

# Working with Children and Young People

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**Issue 2.1 – January 2014**

## ***The Safeguarding Policy of Crockenhill Baptist Church***

The purpose of this document is to provide principles and guidelines to safeguard children and young people

This document is a substantial reworking and expansion of the Crockenhill Baptist Church Child Protection Policy which has been in place, with only minor amendments, since 2000

*“See that you do not despise one of these little ones.  
For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”*  
Matt 18:10 (NIV)

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

The Church recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also acknowledges that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual, spiritual and emotional abuse and neglect. We have, therefore, adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter ‘the Policy’).

We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church, and to this end the Policy applies to every member of the Church, not just to those working with children and young people.

If you see a children’s worker or anyone associated with the church acting in a way that contravenes any part of the Policy, or that might be misconstrued in any way, you should be prepared to talk to that person or an appropriate Group Leader, Church Leader or Safeguarding Coordinator about your concerns.

Please note that even if what you see seems insignificant, it might be part of a bigger pattern of behaviour which can only be identified and addressed with full knowledge of the seemingly insignificant details.

All of the measures set out in the Policy are first and foremost for the wellbeing of the children and young people in our care, but will also enhance our reputation and protect workers from false accusations.

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# 1 Definitions, Responsibilities and Contact Details

## 1.1 Definitions and Responsibilities

### 1.1.1 Child / Children

Anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday.

### 1.1.2 Group Leader

A Church Member acting on behalf of the Church, with overall responsibility for a particular Children's or Young People's group, including both discipline and of the correct application of this Policy.

Group Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all Workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

If the Group Leader has any cause for concern over any of the Workers within their group, they must discuss their concerns as a matter of urgency with the Safeguarding Coordinator or the Pastor.

Group Leaders should regularly report to the Pastor and/or the Safeguarding Coordinator on their activities, particularly any non-standard or 'off-site' activities, and any concerns they may have about their group. This is in addition to the written report produced by each group for the Annual Reports for Church Members.

### 1.1.3 Sessional Leader

A Church Member who has responsibility to run a particular group when the Group Leader either delegates or is not present.

### 1.1.4 Worker

A person who works within a group but is never in charge of a particular session or activity. This person can be left unsupervised with the children and young people for short periods or emergencies.

### 1.1.5 Helper

A person who provides regular or occasional support to the main Group Leader or Sessional Leader and assists with group activities. Helpers must never be left unsupervised with children or young people.

Helpers are distinct from Workers because they are under the age of 18, or because they only work with children very occasionally. They will therefore not usually have been DBS-checked.

### 1.1.6 Church Leaders

The Pastor and Deacons, who share responsibility for spiritual oversight, effective leadership and general oversight of the day-to-day running and statutory responsibilities of the Church

### 1.1.7 Safeguarding Coordinators

Church Members with responsibility for the coordination, implementation and review of this Safeguarding Policy, and for maintaining contact with statutory and other key agencies responsible for Safeguarding.

They will act on behalf of the Church Leaders in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter to the statutory authorities.

These individuals will also be available to the children and parents as independent persons to talk to if the children have concerns about the way in which they are treated.

### 1.1.8 Church Members

All Church Members have a duty to make our premises as safe as possible for our children and young people, and should do everything possible to support children's workers in the implementation of this policy.

In particular, it would be helpful for the whole Church to observe the following simple rules:

- On Sunday mornings, no-one should be in the vicinity of children's activities unless they have a specific reason to be there.
- At other times during the week, when children's activities are taking place, only those who are meant to be at that activity should be on the premises, except for good reason (e.g. they work on the premises, or are attending another recognised and pre-planned meeting). If an individual needs to visit the premises for a specific one-off purpose, they should notify the relevant Group Leader regarding where they will be, when and why. Where possible they should avoid being in the vicinity of the children.

NB In this document:

The general terms "worker / children's worker" will cover everyone working with children or young people under the age of 18 if no further clarification is given.

Similarly, "children" should be taken to mean all those under the age of 18, unless particular age groups are specified.

## 1.2 Contact Details

### 1.2.1 Key contacts within the Church

Pastor	Mark Drury	01322 663995
Safeguarding Coordinator	Keith Milne	01322 666246
Deputy Safeguarding Coordinator	Ruth Everest	01322 664165

### 1.2.2 Group Leaders

Link	Peter Clarridge	01322 404835
11-50	Richard Jones	01322 668212
Adventurers	Simon Perry	01322 402326
Baby Talk	Laura Pilling	01322 614884
	Vicky Manderscheid	01689 821338
Outback	Jon Summers	01322 613929

### 1.2.3 Contact details in the event of an emergency

In the first instance, it will usually be appropriate to inform your main Group Leader. Advice can be sought from the Safeguarding Coordinator. If the child is in immediate danger dial 999 and call the police.

## 2 Good Practice Guidelines

### 2.1 Showing respect

All children's workers are in a position of trust, and their relationship with the child is never an equal one. Therefore care must be taken to ensure that a child's trust is not abused, even inadvertently. Anyone working with children should treat them with respect and dignity in attitude, language and actions.

Sensitive information about children, including prayer requests, should be shared only with those who need to know and who have a recognised role in the Church's children's work.

Workers should avoid developing any relationship with a child that becomes in any way exclusive or private. Particular caution should be observed when using electronic media – see Section 2.11.

Workers should be careful in their behaviour, use of language and tone of voice, and should not engage in any of the following:

- Invading the privacy of a child when they are showering, changing or toileting
- Rough or sexually provocative games
- Any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child
- Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in 'fun'
- Inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form
- Allowing a child to see them in a state of undress

Workers should be aware that sometimes a child might try to involve them in excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical. This is best avoided by not allowing an individual to monopolise attention. If a worker suspects that a young person may be developing a 'crush' on them, or seeking their attention inappropriately, they should communicate this to the Group Leader, who should discuss an appropriate course of action. This might, but need not necessarily, include resignation or transference to another group.

Children should not be inappropriately led into making spiritual decisions. Instead, aim to maintain and encourage an open questioning of Church or Leaders' beliefs.

### 2.2 Keeping records

#### 2.2.1 Contact details

Each group should maintain accurate and up-to-date records of each child belonging to the group, except for groups where a parent or carer is usually present with the child. The records should include:

- Name
- Address (including postcode)
- Date of birth
- Telephone numbers (home and mobile) for responsible parent or carer
- Details of any health conditions, medication or allergies

This information will initially be provided by means of a General Information and Consent form, completed by the child's parents or carers when a child first joins one of the groups. The completed forms should be kept securely by the Group Leader, and copies passed to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

If a child is moving from one group to another, then the form can be passed to the new group, but should be checked for accuracy.

### 2.2.2 Register

Each group should keep a register of the children attending each session. This does not need to be roll-called or formal, but accurate records are essential.

Records should also be kept of workers present at each session, and any visitors, including parents or carers.

If any child or adult is present for only a part of the session, then times of arrival and departure should be recorded.

### 2.2.3 Accidents and other incidents

All accidents or out-of-the-ordinary incidents involving children must be recorded in a log book. Such incidents might be untypical behaviour, arguments and fights, allegations against a worker, or any deviations from this policy for whatever reason.

The Sessional Leader must inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved. This may be simply by a phone call, but the fact that this has been done should also be recorded in the log book.

## 2.3 Supervision of activities

### 2.3.1 Children-Worker Ratios

The following guidelines regarding children-worker ratios are to protect the safety and welfare of the children in our care as well as all those who work within the children's work.

The Children Act 2006 and Day Care Regulations (OFSTED) recommend the following minimum ratios, but ideally more than the recommended ratio is required:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Adults : Children</b>
Under 2 years	1 : 3
2 years	1 : 4
3 - 7 years	1 : 8
8 and over	1 : 10

In all groups of ten or more children, it is recommended that the person in charge is in addition to these minimum numbers.

The maximum number of under-fives in any group should be twenty.

There should always be at least two responsible adults per group, from the start until the end of every session. No worker should be left alone with a group of children where their activity cannot be seen. This may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room.

In young people's activities particularly it is highly desirable to have at least one male and one female leader present at all times. This is less important with lower age-group children, although to some extent this depends on the activity and the children involved.

If there are insufficient workers for a particular event, then either the event does not take place or, in an emergency, parents may be asked to stay and care for their children.

Where capable and mature teenagers, between 15 and 18 years old, are used as junior helpers, they should not be left unsupervised by an adult and may not be counted in the adult ratio count.

Children who are not helping lead a group should not be present in any group other than the appropriate group for their age.

### **2.3.2 One-to-one**

In a situation where a private conversation is requested, first determine whether you are the appropriate person for the discussion. Then suggest where you might meet, ensuring it is a place where both the child and the worker can be clearly seen by other adults.

Offer the person privacy, but remember their safety and your own – make sure that others know that the interview is taking place and that someone else is around in the building; visibility is important.

**IMPORTANT:** do not, under any circumstances, promise confidentiality to the child.

Bear in mind that the person may not be wanting to talk about abuse, but be aware of how to respond if this is the case – see Section 3.

Workers should listen without writing at the same time, but as soon as possible afterwards, the factual contents, time and date of this discussion should be recorded as fully as can be remembered.

## **2.4 Off-site activities**

Leaders must consider the risks of any off-site activity and take all reasonable care to prevent accidents or injury.

Leaders should have with them a fully stocked first-aid kit and the emergency contact medical condition details of all children in their care.

Parents shall be given appropriate advanced written notice of any intention to take their children off church premises, with full details of the nature and location of the activity, and any change to the usual drop-off or collection arrangements.

For activities which go beyond the usual meeting times for the group, the notice should include a section for the parent to fill in giving specific consent to their child taking part in the activity, and permission for the child to receive medical attention in an emergency.

## **2.5 Health & Safety Issues**

### **2.5.1 Kitchen**

For their own safety, unsupervised children are not permitted in the kitchen at any time.

### **2.5.2 Fire procedures**

Each Sessional Leader should be aware of the Fire Regulations of the building where the activity is taking place, and have a good understanding of the action to take in the event of a fire.

## **2.6 Physical contact**

Appropriate physical contact, both from adults and from other children and young people, is essential for the emotional well-being and growth of any child. Therefore (allowing for the following precautions) workers may offer and accept physical contact, appropriate to the age and gender of each child, and should also organise appropriate activities where group members may have helpful physical contact with each other (e.g. through games).

However be aware that what to you is a harmless or well-intended touch may be unhelpful or disturbing for children who have experienced abuse or to those who do not communicate easily and comfortably through this medium. Therefore you should pay attention to how children are responding to physical contact.



Be aware that physical contact can be used by children seeking potentially inappropriate attention, and if readily reciprocated, can lead to misunderstanding. Ask the question "For whose benefit is this physical contact taking place?"

When giving first aid (or applying sun cream, etc.), encourage children to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the children's best interest and give appropriate help where necessary.

Some useful guidelines are:

- Physical contact should not exceed appropriate levels for the age-group and circumstances.
- Primarily physical contact should come through planned whole-group activities.
- All physical contact should be open and transparent. Do not touch a child at all when no-one else is in the room.
- If a child under the age of five needs help with the toilet, this should only be provided by a DBS-checked worker, and with the cubicle door left open.
- Although different children will naturally want and give different levels of physical contact, care should be taken not to favour any members of the group, or to exclude any members of the group.
- Wherever possible full body contact should be avoided. Better to place an arm round a child from one side, rather than to engage in a full embrace.

If you see anybody acting in ways that might be misconstrued, speak to them or to a leader about your concerns.

## 2.7 Accidents and injuries

Whenever first aid is required, ensure that it is administered where the child and the first-aider can be seen by other adults, and that other workers know it is taking place.

No medication should be given to a child without a parent's consent. A written record must be kept of any medicines administered to children.

In the event of a minor accident:

- Administer first aid
- Inform the group leader
- Log the details in the accident/incident book

In the event of a more serious injury:

- The Sessional Leader should take charge
- Get others to help
- Administer first aid
- Call an Ambulance, providing details of injury, location of the event and name of child
- Call the parent or carer. If a parent or carer has not arrived on site by the time the ambulance is ready to depart, an appropriate worker must accompany the child to the hospital
- Log the details in the accident/incident book

## 2.8 Discipline and control

Reasonable discipline may be used if a child's behaviour is disruptive, or puts any child or adult in a position of danger.

Workers are to exercise control and discipline wherever possible without using physical contact, and certainly should never hit a child. At times, though, a gentle guiding hand on the shoulder can be more effective at redirecting a child than a confrontational word.

Restraint should be used only in situations where there is a danger of a child hurting themselves or others, or damaging property, and then only as a last resort.

## 2.9 Home visits

### 2.9.1 Visiting Children at Their Home

There may be occasions when a worker will need to visit a child at home. Always inform the group leader of the proposed visit.

Never go into a home if no parent or carer is present, but leave a signed note identifying yourself and the reason for your visit, keeping a written record of the visit.

### 2.9.2 Inviting Children into Your Home

This must only be done with the knowledge of other group workers and the permission of the parent or carer.

Ideally, this is best in a group situation. Inviting children under 11 years old to your home should only happen on a group basis and never with an individual child.

The guidelines applying on church premises apply also in homes and other venues, especially those relating to one-to-one situations.

## 2.10 Transport

Where transport is to be by any means other than public transport or hired coach with driver, the following guidelines should be followed, even when taking children or young people to or from home:

- All road traffic laws should be followed, including, but not limited to:
  - All speed limits should be observed
  - Everyone must wear a seat belt
  - Driver should have fully comprehensive insurance cover for all passengers
  - No vehicle must carry more passengers than is legally allowed.
- Avoid giving lifts to children on their own. If this is unavoidable, then it should only be done for short journeys, and the child must be asked to sit in the back of the car. If children are being dropped off in the car, arrange your journey (or who sits where) so that you do not end up with one child left in the car who is sitting in the front.
- The Group or Sessional Leader has the right to refuse anyone to act as a driver for children if for any reason they assess the particular driver carries any additional risk to the passengers that in their opinion would be unacceptable to the parents/carers.
- Under 18s shall not be permitted to drive other children on behalf of the Church.

## **2.11 Electronic communication (including social media):**

Electronic communication (including social media) has become enormously important and popular, and the rate of change in technology makes it impossible to give specific guidance on each form of communication. However, these general principles should be followed to keep both children and workers safe.

Personal contact details (e.g. email addresses, social network usernames, mobile phone numbers) for children under the age of 18 should not be included in the Church's Directory of Members and Friends, and should not be requested by workers or other Church attenders without good reason, nor without consent from both young people and their parents or carers.

Direct electronic communication with children of primary age or below is inappropriate; all necessary communication should be passed through their parents or carers.

Electronic communication with young people of secondary school age is permissible, but should be used with care. Ideally, communication with young people through social networking should be through a separate church group profile to which only the members of the group have access.

Electronic communication should be used only to share factual information or to make arrangements for activities. It is a poor substitute for face-to-face or telephone conversations in the communication of support, feelings or ideas. If an "electronic conversation" appears to be developing (that is a series of messages sent to and fro between worker and young person), it is always best to arrange to meet to discuss things further rather than to continue to communicate electronically.

If electronic communication is being used with individuals or a small group, it is a wise safeguard to copy parents / carers into communication.

Electronic communication is easily misunderstood, due to its impersonal format. Workers and Church attenders should be regularly reminded to ensure that what they write is clear and unambiguous. Text language and informal sign-offs (e.g. "lol") should be avoided.

Electronic communication should be used only between the hours of 8:00am and 10:00pm.

Workers' and Church attenders' personal profiles are best kept private from young people, but if they permit a young person access to their own personal profile, they must ensure that everything they post or upload is appropriate for young people to see. They should also allow the young person's parents or carers access to the same profile.

## **2.12 Photographing children**

No photos of children or young people should be displayed in public areas, printed publications, or on the internet without parent or carer consent.

## **2.13 Bullying**

### **2.13.1 Recognising bullying**

The government defines bullying as: "Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally." Children should feel safe within the group environment, both physically and emotionally, and so bullying should not be tolerated in any form.

Bullying can take many forms: it can be overt (e.g. name calling, teasing, hitting, pushing, intimidating, unwanted sexual contact or comments, taking belongings, “initiation ceremonies” or practical jokes); or it can be covert (e.g. inappropriate text messages or emails, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or over the internet, gossiping, spreading hurtful or untrue rumours, embarrassing people within a group, or excluding people from groups, activities or conversations).

Bullies will often pick on a particular feature of a person’s appearance, character or personal circumstances (e.g. racial difference, disability, sexuality, hair colour, gender, intellect, or wealth).

Some potential indications of bullying include: withdrawal; lack of desire to join activities with certain individuals, or to attend the group as a whole; torn clothing; loss of friends; bruises; or a need for extra money or supplies.

Bullies can be children, young people or adults, and their victims can be younger, the same age or older than them, including adults. Often, but not always, bullies have themselves experienced bullying.

### **2.13.2 Preventing bullying**

Where appropriate, children should be involved themselves in creating a code of behaviour that makes clear that bullying is unacceptable.

Any observed behaviour that could be construed as bullying should be challenged immediately and indiscriminately.

Children should know that it is right to report bullying to their Group Leader. Where this is not possible (e.g. if the young person feels bullied by the Group Leader, or if the bullying is occurring outside of structured time and the Group Leader is not available), they should report to a Church Leader or the Safeguarding Coordinator.

If an adult is accused of bullying, the procedure for dealing with allegations of abuse should be followed (see Section 3).

Any other allegations of bullying should be treated seriously and carefully investigated by Sessional or Group Leaders, and discussed with all other Workers in that Group, who should decide the correct course of further action. The relevant Group Leader should ensure that all the Workers in their Group understand the evidence, the decision reached, and the course of action to be taken.

Leaders should attempt to help those doing the bullying to change their behaviour. Often this is most effectively done through facilitating communication between the bully and the one being bullied to create awareness and empathy, especially if the bully has no previous history of bullying (many bullies do not realise the effect that their behaviour has on another person). In more persistent cases, more punitive measures may have to be taken, in consultation with Leaders of other Groups and/or with Pastor or the Safeguarding Coordinator.

Where appropriate, the parents of the bully and the one being bullied should be informed both of the incident and the steps being taken to deal with the bullying.

## 3 Dealing with Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

The Church and all those involved in its children's work are committed to the protection of children from abuse, whether physical, sexual, emotional or spiritual, and from neglect.

Child abuse is rarely confined to a single attack, but is more likely to become a pattern of behaviour over a period of time, becoming more serious the longer it continues.

Most child abusers are unknown to the police and will not appear on any registers. Abuse is most commonly carried out by someone well known to the child. Therefore permanent vigilance is vital.

If you are concerned about a child, it is important that you speak to the Safeguarding Coordinator. The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibilities should be considered.

### 3.1 Recognising signs of abuse

There are five generally recognised types of abuse, each with its own indicators, outlined below. Be vigilant for these signs, but also be careful not to jump to hasty conclusions. There may be other explanations.

#### 3.1.1 Physical

*any injury deliberately inflicted requiring medical attention*

- 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
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc., which do not have an 'accidental' explanation
- Self-harming

Note that injuries may be hidden, so also look for behavioural indicators such as flinching, being wary of adults, frightened of parents, aggression or withdrawal.

#### 3.1.2 Emotional

*lack of love or affection; verbal abuse; being given inappropriate responsibilities; etc.*

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour (particularly where a person withdraws or becomes clingy), depression or aggression
- Nervousness
- Low self-esteem
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Running away, stealing or lying
- Generally poor social skills and development delay
- Bed-wetting

#### 3.1.3 Sexual

*adults (and sometimes other children) use children to satisfy their sexual desires.*

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters evident in words, play, drawings

- detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- tummy pains with no apparent cause
- regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Sexually provocative or seductive behaviour with adults
- secretive relationships with adults or another young person
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- soreness on toileting
- disturbed sleep, nightmares, bed-wetting

#### 3.1.4 Spiritual

*someone uses their power within a framework of spiritual belief or practice to satisfy their own needs at the expense of others.*

- fear of asking questions or of doubting the beliefs of the Church
- fear of attending the group, especially when a particular leader is present.

#### 3.1.5 Neglect

*adults fail to provide the necessities of life and protect children from danger, thereby seriously impairing health and development.*

- always tired (often falling asleep)
- excessive 'comfort' habits (sucking, rocking, biting)
- looking uncared for and unhappy
- being withdrawn or aggressive
- having lingering injuries or health problems.

### 3.2 Dealing with suspicions or disclosure of abuse

If abuse is suspected, disclosed or discovered, report it to the Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible. The Safeguarding Coordinator will keep a secure record of all suspected cases of abuse, so that reported incidents are not treated in isolation.

Do not discuss suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated. Do not attempt to investigate the situation yourself, and on no account must you talk with parents or carers of the child concerned.

If a child chooses to tell you about abuse, follow these guidelines:

- Look at them directly.
- Explain that you cannot be bound to keep a secret if you think that the child or another person may be in danger, but that you will only share information in order to ensure that they will be kept safe.
- Accept what they say (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Try to remain relaxed and un-shocked by what they might be telling you.
- Be aware that they may have been threatened.
- Tell them that they are not to blame.
- Do not press for information. Do not question them. Do not put words in their mouth.
- Reassure them that they are right to tell, and that you believe them.
- Let them know what you are going to do next, who you are going to tell and why, and roughly what will happen.
- Finish on a positive note.
- As soon as possible afterwards make hand-written notes of what exactly they said and any evidence of mood (e.g. crying), and the date, time and circumstances of the conversation.

- Report the conversation and pass your notes on to the Safeguarding Coordinator for advice and action. You will receive support from them.

### **3.3 What happens next**

The Safeguarding Coordinator will determine a plan of action in consultation with the Church's Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), which provides advice and guidance in dealing with all child protection issues.

This plan of action might involve referring the matter to Social Services, or to the Police.

### **3.4 Understanding more about safeguarding issues and processes**

The Church has purchased a Safeguarding Training DVD from CCPAS, which is kept by the Safeguarding Coordinator. Groups can ensure that their Safeguarding Children knowledge is up to date by watching the DVD, and by regularly reviewing the contents of this policy.