

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED AND YOU NEED TO TAKE URGENT ACTION

Ensure you notify your Group Leader, your Child Protection Representative and the Diocesan Child Protection Advisor, Stephen Barber

- 1 Make a telephone referral to the Social Services Department.
- 2 Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family e.g. the child's name, age, address, telephone number and GP (if known)
- 3 Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form or letter
- 4 Remember that the child and family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this will put the child's welfare at risk. However, if you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The Duty Social Worker will give you advice over this if necessary.
- 5 Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team.
- 6 For out of hours referrals, call the Emergency Social Work Team

LESS URGENT SITUATIONS

If the child is not in immediate danger, if you are not sure if child abuse is involved, or if you have concerns about a child and you need someone to talk things over with, then contact one of:

- Your Group Leader
- Your Child Protection Representative
- Your local Children's Social Services Department
- Stephen Barber, the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser

In all cases, make notes, as accurately as you can, of the details of the allegation, all that happens, and anything

that was said, which struck you as particularly significant. Ensure you note from the church's registration records the child's name, age, address, telephone number and GP.

Remember that, under the Data Protection Act, you will need to make any notes available to the child and family if they request them.

- The notes must be kept in a safe, secure place indefinitely
- Notify your Group Leader if you have not already done so
- Seek support for yourself from an appropriate person within the church

HEARING A CHILD ABUSE DISCLOSURE

If a child asks to talk in confidence do not promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer a child/young person who is at risk. Explain that you may have to get other people to help if they are being harmed.

Ensure you have as much privacy as possible but try to have another adult present when the child is speaking to you.

- Stay calm
- Listen to the child attentively
- Maintain eye contact
- Allow the child to talk but do not press for information
- Tell the child that they are not to blame for anything that has happened
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell
- Let the child know that other people will have to be told so that the abuse can stop
- Try to explain what will happen next in a way the child can understand
- Reassure the child that he or she will continue to receive support during the difficult time to come.

Parish of Great Missenden with Ballinger and Little Hampden

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDE for CHURCH WORKERS with CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

**A guide to assist
leaders and
helpers
implement the
Parish policy.**



A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF OXFORD

We the bishops, clergy and people of the Diocese are committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of all the children in our care. Many children are involved in the life of the Church, in worship and in various activities, under the guidance of a dedicated group of leaders and helpers. These adults give their time freely and generously so that our children can grow in the faith of Jesus Christ. Both children and adults need a safe and secure environment in which to work.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

All leaders and helpers should be subject to the Diocesan-approved recruitment procedures, which include:

- Submitting an application form with references
- Completing a Confidential Declaration Form
- Having a valid Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau

One of the aims of the policy is for church groups to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour. All volunteers must work within sight of another adult.

REGISTRATION OF CHILDREN'S GROUPS

Whenever a new Group is formed the Leader should inform the Parish Child Protection Representative. Leaders should inform the Child Protection Representative of existing Groups.

All children and young people under the age of 18 who engage in activities connected with the church should be registered. Group Leaders should ask the parents or guardians to complete a Registration Form*. This form should be sent to the Parish Child Protection Representative, and a copy should be kept in the Parish Office. For one-off events a list of the children should be kept. These lists should be retained

Parents and Guardians should also be asked to complete and sign a Consent Form.* This form should also be sent to the Parish Child Protection Officer and a copy should be kept in the Parish Office. Written parental consent should be obtained for all activities that involve leaving church premises. Full details are contained in the Diocesan Handbook: Page 35-6 and 76-7

*Copies of these forms may be obtained from the Parish Office.

RECOMMENDED STAFFING LEVELS

The minimum required staffing levels for children's groups are given below: More help may be required if children are being taken out or undertaking physical activities.

- 0 - 2 yrs 1 person for every 3 children
- 2 - 3 yrs 1 person for every 4 children
- 3 - 8 yrs 1 person for every 8 children
- Over 8 yrs 1 person for the first 8 children then 1 extra person for every extra 12 children

Each group should have at least 2 adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.

If groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with doors open then one person per group is allowed.

Young people aged 16 & 17 may help with groups but should be supervised by an adult helper who will be responsible for ensuring good practice and that child protection procedures are followed. Young people under 16 may help with other things but should not have responsibility for children.

Additional adults may help on one or two occasions but must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter they should become part of the team and properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.

Important telephone numbers	Thames Valley Police (all enquiries)	0845 8 505 505
	Local Police Child/Family Protection Unit	0845 8 505 505
	Local Council Children's Social Services	01494 475 000
	Local Emergency Social Work Team (out of hours)	01494 675 802
	Local General Hospital - Stoke Mandeville	01296 315 000
	Stephen Barber, Diocesan Child Protection Adviser	01865 208 290
	Jenny Hyson, Diocesan Children's Adviser	01865 208 255
	Ian Macdonald, Diocesan Youth Adviser	01865 208 253
	Margaret Gordon, Parish Child Protection Representative	01494 862 580

Other Issues

Please see the Diocesan handbook for detailed guidance on:

- Taking Children Out
- Seeing young people on their own
- Page: 38
- Page: 41
- Holiday Clubs
- Making & publishing images of children
- Page: 40
- Page: 43
- Sleeping on Church Premises
- Page: 41