

Best Practice

BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR CHILDREN'S & YOUTH MINSITRY...

- Treat all children, young people and adults with respect and dignity, keeping your own language, attitude and body language respectful
- Avoid being alone with a child and always aim to work within sight of another adult and keep others aware of your actions
- Make it plain who someone can speak to about a personal concern, and be proactive in addressing concerns and allegations following the Recognise, Respond, Record, Refer procedure overleaf
- Never smoke, use illicit drugs or alcohol when responsible for a child or adult at risk
- Photographs may only be taken using Church equipment, personal phones must not be used for photography. Adhere to agreed parental permissions regarding photographs
- Keep physical contact to a minimum and only when initiated by the child or young person. Always in public. Avoid any physical contact or language that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive
- Never scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult or allow others to do so
- Avoid showing favouritism to any one child, adult or group or doing anything to reinforce their infatuations towards you
- Never give lifts to children or young people on their own
- Never allow unknown adults access to children
- Never share sleeping accommodation with children or invite them to your home alone
- Always operate within the Diocesan principles, procedures and guidelines of the Church of England Code of Safer Working Practice, clarifying these with the group leader when unsure
- Volunteers must not contact children or young people in their groups outside of their volunteer time

KEY SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

St. Francis

Hannah Wilkins
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)
07800 850723
safeguarding@st-francischurch.org.uk

Mary Terry | Associate Priest
Mary@st-francischurch.org.uk

Sophie Stokes | Youth Worker
07830021272 / youth@st-francischurch.org.uk

Jacinta Blunt | Children & Families
family@st-francischurch.org.uk

Hope Church

Hannah Rendall
Hope Church Safeguarding Officer
safeguarding@st-francischurch.org.uk

St Lawrence

Sandra Williams
Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)
07754 605647
stlawrencechurchsafeguarding@gmail.com

Diocesan Safeguarding Team

Tel: 01722 438651
safeguarding@salisbury.anglican.org

Service provider 'thirtyone:eight' provides out of hours cover:
Tel: 0303 0031111

Council Safeguarding Team (MASH)

0300 4560108 (office hours)
0300 456 0100 (out of hours)

St Francis Hope Church St Lawrence

SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

Essential information for working
with children & young people
Sep 2026

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

A form of maltreatment of a child. A child may be abused or neglected by someone inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in the home or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

There are five common categories of abuse

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
 - Neglect
- Spiritual abuse

Children may be physically or emotionally abused when they see abuse between adults within the family.

It is important that workers understand these five categories. There will be regular opportunities for safeguarding training, however it is also important that you read through the

CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY.

The policy is available on the website or ask your team leader for a paper copy.

The information in this leaflet is no way intended to replace the full safeguarding policy which must be referred to for more detail.

RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE – THE 4 RS

The 4 Rs are a useful way to remember how to respond to a disclosure:

Recognise → Respond → Record → Refer

RECOGNISE

- Accept and take seriously what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Let the person tell their story and don't push for information or ask leading questions.
- Do not interrogate or decide if they are telling the truth.
- Be alert to signs and symptoms of abuse.

RESPOND

- Reassure the individual that they have taken the right step in sharing this information and they are not to blame.
- Be honest; never make promises to keep what you are being told confidential. If abuse is involved, you will need to tell someone.
- Tell them what you will do with the information they have shared, and that they will be kept informed.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experience or that of others.
- Do not investigate the matter any further for yourself, or approach the person about whom allegations may have been made.

RECORD

Write down, concisely, exactly what is seen, said or heard and make clear where you have added your views or interpretation. Remember that this is your information, and that you are responsible for passing it on to the person with safeguarding responsibility. Be mindful that your written comments may be needed in the event that further legal or disciplinary action is taken.

You may find it helpful to use the 4 Ws, as follows:

- WHO was involved? Name the key people.
- WHAT happened? Facts not opinions.
- WHEN did it happen? Date and time.
- WHO have you referred the issue on to?

When recording a second- or third-hand account, it might be helpful to clarify that "what happened" refers not to the alleged incident but to what occurred in your presence – in other words, the date, time and manner in which the issue was reported/disclosed to you. It should not be an attempt to describe the event/situation as if you had witnessed it yourself.

Only pass the information on verbally if it is an emergency situation. Even so, you must also find time as soon as possible to write it down and send it on to the relevant person.

REFER

- Pass the information to the Parish Safeguarding Officer, Vicar or the Diocesan Safeguarding Team within 24 hours.
- In case of an emergency call the Police or dial 999.

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RESPOND



Do:

- Listen.
- Take what is said seriously.
- Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- Remain calm.
- Take into account the person's age and level of understanding.
- Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.
- Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.
- Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell your activity leader/ Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)/ Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) and statutory authorities what is believed to have happened, when and where.
- Check what the person hopes to happen as a result of the disclosure.
- Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.



Do not:

- Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information).
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.
- Investigate.
- Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.
- Do a physical or medical examination.

RECORD

- Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by the DSA or the statutory authorities.
- Record the date, time, place and actual words used, including any swear words or slang.
- Record facts and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions.
- Don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

REPORT

- If there is immediate danger to a child or adult contact the police.
- Otherwise report to your activity leader/PSO/Vicar immediately.
- Within 24 hours the PSO/Vicar should report the concerns to the DSA.
- The DSA will advise regarding reporting to statutory agencies within 24 hours.
- If there is any doubt, seek advice from Children's/Adult's Social Care.