

EMMANUEL GROUP OF CHURCHES

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults: Policy and Procedure

The Golden Rule

‘Keep all relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults open, observable, readily understood and shared with more than one responsible adult. All work with children, young people and vulnerable adults must be well supervised. The adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults must be carefully selected, well trained and advised of their safeguarding responsibilities.’

This Policy and Procedure was adopted at the Emmanuel Group Church Council meeting. It follows and is consistent with the Church of England House of Bishops’ “Protecting All God’s Children” 4th edition 2010, “Promoting a Safe Church” 2006 and Safer Recruitment Policy 2013 (Church of England and Methodist Church)

Each person who works with children and vulnerable adults will agree to abide by this policy.

It will be reviewed annually, accepted and written in the minutes of the GCC.

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Introduction

The Constitutional Church Council (GCC) takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This Policy and Procedure applies to all who have received the Bishop's Licence or Permission to work and all others who work with children and young people and vulnerable adults in our Parish/LEP/Benefice.

The term 'Parish' is used to denote the GCC and members of the Ministry Team who are together responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented.

The GCC will:

1. Appoint a **Designated Person** to work with the Ministry Team on safeguarding matters
2. Follow the **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures**
3. Report any abuse or suspected abuse if discovered.
4. Have adequate insurance cover in place.
5. Ensure all those whose work brings them into regular contact with children and vulnerable adults are safely recruited, complete a Confidential Declaration Form and are subject to a criminal records disclosure.

For the purposes of this document a child is anyone under the age of eighteen years.

For advice on all safeguarding issues including allegations or suspicions of abuse contact:

**Bev Huff DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING OFFICER 01733887000
bev.huff@peterborough-diocese.org.uk**

1. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount
- everyone has different levels of vulnerability, and each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives
- all children and adults who may be vulnerable (regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity) have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse which can occur in all families and communities
- domestic abuse if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of child abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour
- working in partnership with children, their parents' adults who may be vulnerable, their carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

We will develop a safeguarding culture in our church that:

- enables and encourages concerns to be raised and responded to openly and consistently and protects children and adults who may be vulnerable from actual or potential harm
- is child-friendly and ensures that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse
- values, listens to and respects children and adults who may be vulnerable, encouraging them to be active contributors to the church community
- encourages adults who may be vulnerable to lead as independent a life as possible

When concerns are raised we will:

- respond **without delay** to every concern raised that a child, or adult who may be vulnerable may have been harmed, or may be at risk from harm, through abuse, harassment or bullying; or about the behaviour of an adult or child
- work with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator (SC), clergy and the appropriate statutory bodies during an investigation into abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community
- challenge any abuse of power especially by anyone in a position of trust

If abuse has occurred, we will ensure in partnership with the SC, clergy and other agencies that:

- informed and appropriate pastoral care is offered to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse, including support to make a complaint if so desired
- supervision is provided for any member of our church community known to have offended against a child or vulnerable adult, or to pose a risk to them.
- appropriate pastoral care is offered to any member of our church community against whom an allegation is made

In all recruitment and selection we will:

- ensure careful appointment of ordained and lay ministers, voluntary and paid workers with children and young people and adults in line with safe recruitment principles and checks
- provide supervision, support and training after appointment
- commit us to support, resource, and train and regularly review those who undertake work amongst people who may be vulnerable.

In our publicity we will:

- share information about good safeguarding practice with children, parents, guardians and adults who may be vulnerable, their carers, and all those working with them

2. Responding to a child or adult who may be disclosing abuse

We will endeavour to:

- Listen carefully, take the child, young person or vulnerable adult seriously
- Tell the child s/he has done the right thing by telling
- Say if we can, what we will do next
- Make an accurate record as soon as possible*

We will not

- Promise confidentiality
- Investigate
- Ask any questions
- We will not ask the child, young person or adult to repeat the disclosure more than is necessary

Imminent risk

- If we encounter a child in a situation where the child or adult is in imminent danger, we will act immediately to secure the safety of the child, young person or adult. We will seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to Local Authority Social Care in accordance with the Child and Adult Safeguarding Procedure. If a child or adult needs emergency medical attention, we will seek this immediately and directly from the emergency services.

3. Child and Adult Protection Procedure

We will follow the procedure below where there is concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been harmed as a result of abuse and urgent action is needed.

1. All safeguarding disclosures must be treated as confidential. Once referred to Safeguarding Co-ordinator or clergy the issue is not to be discussed further except with authorised people stated below.

2. If there is concern that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm, inform the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Kristin Hatherly, or Clergy, who will take advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or Local Authority Social Care

3. If there is concern that a child or vulnerable adult has been harmed, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or clergy must be informed immediately. If no one is available contact the Local Authority MASH team. **You must make every effort to contact the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or clergy before contacting any other authority.**

4. Who to Contact if where there is worry about a child or adult

Northamptonshire

CHILDREN (Multi Agency Safe Hub)	Contact Number
Children’s Care Team Option 1 Adult Care Team Option 2	0300 126 1000 0300 126 1000
POLICE 24hrs	101

5. Safe Recruitment

- All church workers with children and adults will complete and sign an application form and confidential declaration.
- Written references and identification will be required and will be carefully checked.
- A criminal disclosure will be required in relation to all eligible roles
- All church workers with children and adults will be interviewed in relation to a role/job description or person specification.
- After appointment support and training will be offered.

6. Those who pose a risk to children

When it is known that a member of the congregation, or someone wishing to join the congregation, has sexually abused a child or young person, or is not a sexual offender against children but nevertheless may pose a risk, we will consult with the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer, so that a safe course of action in accordance with recommended Church of England procedure can be pursued in conjunction with the relevant statutory agencies.

7. Care of Survivors of abuse and their families

We will seek to work with anyone who has suffered abuse, developing with them an appropriate ministry of informed pastoral care.

8. Record Keeping and Storage

Written records will be made of all safeguarding incidents involving children, young people or adults. They will be treated confidentially and will be securely stored by the Safeguarding Officer. They will be retained even if the information received was judged to be malicious, unsubstantiated or unfounded.

9. Safer Practice with children

We will ensure our work with children is carried out in a safe environment

- The ratio of leaders to children will comply with the Children Act 1989
- Each group will have a minimum of two adults and a gender balance will be maintained if possible.
- Adults will not work alone with children
- We will seek to ensure meeting places are safe, secure and suitable for purpose
- We will obtain parental/guardian permission for attendance at groups, trips, use of images and transporting children in private cars
- All those who drive children on church-organized activities should have held a full driving licence for over two years, which must be 'clean' i.e. with no current points.
- All cars that carry children should be comprehensively insured for both private and business use. The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities.

10. Touch

We can all find physical contact potentially difficult, and we each have different boundaries of personal space, which may depend on our background, personality and cultural or ethnic norms. Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable as part of their expression and understanding of human relationships. Because child and adult protection issues have become highly emotive, this has led to some people avoiding all occasions of touching children and adults who may be vulnerable. The following points regarding touch are offered as suggestions to follow:

- Be sensitive and sympathetic to the needs and wishes of the individual, and try to respond in a way which is neither patronising nor rejecting
- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
- Touch should be related to the child's or adult's needs, not the leader's or carer's
- Touch should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child or adult
- Avoid all physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the child or the adult
- Children and adults have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances where they may need medical attention.

11. Restraint

Restraint is where a child or adult is being held, moved or prevented from moving, against their will, because not to do so would result in injury to themselves or others, or would cause significant damage to property. You are advised to seek training, from your local police or local authority, for leaders in appropriate restraint techniques and how to diffuse volatile situations.

- Restraint must always be used as a last resort, when all other methods of controlling a situation have been tried and failed
- Restraint should never be used as a punishment or to bring about compliance (except where there is a risk of injury)
- In all cases where restraint is employed, the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported, and this should include written and signed accounts of all those involved, including where possible the child, young person or adult. The parents or carers should be informed the same day.

12. Children or adults in distress

There will be occasions when a distressed child or adult needs comfort and reassurance, and this may involve physical contact. Young children, in particular, may need immediate physical comfort, for instance after a fall, or separation from parent. Leaders should use their judgement to comfort or reassure a child in an age-appropriate way whilst maintaining clear boundaries.

13. Intimate and personal care

It may sometimes be necessary for leaders to do things of a personal nature for children or adults, particularly if they are very young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parents or carers, and every effort should be made to ensure that the child or adult who may be vulnerable also understands and gives informed consent, taking account of their disability or impairment. Adults should avoid any physical contact when children or adults who may be vulnerable are in a state of undress, avoid any visually intrusive behaviour, and where there are changing rooms, announce their intention of entering. Generally, leaders should not change in the same place as children, shower or bathe with children, or assist with any personal care task which the child or adult who may be vulnerable can undertake by themselves.

14. Relationships of trust

Genuine relationships may occur between adults, one of whom is in a caring role with another who is more vulnerable. No intimate relationship should begin while the member of staff or voluntary worker is in a position of trust over them. The power and influence that a person in a position of trust has over someone attending a group or activity or in a counselling situation cannot be over-estimated; such an abuse of trust with a person under 18 years may be a criminal offence (Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000).

“The inequality at the heart of a relationship of trust should be ended before any sexual relationship begins.” Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable Guidance for preventing abuse of trust (Home Office 1999)

Some specific do's and don'ts for paid staff and volunteers	
Do	Don't
Wherever possible work with or within sight of another adult	Inflict physical punishment of any kind, nor any sanction which may ridicule or humiliate a child or adult
For activities such as bell-ringing, which require specific physical contact, make sure the person and their parents/carer are aware of this and its nature	Engage in rough physical games including horse-play, or in sexually provocative games
Only use restraint to prevent a child or adult from harming him/herself or others, or doing significant damage to property	Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or adult, even in fun
Administer first aid with others around	Allow children or adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged
If young children need comforting, ensure they are responded to warmly but with other adults around, whilst respecting the need for privacy	Let complaints or allegations made by a child or adult be ignored or go unrecorded
When taking young children or adults to the toilet, make sure another adult is informed, or organise a toilet break for the whole group	Do things of a personal nature for children or adults that they can do themselves

15. Unaccompanied Children

If children attend our church services without their parents' or carers' knowledge we will welcome the child(ren) and try to establish whether their parents are aware of where they are. We will make sure an adult recruited for work with children takes care of the child and try to discover when they are due home and encourage them to keep to that arrangement. Depending on the age and competence of the child, we will ring the parents or ask the young person to ring to gain the parents' consent to the child remaining. If the child comes regularly, we will endeavour to establish regular contact with the parents or carers.

16. Visiting adults who may be vulnerable, in their homes (including residential homes)

Church workers will always complete an assessment of risk before visiting someone in their own home. They will always carry a mobile phone on a home visit, and ensure that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator knows where they are and ensures they confirm when visit is completed. They will always call by appointment and carry identification. Where our workers need to refer the person to another agency we will talk this through with the vulnerable adult, seeking his/her permission before passing on personal information. They will also ensure they have consulted with the safeguarding co-ordinator and/or clergy before making a referral. Our workers will always endeavour to be clear about what behaviour from the vulnerable adults is acceptable and what is not.

17. Organizations hiring Church Building or Premises

In relation to all activities and events which are not run directly by the church but which take place in church buildings or grounds the responsibility for implementing safeguarding policies rests with the hiring organisation and not with the Church Council. However, the CC needs to take reasonable steps to ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are being practised by the hiring organisation. The CC will require visiting groups to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, follow safe recruitment procedures, and are aware of health and safety issues in the building. Visiting groups will be required to sign a hire agreement, produce a copy of their safeguarding policy and be aware of our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

18. Social Media and Engaging with Young People

These guidelines relate to internet, e-mail, mobile phone and social networking. For many young people this is their preferred means of communication and it can be an extremely effective tool within youth work. However while it brings great opportunities there are also significant risks and it is important that guidelines are followed.

Leaders communicating with young people or vulnerable adults via the Internet, social networking or mobile phone must be criminal records checked in accordance with the diocesan safeguarding guidelines. (This is done through the church's Safeguarding Co-ordinator).

It is recommended that:

- If a worker expects to communicate with young people in the group via email, messenger, social networking sites (i.e. Facebook) or texting, written permission from the child's parents should be sought first.
- One-to-one communication between a worker and a young person should normally be avoided; all communication should be in a page or group context.
- If it is necessary for a worker to communicate with a young person individually, it should be through an approved 'work' account that a supervisor or approved third party can also access and review the conversations. Young people must be made aware that any one-to-one communication will be shared in this way. (See 'Facebook' below).
- Communication should be from a specific account/address known to the young people, parents and supervisor.
- Clear and unambiguous language should be used in all communications. Avoid abbreviations that could be misinterpreted.
- Do not use any comment or picture of a young person without written parental permission, diocesan guidelines on the taking of images must be followed.

Mobile phones:

- Employed workers should be supplied with a mobile phone dedicated for work purposes. This allows for the phone to be switched off outside working hours, and for usage to be accountable.
- The work phone number should be the only number that young people are given; a worker's personal number should remain private.
- Texts that raise concerns should be saved and passed on to a supervisor or the safeguarding co-ordinator within the organisation. Conversations causing concerns should be discussed as soon as possible.

Email and Instant Messenger:

- Be aware of who has access to computers, or other devices, used for communication between workers and young people.
- There should be a 'curfew' on instant messenger communication and this should only take place during normal working hours
- Log and save all conversations and regularly review these with your supervisor before they are deleted. Make sure that young people know that a supervisor has access to the conversations.
- Video or Voice messenger should be done in public so that other people are aware of what you are doing and to whom you are speaking.

Facebook & Social Networking Sites:

- The best advice is that it is not appropriate to use a personal Facebook account and profile for work with young people, so you should create a professional account to manage your communications with you people.
- To create a professional or 'Work' account and profile, enter your work email in the sign up box, adding 'Work' or another suitable term after your last name to distinguish your professional profile from your personal (i.e. John Smith Work)
- Your supervisor/Named Person should be aware of the account name and password so that they can at any time log onto the account to monitor the communications. Young people should be made aware that information is shared in this way.
- You should ensure your organisation/church name is entered onto the profile you create. Also make sure you use work contact details and web address.
- Adding interests makes your profile more interesting, but only share information appropriate to the young people you will be working with.
- You should use a photo of you in an office/work setting.
- You should consider entering an 'expectations statement' under 'about' in your profile such as;

"I am a youth worker with a keen interest in social media, which I use to share about the groups, and events we run through Emmanuel Group of Churches. I also post lots of links that I think young people who come to our groups would find interesting. I generally only login to Facebook a few times a week during my work hours. If you need to contact someone from Emmanuel Group of Churches urgently then please call XXXXXXXXXX or visit XXXXXXXX (website)"

- Any communication or content that raises concerns should be saved or printed, shared and discussed with your supervisor.
- Workers should only accept friend requests for this profile from young people known to them that they have met offline.
- Communication should normally be in the public domain wherever possible (by using group mailings or public wall posts).
- Where groups are set up, they should be closed, and not open to the general public. The worker should retain administrative rights and moderate the group, only sharing those rights with a supervisor and other trusted workers.
- Workers with personal social networking accounts should customise their privacy settings in order to maintain the boundaries between their personal and professional lives. They should avoid uploading any appropriate personal information. Further more the work account and private account should not be friends with each other.

All of the above should be shared with young people.

APPENDIX 1

This is a standard guidance provided by the Diocese.

‘Pokemon Go’ – Safeguarding Guidance

What is Pokemon Go?

Pokemon Go is a mobile and tablet app game which lets players find Pokemon (Animated creatures, which players have to catch, train and battle with). The game takes place in augmented reality (meaning the game combines real life action with virtual gaming) by using GPS as you walk around towns, cities and other locations to find the Pokemon. The game has been an overnight sensation with millions playing it around the world.

Why does your church need to know?

Your church might be a ‘PokeStop’ – real life buildings and landmarks that players have to visit to get certain items they need to play the game. Your church could also be a ‘Gym’ where players can battle their Pokemon. (Being a Gym means people spend significantly more time battling Pokemon at your location.)

Pokemon Go is therefore giving churches around the country a great opportunity to meet people from their area who might not normally come to church. However, we all need to be aware that this game means that children under the age of 18 may come into contact with people who might present a risk. The NSPCC report that within days of Pokemon Go launch, there have been numerous accounts of children being placed in dangerous situations because of the geo-location feature – in one instance it is reported that armed robbers lured teenagers to a particular spot using Pokemon Go and in another that players were taken to a sex shop.

Safeguarding Guidance

With regard to Pokemon Go our first priority as a church should be to provide a safe place for children and vulnerable adults, whose welfare is paramount. It is important for all of us in church congregations, but especially parents, those in a leadership position and those who work with children and young people, to be aware that the app allows for engagement with others. This means that children and young people may be meeting strangers in circumstances where the church is responsible, be that on church premises or any other place.

(i) To obtain the Pokemon Go app it is necessary to provide a date of birth and email address. Parents will need to be aware of this and can set up a privacy policy within the agreement. (see NSPCC website)

(ii) Remind children and young people to stay in groups for safety and to watch out for others.

(iii) As the app drains mobile phones, which may leave a child or young person vulnerable if they have no battery life left, consider phone-charging stations within church premises, if possible.

(iv) Be clear where children for whom you are responsible are and will be, if using Pokemon Go.

(v) When you see children and young people using their phones in relation to Pokemon Go, engage with them where appropriate. They may identify issues that need to be acted upon.

(vi) If attention is drawn to any individuals or groups that cause concern contact the Police on 101 or 999 in an emergency. Do not approach the individual or group unless it is necessary to prevent serious harm or injury.

Make a note of:

- date, time and venue of incident / concerns
- the description of the individual / group
- what the concerns / incident was about
- notify the Diocese Safeguarding Advisor and email the details

Please make sure you read the advice on the NSPCC's website here:

<https://www.nspcc.or.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/pokemon-go-parents-guide/>

If you have any concerns in relation to those playing Pokemon Go, please contact the Emmanuel Group of Churches Ministers or Safeguarding Co-ordinator Kristin Hatherly. If they are not available please contact Bev Huff, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, on 01733 887041, or Sam Suddery, Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser on 01733 887040.