regularly engages in inappropriate overt sexual play
- young person who is sexually provocative 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

### ***Emotional signs***

- changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a young person withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression
- nervousness/watchfulness
- sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- inappropriate relationships with adults and/or peers
- attention-seeking behaviour
- persistent tiredness
- running away/stealing/lying

**It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicating that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.**

## **RESPONDING TO ABUSE**

### ***If you suspect that abuse may have occurred or it has been disclosed to you:***

- Do not delay
- Do not act alone
- Do not start to investigate
- Maintain confidentiality at all times - do not discuss with anyone other than the Child protection Officer .

### ***How to react when a young person wants to talk about abuse***

- Behave kindly and calmly, listen carefully
- Workers should always believe what the child is saying in the first instance
- Try not to appear shocked or in disbelief by anything you are told
- Never promise to keep anything secret - explain why and to whom you may need to disclose information
- Talk in a quiet part of a public room, in view of others
- Do not prompt the young person or impose your own assumptions on the child's version of events

### ***What to do once a child has talked to you about abuse***

1. Make a handwritten record of what has been said as soon as possible, noting dates and times of events, signing and dating it. If possible, use the child's own words.
2. Report your concerns as soon as possible to the Children's Advocate, or Pastor (depending on whom the allegations are against). It is always better to share concerns which later prove groundless, than to wait for certainty which may mean actual harm to the child.
3. Do not discuss your concerns with anyone else.
4. Following discussion, if the concerns are thought to be well-founded, it is the

responsibility of the Children's Advocate to report the suspicions to social services, either for advice or to make an official referral.

5. Both the victim and alleged perpetrator will be treated with respect and dignity while an investigation takes place and ongoing support will be offered to the child and the accused.

### ***Abuse of Trust***

Relationships between children/young people and adults can take many different forms, but all of them can be described as 'relationships of trust'. Within the relationship between a youth worker and a child, there is the potential for the trust to be abused by the leader, who is in a position of power over the child or young person.

It is always wrong for a leader to enter into a sexual relationship with a young person - even a 16 or 17 year old who can legally consent to some types of sexual activity may still be emotionally immature. Regardless of consent, the imbalance of power between a youth worker and a child/young person makes it an abuse of trust.

Romantic relationships can be seen as an abuse of trust, even when the leader is also a young person, as the roles of romantic partner and leader could easily be confused. If such circumstances should arise, it is vital to seek the advice of the Child Protection officer.

### ***Supporting those affected by abuse***

Welcome Baptist Church is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and supporting those attending the church who have been affected by abuse, be they children or adult survivors or families of those abused.

### ***What do we do if we have a known offender in the church?***

Occasionally, churches find that a member of their fellowship has been convicted in the past of abusing a child.

For the sake of the protection of children and for the sake of an offender's journey towards forgiveness and restoration, it is important that those who have offended against children in the past are not given positions of responsibility for children within the church.

An open discussion will be held with the person concerned in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of the church. A written contract will be drawn up which identifies appropriate behaviour which the person will be asked to sign.

## **CHILDREN'S/YOUTH WORKER APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE**

1. Candidates must complete the application form – “Volunteer Helpers Form For Work With Children & Young People”.
2. The church will apply for a DBS clearance on their behalf
3. The Church will take up the two references provided on the application form.
4. The Church will carry out an interview with the candidate.
5. Following satisfactory DBS report from the BU and references the appointment decision will be made.
6. The new worker must read and sign a copy of the Child Protection Policy Statement and Procedures stating that they will abide by them.
7. Training to development awareness of child protection issues will be carried out.
- 8.

Due to the challenges and restrictions of getting a DBS clearance done for an under 18 year old helper the following policy is now in place. This will avoid the DBS process but will uphold our Child Protection policy and security.

1. Each under 18 will fill in a contact details form including allergy's etc (In case they have an accident)
2. They will then have to read our "Child protection policy" and sign our acknowledgement form which we will keep on record, prior to starting work
3. Each young leader will not be given jobs such as taking children to the toilet and will not be left alone with children or young people. (this is the current Safe to grow recommendation anyway)

**Files and Documents for your reference.**

**USEFULCONTACT INFORMATION**

In a situation posing an immediate serious risk to the child, dial 999 (or 112 from a mobile)

**Child protection officer  
Caroline Adams**

**01435 813040**

**Child protection deputy  
Chris Roche**

**07771 995877**

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**BU youth officer**

**Maeve Whitchurch**

**07944 600871**

**Heathfield police**

**01273 475432**

**CCPAS (Churches Child Protection Advisory Service 24 hour help line)**

**0845 1204550**

Be careful **what** you **say**.  
Be careful **what** you **do**.  
Be careful **how** you **relate**.  
**Call the Police if the child is in immediate danger.**



## **Welcome Baptist Church Driver's agreement**

We would like to thank you for agreeing to help out with transport for the youth and children's work.

In order to safeguard yourself and anyone travelling with you in your car we would ask you to read this agreement and if you are happy to do so sign and return it to Chris Roche (Youth Minister) or Sue Lade in the office.

We ask that all new drivers will have at least 6 months experience of driving before driving children and young people.

**I..... agree to;**

**Ensure that my vehicle is in a roadworthy condition, has a current TAX disc and a valid MOT.**

**Ensure that I have a valid insurance policy to cover my activities.  
(Documentation may be required to be seen)**

**Keep to the Highway Code at all times.**

**Drive in a which is safe, respectful to other road users appropriate to the speed limits and conditions.**

**Ensure that everyone has their seat belt on for the duration of the journey**

**Not to allow myself to be distracted by any passengers that I am carrying.**

**Not to be in a situation where there is only myself and one young person or child in the vehicle.**

**I also acknowledge that any penalties acquired will be my own responsibility and liability (including parking tickets)**

**I understand that if I break these agreements I will be asked not to drive children and young people on behalf of Welcome Baptist Church.**

Signed..... Date.....



**Welcome Baptist Risk assessment**

Group..... Activity.....

Date.....

Venue.....

**We should aim to reduce all risks to a factor lower than 3**

Potential Risk	Chance of occurring 1-remote 5-probable	Severity of injury 1- minor bumps 5- major (hospital treatment)	Persons Affected	Measures in Place	Chance of occurring after measures in place 1- unlikely 5- defiantly	Responsible Person(s)

## Ratios

Age range	Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities
0 - 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 - 7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 - 12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

**Remember that in calculating the ratios of workers to children you should not include young leaders who are under the age of 18 among your number of adult workers.**