

DIOCESE OF RIPON AND LEEDS

TAKING CARE POLICY

Safeguarding children and young people

Diocesan Handbook

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2nd edition 2006

Bishop's foreword

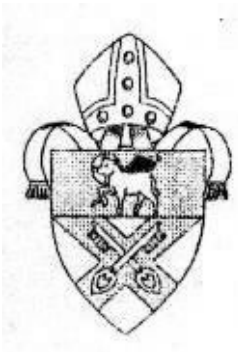
I am delighted to be able to write this foreword for the second edition of the "Taking Care" Handbook for safeguarding children and young people in the Diocese. Our mission to children and young people is fundamentally important, both for the children involved and for the invigoration of those who help, and I am grateful to all those who spend their time and use their talents in this area of work.

The Diocese has a duty of care to all those attending churches and taking part in any parish activities: we have to ensure that we have safe places, safe activities, and safe people.

We are committed as a Diocese to best practice in the area of child protection, and the second edition of the handbook provides more information for parishes, and incorporates new developments in the field giving advice on those new areas which have led to exploitation of children. I would urge anyone working with children and young people to make themselves familiar with the contents.

The increasing complexity of the issues the church has to face in protecting children in our care, our responsibility to help those affected by abuse and to provide a place for those who abuse require our commitment to safeguarding children to be high on our agenda.

This work requires a professional and collaborative approach with the people involved and with colleagues in allied areas of work, and by responding to national and legal requirements in the area of child protection. We have to be able to work with what may seem to be conflicting needs: we must be vigilant in work with children, while offering a welcome and protection to all. By doing so, we offer our children the safest opportunities to grow in the love of Christ.



DIOCESE OF RIPON AND LEEDS

TAKING CARE POLICY

Safeguarding children and young people

As members of the Church of England we are concerned with the wholeness of each individual within God's purpose for everyone. We seek to safeguard all members of the church community, of all ages. It is the responsibility of each one of us to protect children and young people from physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and from neglect.

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THE CHILD PROTECTION HANDBOOK

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is the revised version of the first Diocesan Child Protection Handbook which was produced in 2002. It incorporates the Taking Care Policy of the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds and Protecting all God's Children, the current policy of the Church of England. It provides more information concerning good practice for parishes and has an expanded resources section. New sections include working with those who present a risk to children, information on signs of abuse, and clear guidelines on CRB disclosures.

It continues to provide a draft policy and guidelines that parishes will be able to adapt to suit their own purposes. Each parish needs to consider how far the draft policy meets its own needs, and if necessary adapt it to their own circumstances, while observing the Safe from Harm principles. In the past five years many parishes have developed their own excellent policies and procedures and I commend the work and commitment that has gone into their production. However, circumstances and children's/young peoples' work change, and all parishes on receipt of this new handbook should examine their own procedures and decide if their own systems need amending. Such amendments should be part of the continuing process of ensuring that safeguarding children is appropriate and includes new understanding and developments in the field. Much of the new information in the Handbook is included as a result of requests from parishes and those attending training, and I am grateful for their suggestions.

It remains the case that many thousands of children and young people come on to church premises every week to take part in worship and other activities. This happens because thousands of people volunteer their time and skills to work with and care for them. For the overwhelming majority of children the experience is good. I believe that such activity becomes better and more rewarding for all concerned if we evaluate what we do in the light of good practice.

However, this is not true for all children. Occasionally children and young people are hurt in accidents, some of which could have been prevented. Even more rarely, a child is deliberately hurt or abused by another member of the church community. Although the majority of abuse takes place in the home, it can and does take place in the church.

This Handbook is about prevention, in the belief that a sound policy and practice contributes to minimising the chances of harm occurring. The Taking Care Guidelines exist as a response to current legislation, particularly the Home Office Code of Practice for voluntary organisations: "Safe from Harm" issued in September 1993. Notwithstanding the amount of legislation concerning safeguarding children and new criminal justice measures, this document continues to be the basis of the guidelines for working with children and young people in the voluntary sector. The publication of the Church of England Child Protection Policy in 2004, "Protecting All God's Children", brought up-to-date the national policy on

which the Diocesan Policy depends, and this Handbook should be viewed as the practical application of that national policy.

The Diocese covers a large geographical area, with a number of Social Service Departments and offices included within its area. I have therefore not included this information within the handbook, but it is useful for parishes to enter the details of their local office and add it to this file.

Resources within each parish vary considerably, as does the amount of contact with children and young people. All parishes will however have children on its premises at some point, even if there are no specific children's activities, and I would therefore urge all parishes to undertake a safety audit. All parishes are likely to include survivors of abuse within their congregations, and may be a source of assistance and understanding for those individuals. Many parishes will have those who present a risk to children within their worshipping community (whether they are aware of that or not) and should therefore plan their work with children with that possibility in mind. This Handbook should provide assistance in this task.

I am grateful to the child protection representatives who make these things happen in parishes. They help to ensure that parish work is as safe as it can be for children and young people, fulfilling an essential and a sometimes difficult task, and they deserve our thanks.

Sue Booth, Bishop's Advisor for Child Protection.

SECTION 2

INSURANCE STATEMENT

Groups and parishes will be insured through a number of different companies whose policies will be subject to various terms, conditions and exceptions. However, the majority of churches within the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds are insured with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group PLC. They have provided the following statement, incorporated in their Child Protection Booklet.

Ecclesiastical...supports the House of Bishops Policy Document and its measures for the safeguarding of children. Ecclesiastical believes that preventative measures to remove the likelihood of abuse are the cornerstones for both the protection of a potential victim and an accused child carer.

Common law, and in some areas statutory legislation, require a very wide range of people to take reasonable care to prevent injury to others. Indeed, the law recognises that a higher standard of care exists in matters concerning children. The use of 'best practice' procedures in the management of child protection and care is essential, just as a similar obligation rests upon those responsible for health and safety in commerce and industry. The observance of 'reasonable care' is a standard insurance condition.

Subject to the policy terms, Public Liability (Third Party) Insurance will protect the interests of Policyholders where they are found to be legally liable for accidental death of or bodily injury to a third party. Cover is provided to Policyholders if they are held legally liable for an event caused by their negligence leading to accidental bodily injury or illness as a result of abuse. There is, however, no such cover for the actual perpetrator of abuse.

The Policy terms require that all reasonable steps be taken to prevent injury loss or damage occurring and failure to take such precautions may prejudice the insurance cover. A duty therefore exists upon Policyholders to adopt 'best practice' based upon current and ongoing guidelines.

SECTION 3

GUIDELINES

PRINCIPLES OF THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS' POLICY

From Section 3, Protecting All God's Children

The Church is probably unique in its ministry to both those who have been abused and those who have abused. It is within this tension that policy, procedures and good practice must be made to work. The Church seeks not simply to keep the law in regard to Child Protection but to foster and promote best practice as part of its work for and witness to God's kingdom. Therefore:

- The Church of England fully endorses the principle, enshrined in the Children Act 1989, that the welfare of the child is paramount.
- The Church recognizes that it is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, respect, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Clergy and laity who come into contact with children within the Church need to operate within a carefully thought out framework of policy, procedures and good practice which will ensure that children are safeguarded and nurtured within a culture of informed vigilance.
- Clergy and laity need to have an awareness of their use of authority and power and never betray the trust which is given them.
- Clergy and laity in the Church should seek to maintain the highest standards of conduct in all worship, pastoral, educational and recreational situations.
- The Church will take allegations of abuse seriously, fully cooperating with the local authority area child protection committees in any matter concerning the welfare of children and young people. It acknowledges the prime responsibility of statutory agencies to investigate any significant harm to a child. The Church will never itself investigate incidents of suspected child abuse.
- The Church will work with the statutory agencies to manage the presence in congregations of those who have been convicted of offences against children including those who are on the Sex Offenders Register.
- The Church of England will seek to work with other Christian and faith traditions to promote the welfare and safety of children and young people.
- For the purpose of the Policy and Procedures in this document a child is anyone under the age of eighteen years. All those who work with or are in regular contact with such children must comply with this policy.
- All those working with or in direct and regular contact with children in a paid or unpaid capacity will be carefully recruited and their backgrounds checked at the appropriate level through the Criminal Records Bureau. These checks will also be carried out on those supervising people working with children and on those whose representational ministry, office or status gives them the opportunity or the expectation for regular or unsupervised contact with children.

GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN.

These Guidelines are the “Safe From Harm” guidelines produced by the Home Office and are the basis of all work with children and young people. They should form the basis of all parish policies.

1. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
2. Ensure policy is reviewed and understood.
3. Treat all would-be staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.
4. Gain two references from people who have experience of the applicant’s paid work or volunteering experience.
5. Explore all applicants’ experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
6. Establish procedures to attempt to find out whether an applicant has any convictions for offences against children.
7. Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
8. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
9. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.
10. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
11. Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
12. Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.
13. Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.
14. Issue Guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE P.C.C.

Each Parish should:

- Accept the prime duty of care placed upon the incumbent and Parochial Church Council (PCC) to ensure the well-being of children and young people in the church community.
- Adopt and implement a child protection policy and procedures, accepting as a minimum the House of Bishops' policy on Child Protection but informed by additional diocesan procedures and recommended good practice whilst being responsive to local parish requirements.
- Appoint a coordinator to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures. The coordinator must ensure that any concerns about a child or the behaviour of an adult are appropriately reported both to the statutory agencies and to the diocesan child protection adviser. Ideally this coordinator should be someone without other pastoral responsibility for children in the parish.
- Appoint a person, who may be different from the coordinator, to be a children's advocate; this should be someone whom the children know they can talk to about any problems, if they wish.
- Display the Childline telephone number.
- Ensure that all those authorized to work with children and young people or in a position of authority are properly appointed, trained and supported, and provide all authorized personnel with a copy of the parish child protection policy, procedures and good practice guidelines.
- Pay particular attention to children with special needs and those from ethnic minorities to ensure their full integration and protection within the church community.
- Create a culture of informed vigilance which takes children seriously.
- Ensure that appropriate pastoral care is available for those adults who have disclosed that they have been abused as children.
- Provide, as appropriate, support for all parents and families in the congregation, being aware particularly of parents whose children have suffered abuse.
- Ensure that those who may pose a threat to children and young people are effectively managed and monitored.
- Ensure that appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place.
- Provide appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the parish.

- Review the implementations of the child protection policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually.
- Rural parishes or parishes held in plurality may wish to join together to implement the policy and procedures. It should be noted, however, that people working in isolated situations can be vulnerable and care should be taken to implement the policy in full.
- Local ecumenical projects should agree which denomination's child protection policy to follow and this decision should be ratified by the bishop or other appropriate church leaders.

Responsibilities of Parish Child Protection Representatives

- To work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement the child protection policy and procedures, following the guidelines and recommended good practice contained in the Diocesan Handbook, Taking Care. This applies to all parish activities, both internal and external.
- To supervise the process of recruiting volunteers to work with children and young people in the Parish, by following the procedures in the Diocesan Handbook.
- Ensuring that any concerns about a child, or the behaviour of an adult, are appropriately reported when it comes to their attention.
- Ensuring that Health and Safety audits, with a particular emphasis on the safety of children, are carried out. This will usually be done in conjunction with the churchwardens.
- Helping communication on Child Protection matters between the parish and the Diocese, in conjunction with the Diocesan Child Protection adviser.
- Ensuring that training in Child Protection for those involved in working with children and young people takes place, in accordance with the Diocesan Training Strategy.
- Ensuring there is a regular (at least annual) review of the parish child protection policy and procedures, so that it does not become a neglected issue.

SECTION 4

SAFE WORKING PRACTICES

Children and young people are best protected from potential abuse when those working with them do not feel isolated, and are trained and supported. Those in the parish working with children should meet regularly, preferably with the incumbent and/or the child protection representative to discuss concerns, receive support and to identify any training needs. Training is available in the Diocese and events are publicised through mailings and the CLAY training leaflet. Additional parish training events can be arranged through the Training officer or the Child Protection Adviser.

Workers with children and young people can reduce the potential for abuse, and best protect themselves, by following recommended safe working practices.

1. Workers should not spend excessive time alone with children away from others. Any time spent alone with children should be in a room with the door open, and with clear visibility from outside the room.
2. Workers should not take children alone on car journeys. If a worker is taking a group of children in their car they should be accompanied if possible by another adult, or with their own child present. This should only be done with parental consent. In an emergency, the child should sit in the back seat. Seat belts must be worn. Check that the car insurance covers the vehicle and the passengers.
3. Do not invite a child or young person to your home alone. Invite a group, and ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure that parents are aware of the situation and give their consent.
4. Workers should be familiar with the following guidelines, also available on advice cards:
 - Treat all children and young people with dignity and respect.
 - Respect personal privacy.
 - Be sensitive to others.
 - Provide access for young people to talk to others about their problems.
 - Follow the guidelines relating to contact with young people.
 - Challenge unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying.
 - Plan activities appropriately.
 - Provide an example for others to follow.
 - Do not rely on your good name to protect you.
 - Do not show favouritism to any individual.
 - Remember that your actions may be misinterpreted by others.
 - Regularly review your work with other children's workers.
 - Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
5. Always have at least two adult leaders, ideally one male and one female, for any group activity. For events such as choir practices, chaperones should be used.
6. Ensure that your church/organisation has adequate insurance cover for you and the children and young people.
7. Ensure that each worker has a clear job description, and knows with whom they should consult if there is a problem.

Personal Tasks

It may be sometimes necessary for workers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or have disabilities. These tasks should only be undertaken after discussion with the parents/carers, and it is advised that parents are asked to sign a consent form. In an emergency situation, which requires such assistance, parents should always be fully informed as to any action taken.

Staffing Ratios

Social Services are required to register premises where an activity takes place for more than two hours in any one day where the children are aged under eight and are unaccompanied by their parents. This registration applies to groups which are run for financial reward, but if in doubt as to whether this applies to your group, the group leader should contact the local Social Services Department. As the vast majority of church based activities are not for reward, it is unlikely any church group would need to register its premises.

There should be a minimum of two adults for each group. Those under the age of 18 should not be counted in the requirement of the first two adults, but if they are 16 or over may count towards any further numbers of supervisors needed. With groups of mixed gender there should be both male and female workers, and it is recommended that wherever possible one of the leaders should be female.

The Children Act requires the following standard ratios for the supervision of children for indoor activities:

Age Group	Staff	Children
0-2 years	1 for every	3
2-3 years	1 for every	4
3-5 years	1 for every	8
5-8 years	1 for every	8
Over 8 years	1 for the first 8 children and then 1 for each additional 12.	

However, on no account should an adult be by themselves with this age group. Staffing ratios with all age groups should always take account of the need and nature of the group.

The following factors should always be considered in deciding how many adults are needed:

- Age and age range of the group
- Special Needs, e.g. health, disability, behavioural problems
- Provision for accompanying a child home or to hospital
- Activities requiring workers with specific skills or qualifications
- Activities requiring closer supervision
- Layout of the building being used and proximity of adults to each other
- Activities taking place outside the building

Additional information and guidelines are available for those planning to take groups away.

Uniformed organisations have their own staffing ratios and guidelines which must be observed.

Adults asked to help by using particular skills may be treated as a visitor for the specific occasion, but should always be supervised by an appointed worker. If they are to become a regular helper for the group they must go through the usual recruitment process.

The Issue of Touch

Within the world of working with children there is a concern about touch. While it is necessary to keep children safe, this need not involve keeping the child at arm's length. Such an approach can be neglectful of children's needs and demoralising to workers. However, children need to be protected from inappropriate touching. The following guidelines are suggested by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service.

1. Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
2. Touch should be age appropriate and initiated by the child rather than the worker.
3. Avoid any physical activity which is, or could be construed to be, sexually stimulating to the child.
4. Children are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others, except in exceptional circumstances such as when they need medical attention.
5. Team members should take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to challenge constructively a colleague if necessary. This issue should form a part of any review of children's activity. Concerns about possible abuse should always be reported in accordance with the guidelines.
6. Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming him/herself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the Parish Child Protection Representative. Further consultation with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser should take place if the behaviour continues.

Inappropriate Behaviour By Children Towards Adults

Children or young people can sometimes make suggestive approaches to an adult. They may have a crush or act inappropriately because of previous experiences. The behaviour may be a "cry for help".

If an adult feels uncomfortable about a child or young person's behaviour he or she must:

- Make it clear to the child or young person , with sensitivity, that their language or behaviour is inappropriate.
- Tell another adult: clergy colleague, the parish priest or parish Child Protection Representative. Agree what measures should be taken to prevent a recurrence.
- Record the incident in case accusations are made in the future. Sign and date the record and ensure it is placed with other confidential records.

Unaccompanied Children

Sometimes children may attend worship or children's groups apparently without the knowledge of their parents. No hard and fast guidelines can be given, as each situation is different, but the following advice may assist:

- Establish whether the child attends with their parents' knowledge, or at least without their parents' objections.
- Establish their full name, address and contact details. Include them on the register. Provide information about the group for the child to take home.
- Seek to secure parental consent to the child's involvement, preferably by direct contact with the parent rather than by using the child as an intermediary.
- Bear in mind the child may have some personal or family difficulty which they may not wish to disclose, which needs sensitive handling.
- Do not include the child on trips away from the usual place of meeting without explicit parental consent.
- If the child does not attend after having attended frequently it may be appropriate to undertake some level of outreach, but this should be done very carefully and after discussion with group leaders and the clergy.

Health and Safety

For a Parish Safety Audit & Risk Assessment, please see Appendix 1.

**Children and young people should meet in a safe and welcoming location.

**Care should be taken where there are heating appliances, low level sockets, windows and doors. If young children have access to kitchens where there may be hot water or food this must be supervised.

**If there is any stacked furniture this must be placed safely in any room where children meet.

**A first aid kit must be available in all premises where children meet, and on trips out. It is advised that a qualified first aider is available, but all group leaders should be familiar with the contents and use of the first aid box. Ensure the contents are replaced when necessary.

**All leaders should know the location of the nearest telephone.

**Accidents will happen: they should be recorded in an official accident book and parents/carers notified immediately.

**Fire drills should be regular features of each group.

**Children should not leave the premises unsupervised or without permission.

**There should be one toilet per ten children. Only group leaders, not casual visitors, should accompany small children to the toilet and another worker should be informed. For very young children, toilet breaks should be organised.

**No medication should be given to a child under 18 without the written permission of a parent/carer.

**All cleaning fluids must be kept in a locked cupboard or in a high place where children do not have access.

Use of Transport

Voluntary workers must ensure that they have adequate insurance before offering to transport anyone on a voluntary basis. Their insurance certificate and driving licence should be checked by the person responsible for the group.

All paid workers will need to ensure that their insurance covers them for transporting children and young people as part of their employment. The P.C.C., or any other employing group should check the insurance policy and driving licence.

All those who drive children on church-organised activities should be over 25 and have held a full driving licence for two years. P.C.C.'s should ensure that those driving on their behalf are fit to drive and of an appropriate ability.

All cars that carry children should be roadworthy and children should wear seat belts or age-appropriate seats. At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number.

Any driver who has an "unspent" conviction for a drink driving offence, or for Dangerous Driving or racing on a public highway should not transport children.

Many groups rely on the use of a mini-bus for transporting children and young people. Drivers must ensure that they are licensed to do so. The European Directive requires new drivers to take a test before they can drive a mini-bus with more than eight passengers, other than one used purely for social or voluntary purposes.

Adequate insurance cover must be arranged for the driver, passengers and the vehicle. The above guidance for transport also applies.

You must be satisfied that the vehicle documentation is up to date and the vehicle is safe to drive. The mini-bus must have forward facing seats and three point diagonal seat belts throughout.

The leader should have a list of the names and addresses of those you are transporting both on their person and a copy left behind with another responsible person. These details should include the parental consent forms.

The mini-bus needs to be appropriate for its user group eg with wheelchair adaptation if necessary. Any luggage should be secured and that driving times are reasonable. Ensure there is a qualified co-driver if the journey is more than six hours in total. You should be accompanied by another adult in any event.

The vehicle should be covered by breakdown cover and access to a mobile phone is highly desirable.

Outdoor Adventure Activity

If you are providing any outdoor adventure activities as part of a group activity, you should check that the centre or hostel being used has adequate insurance, qualified instructors and is licensed by the Adventure Activity licensing authority. This can be checked by contacting:

The AALA, Tourism Quality Services Ltd.
17, Lambourne Crescent
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF4 5GG

For overnight stays, special activities or hazardous activities it is essential that parents or guardians complete the consent form. No child should be allowed to participate in such activities if a consent form has not been completed and returned to the group leader.

Parents must be given full details of the event, including:

Aims and objectives of the activity, date and duration, details of the venue including arrangements for accommodation and supervision, travel arrangements, name of group leaders and contact numbers, information about financial, medical and insurance arrangements.

Ensure your group has adequate and appropriate insurance cover.

Always have separate sleeping arrangements for leaders and young people.

Making and publishing images of children

The making and publishing of images of children is something which is enjoyed by children, parents and carers and those involved in children's work, and can bring positive publicity to church activities. However there are issues to be borne in mind when such activity is planned. The issues are the same, whether the images are still photographs, digital images or films, and regardless of the particular technologies involved.

Images count as personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998 and therefore the principles of that Act apply. For parish purposes, it is important that the consent of children and their parents/carers is obtained for the making and use of images of children.

Those taking photographs need to bear in mind that there may be good reason for withholding consent, such as:

- some children may have been involved in legal disputes, local authority proceedings or adoption and their whereabouts should not be too widely known
- if individual children are identified by name it would be possible for potential abusers to use them to target potential victims
- images made using digital cameras can be manipulated to produce indecent or abusive images.

Good Practice is therefore:

- Obtain consent from parents and children before making images. Consent need not be in writing if it is not proposed to publish the pictures in any way, but if they are to be displayed, used in publicity via newspapers including the Diocesan newsletter, or put on a web-site, then specific written consent should be obtained.
- If the event is a church event that is to be filmed, then an oral notice can be given out at the beginning of the service/activity asking any parent objecting to images being made of their child to remove them from the view of the camera, or to ask the group leader afterwards to ensure that any image they object to is not used.
- Where possible, each child should be part of a group
- If the image is to be published, avoid naming the child. If a name has to be used, use only first names.
- If a child is named in full, avoid using their image.
- Avoid images of scantily clad children, such as at swimming parties.
- Be clear if the image is to be retained for further use.
- Store the image securely, and destroy it if there is no further use for it.

Guidelines for the use of the Internet

These Guidelines are designed to address the potential Child protection issues resulting from the use of the Internet in connection with church activities. There are potential risks if

- Your computer can be accessed by children
- You run your own web-site
- You use e-mail, chat rooms or text messaging to communicate with children

If the parish computer is accessible to children :

- Fit a locking device or use passwords to prevent unauthorised access to the internet.
- Use filtering software to govern which sites can be accessed.
- Encourage potential users and their parents to sign an agreement as to appropriate use.
- Ensure potential users complete an Internet consent form, including parental permission.
- Young people must be supervised when using the internet.
- Keep a log of use by children and young people.

If you run your own web-site :

- Follow the above guidance on images of children

If you use e-mail, chat rooms or text messaging to contact children:

- e- mail: Ensure any communication is public, not private. Ensure that church leaders and parents know that you are communicating in this way and that the parents are happy with this. Send group e-mails rather than individual ones if possible.
- Text-messaging: take great care when using this medium. Ensure you save text messages as text files so that a record exists.
- Chat rooms: Keep everything public. Check that the chat room is moderated and that there is appropriate access and password verification.
- Remind users about safety issues.

Further information is available from the Diocesan Youth Work Adviser and from Youth Org UK: <http://www.Youth.org.uk>

Working with those who may pose a risk to children

Research indicates that a higher proportion of convicted offenders against children may be found in church congregations than in the population generally. It is probable that many congregations will have among their number people who have abused children, only some of whom will be known. This is a powerful reason for implementing safe working practices which apply to everyone.

Not all of those presenting a risk will have been sexual abusers: some will have committed physical or emotional abuse, or neglect. The church is a unique institution in that it has a duty to administer to all: this poses a particular responsibility to offenders and ex-offenders. However, this duty must not compromise the safety of children: the protection of children is the paramount duty.

In addition to those with convictions for offences against children, there are other groups of people who may also pose a risk. These may for example, be those with convictions for violence or sexual offences against adults, adults who perpetrate domestic violence, those involved in drug or alcohol addiction, or those whose behaviour in a professional setting has caused them to be placed on the list barring them from working with children.

The following advice is designed to protect both the adult involved, and children in the parish. Evidence shows that when an offender is known, befriended and supported by a group of volunteers to lead a fulfilled life without children, the risk of reoffending is reduced (though never eradicated). The church has an important role to play in helping the individual in these circumstances.

- When it is known that a member of the congregation has sexually abused a child or young person the diocesan child protection adviser must be consulted, so that a safe course of action can be agreed in conjunction with any relevant statutory authorities. It is expected that an agreement will be entered into with the offender.
- If the offender's victim is a member of the same congregation the offender should be introduced to another congregation. Consideration must also be given to those who have been abused in the past.
- The person should not be given any role or office in the church which gives them status or authority as a child or young person may deem that person to be trustworthy.
- A frank discussion will be held with the offender, explaining that a small group of the congregation will need to know the facts in order to create a safe environment for him or her. If possible the membership of the group should be agreed. Those needing to know are likely to include the clergy, church wardens, child protection coordinator/ children's work leader, and any befriending volunteers.
- It must be made clear that no one else will be informed without the offender's knowledge. The highest levels of confidentiality should be maintained.

- The group should offer pastoral care, support and friendship as well as supervision. They should endeavour to keep channels of communication open.
- Alongside the setting up of the small support group. Consideration should be given as to whether the congregation should be told. This should be with the offender's agreement, and should only be undertaken after careful consideration of all the advantages and disadvantages of this course of action.
- It will be necessary to establish clear boundaries, both for the protection of children and young people and to reduce the possibility of the adult being wrongly accused of abuse. An Agreement will be prepared with the offender which will include the following elements:
 - attend designated services only
 - sit apart from children
 - stay away from areas of the church where children meet
 - attend a house group where there are no children
 - decline hospitality where there are children
 - never be alone with children
 - never work, or be part of a mixed age group, with children
 Further clauses will be added to reflect individual circumstances.
- The offender will be asked to sign the agreement.
- The agreement should be enforced, and no manipulation allowed.
- The agreement should be reviewed regularly and the diocesan child protection adviser consulted, particularly if there is a need for a variation of the Agreement.
- An Agreement must remain in place for as long as the person is a member of the congregation, whether or not their name appears on the Sex Offenders Register.
- If the Agreement is broken, as a final resort the offender will be asked not to attend the church, and informing other statutory agencies will be considered. If the person cannot be banned from the church because it is their parish church, the diocesan registrar will be consulted. A high level of supervision should be maintained.

In some cases offenders only come to light after many years. In such situations great sensitivity will be required. It must, however, be remembered that there may still be a substantial risk to children.

SECTION 5

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

(Extract from “Working Together to Safeguard Children”: Dept. of Health)

“Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.” Working Together recognizes four areas of potential abuse for children: abuse can be described under any one of these categories identified below, or a combination of categories. From “Protecting All God’s Children”: “It is vitally important to recognise that abuse of children is much broader than sexual abuse and that all abuse is a betrayal of trust and a misuse of authority and power. Church communities must be particularly vigilant to identify the inappropriate use of any religious belief or practice which may harm somebody spiritually, emotionally or physically.”

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic needs.

Domestic Violence

A further category of abuse, relating to children who live in situations where there is domestic violence is now being incorporated into current definitions. This is an issue that churches frequently encounter and the welfare of the children in such situations is paramount.

ABUSE WITHIN A CHURCH CONTEXT

Physical abuse may involve punishment, over-emphasis on physical activities that are beyond the scope of the child, failure to recognize special needs, failure to deal with bullying from whatever source,

Emotional abuse may involve being rude or ignoring a child, failing to recognise special needs, failing to recognize that a child is in need, the creation of situations where children can only fail, the instilling of guilt in a young child, name-calling, teasing, failing to deal with bullying, the deliberate abuse of a situation of power and control, etc.

Sexual abuse may involve unwanted and inappropriate touching, making suggestions and comments, inviting children to share sexual feelings/experiences, involving them in looking at pornography or accessing the internet inappropriately, along with all the sexual behaviours listed in the Appendix.

Neglect in a church context may be a failure to respond to a child in need, a failure to listen to a child or to take them seriously, a failure to provide a safe environment and age-appropriate and safe (as possible) activities for children.

WHO ABUSES CHILDREN?

Child abuse is not new: it has however been increasingly recognized, named and condemned during the course of the twentieth and into this century. Its manifestations vary in time and place, and currently we are witnessing a new manifestation in the abuse of the new electronically- based technologies. Child abuse occurs in all cultures, religions and classes. It affects girls and boys, babies and young people of all ages up to the age of eighteen, children with learning difficulties, with physical disabilities and children from any kind of family background.

Most child abuse is committed by those closest to the child: its parents, brothers or sisters, step parent or other carer, babysitter or family friend, or other trusted adult. It is known to be perpetrated by children against other children: child perpetrators will have greater power than their victims, perhaps due to age, gender, physique or ability.

Within a church setting, a worker may encounter child abuse when a child discloses, fully or partially, or when the worker picks up clues that things are not right at home. Children may be suffering from neglect or physical abuse and the symptoms may be spotted by church workers.

There is, however, a group of offenders, the majority of whom are male, who will use access to children within the church setting to gain the confidence of children and ‘groom’ children for sexual abuse. It is very difficult even for professionals to be able to detect such individuals. This is why having procedures offers some protection to children, because the deterrent factor is significant. The procedures also provide some protection for workers against any false allegations of abuse.

Sexual abuse of children does not simply just happen. It is a process that is planned, manipulated and repetitive. You cannot tell by looking at someone that they are an abuser and abusers come from all classes and groups within society. People in positions of trust and authority can be involved in abusing children: they may be youth workers, teachers, social workers, or church workers or leaders.

Vigilance is a key weapon in the battle against child abuse. Sadly, this means being vigilant within our own groups and activities. Workers with children need to be aware that some adults are unable to provide consistent care, that some may manipulate themselves into positions of trust where they can exploit children physically, emotionally, or sexually. The reasons why people sexually abuse children are usually very different from the reasons why children are neglected or physically abused.

Sexual abusers may involve or “groom” children by befriending them, by spending time with them and paying them a lot of attention, by giving them money or gifts. The children are usually told to keep the gifts a secret and thus begins a process of encouraging secrecy. Such offenders often target vulnerable children and their families, who may be isolated or who have been victims of emotional deprivation, neglect or earlier abuse.

The abuser then grooms the child to accept increasing levels of physical contact, from apparently accidental touching to cuddles and kisses that a parent may feel is quite innocent. Physical contact becomes more sexual and the child is warned to keep the contact secret,

either for reward or by the threat of something bad happening to them or their family. The process of ensuring secrecy through fear or encouraging the child to believe no-one will believe them, or through making them believe that they are responsible for the abuse, often results in the child not being able to disclose, or to disclose only partially and then to retract the disclosure. Most children do not disclose their abuse: it is likely that most never disclose, even when they are adult.

Sexual Abuse may also occur in ways that do not involve physical contact: such as taking photographs or videos, or by being shown illicit material on the internet.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE

This summary gives a brief outline of some of the signs and symptoms which may be causes of concern. They should not be regarded as definitive and require professional investigation before attribution an child abuse.

Bruises

In or around the mouth

Fingertip bruising on arms, chest or face indicating tight gripping or shaking

Bruises of different colours indicating injuries of different ages

Two simultaneous black eyes without bruising to the forehead

Bruising showing the marks of a belt or implement or a hand print

Bruising or tears around the earlobes

Bruising to the head or soft tissue areas of the body

Bites

Human bite marks are oval or crescent shaped and can leave a clear impression of teeth

Burns and scalds

Burns with a clear outline are suspicious

Circular burns from cigarettes

Linear burns from hot metal rods or electric elements

Burns of a uniform depth over a large area

Friction burns from being pulled across a floor

Scalds producing a water line from immersion or pouring of hot liquid

Splash marks around the main burn area are caused by liquid being thrown

Old scars indicating previous burns

Fractures

Any fracture in a child under one year is suspicious

Any skull fracture in the first three years is suspicious

Female circumcision

(or female genital mutilation)

This is illegal except for very rare health reasons

Neglect

Often difficult to identify, neglect leads to the physical and emotional harm of a child.

The signs and symptoms include:

Failure of a parent to provide adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene, medical care or supervision.

Failure of a child to grow within the normally expected pattern; they may show pallor, weight loss and signs of poor nutrition.

Failure of a parent to provide adequate love and affection in a stimulating environment, a child may look listless, apathetic or unresponsive with no apparent medical cause.

A child may be observed thriving when away from the home environment.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can also be difficult to identify. It is the result of ill treatment in the form of coldness, hostility and rejection; constant denigration or seriously distorted emotional demands; extreme inconsistency of parenting. Some of the signs and symptoms are:

Low self-esteem

Apathy

Being fearful and withdrawn or displaying “frozen watchfulness”

Unduly aggressive behaviour

Excessive clinging or attention seeking behaviour

Constantly seeking to please

Over-readiness to relate to anyone, even strangers

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse can be suspected based on physical signs, the child’s behaviour or following a direct statement by the child. It is often investigated because of a combination of these signs.

Physical signs:

Recurrent abdominal pain

Unexplained pregnancy

Difficulty walking and sitting

Faecal soiling or retention

Recurrent urinary tract infection

Behavioural signs:

Knowledge unusual for the age of the child

Sexually provocative relationships with adults

Sexualised play with other children

Hints of sexual activity through play, drawing or conversation

Requests for contraceptive advice
Lack of trust or marked fear of familiar adults
Sudden onset of soiling or wetting
Severe sleep disturbance
Change of eating habits
Social isolation and withdrawal
Role reversal in the home eg a daughter taking over the mothering role
Inappropriate displays of physical contact between adult and child
Learning difficulties, poor concentration
Inability to make friends
Using school as a haven, arriving early and reluctance to leave
Reluctance to take part in physical activity
Truancy, running away from home
Self harm, mutilation or suicide attempts
Dependence on drugs or alcohol
Anti-social behaviour including promiscuity and prostitution

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

If you are concerned that a child or young person has been abused or is at risk of being abused, then you must report it. Above all, what you must NOT do is NOTHING.

A worker may become concerned about abuse for a number of reasons:

- ** A child may tell you
- ** Someone else involved with the child may tell you that they are concerned, or that the child has told them something
- ** A child's behaviour may make you concerned that he/she is being abused
- ** You may feel uncomfortable about the way a worker is behaving with a child, or with a child's reaction to a worker
- ** A child may have an injury for which there is no satisfactory explanation.

NB. Distress in a child may be caused by many factors, one of which may be child abuse. It is therefore important to refer on so that the situation can be investigated by professionals.

IF A CHILD DISCLOSES TO YOU

- ** Listen, and keep on listening
- ** Don't ask questions
- ** Accept what you hear without passing judgement
- ** Do not promise to keep secrets, and tell the child what you are going to do
- ** Write down what has been said as soon as possible and keep a copy
- ** Refer to the incumbent and/or the parish Child Protection Representative, and the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. If they are unavailable, or in an urgent situation, refer immediately to Social Services or the police Public/child protection unit.
- ** Do not contact the person against whom the allegation is made
- ** Do not talk to others (except the above) about the allegation

No individual person should attempt to deal with the problem alone. In the first instance the incumbent, or in the case of the incumbent's involvement the churchwarden, should be contacted. The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser should also be contacted. Anyone has the right to contact Social Services or the Police and if they feel such action is immediately

necessary then they should do so, and inform the incumbent and the Child Protection Adviser that they have done so.

SIGNIFICANT HARM

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interest of children. The local authority is under a duty to make enquiries, or cause enquiries to be made, where it has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, and the extent of premeditation, degree of threat and coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements in child sexual abuse. Sometimes a single event may constitute significant harm, but more often it is a compilation of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage the child's physical and psychological development. In every case it is necessary to consider any ill-treatment alongside the family's strengths and weaknesses.

SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

The church will be involved with survivors of abuse in many ways:

- abused children may come to the church for help
- adult abuse survivors may turn to the church for help
- some clergy were sexually abused as children, and may need the support of colleagues and congregations
- children may be abused by Christian family members
- children may be abused by clergy or church workers

Each parish should consider the fact that they almost certainly have survivors within their community and should think about ways of responding in a sympathetic and practical way. This means creating a loving environment within which healing can happen, and may require providing access to factual information and sources of professional help. Please see the information section in the Handbook.

DISCLOSURES OF HISTORICAL ABUSE

In the course of their work, many ministers and those offering pastoral support in the Church, will find themselves hearing disclosures from adults concerning abuse that happened to them when they were children.

There is no single, correct procedure for dealing with a disclosure of historical abuse by an adult. The wishes of the person disclosing abuse will be very important. For some adults, just being able to talk to a trusted person about their experiences can be a powerful healing event. The pastoral care of the person who has been abused should be a priority. A referral to the police will not always be necessary unless the individual wishes to report the offence; however, they should be encouraged and supported to do so. Adults do need to be made aware, however, that if the alleged abuser is still working with or caring for children a referral to Social Services will be made by the person hearing the complaint or the diocesan child protection adviser, who must in any case be informed. People who have committed sexual abuse against someone years ago could well be abusing children today.

SECTION 6

RECRUITMENT OF PEOPLE TO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

It is important that anyone who works for the church or church-based organisations, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, should be chosen with care. While there are no procedures which can give an absolute safeguard against appointing people who will abuse children, the consistent application of procedures designed to vet for offenders against children has a significant deterrent effect. This is not sufficient of itself: continued monitoring and a culture of supervision and review are also important in ensuring our children are protected from harm.

Those included in the recruitment procedures will include (from Protecting All God's Children) :

- all clergy who have the freehold, hold the bishop's licence or permission to officiate;
- all ordinands before they are presented to a bishops' selection conference;
- all accredited lay workers and readers who hold the bishop's licence or permission to officiate;
- any other leaders in the church whose position of trust gives them the opportunity or the expectation that they might have regular or unsupervised contact with children;
- those people who as part of their job supervise those working with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- the parish child protection coordinator (representative)
- all people employed by the diocese, cathedral or a parish who work with children or who may come into regular and direct contact with children during their work;
- all volunteers who work with children or who may come into regular and direct contact with children during their activities: this will include adult members of mixed age activities such as, bell-ringers, choirs, servers;
- members of religious communities and similar bodies who have contact with children as part of their ministry.

The principles for recruitment as outlined in Safe from Harm should be followed by parishes for all posts involving direct contact with children, whether paid or unpaid.

Parish Process of Recruitment

Step one

Provide a job description and application form (e.g. Appendix 3 & Appendix 4.1) for staff and volunteers wishing to work with children. The confidential declaration at Appendix 4.2 must be used.

Step two

Take up the references provided by the applicant. One reference should be from the current employer or previous church.

If the references or declaration give cause for concern, the incumbent or person responsible for running the group or activity should consult the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

All references and declarations must be stored in a safe place and access available only to those who need to be involved: for instance, the incumbent, the group leader and those who form the parish' Taking Care / Child Protection group.

Step three

Have an appropriate interview: at least one of those interviewing should be the leader of the group in which the applicant will be employed. It is also desirable that one member of the panel should be a member of the parish Taking Care group, or the parish Child Protection Representative.

All interviewees should be provided with a copy of the Parish Child Protection Policy and agree to it.

Step four

Obtain a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure via the Diocesan system, now administered by the Archdeacon of Leeds' office.

Step five

The decision to appoint should be made conditional on a probationary period, and confirmed in writing after satisfactory completion of that time.

Step Six

All workers with children and young people should be given the small blue guide to the Taking Care Policy. Additional copies are available from the Child Protection Adviser.

Helpers aged under 18.

Young people aged under 18 are often a valuable source of assistance to children's work. However, they should not be asked to take formal responsibility for work with children. Helpers aged 16 and 17 should be interviewed and asked to complete a confidential declaration and sign an agreement to follow the Parish Child Protection procedures. They should not be asked for a CRB disclosure. They should never be solely responsible for a group or creche and should always be supervised and supported by an adult. Once they reach 18 they should be treated as adults and asked to apply for a CRB disclosure.

CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU DISCLOSURES

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is an executive agency of the Home Office. Its purpose is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions, and should be understood in this context. It is not an agency for deciding who is suitable to work with children, but as an aid to identifying those who are not. Although it is not a legal requirement for the Church to use this service, the House of Bishops regards it as a mandatory element in the recruitment process that disclosures should be obtained. It is now an offence to appoint a person who is banned from working with children to that role, and is our only mechanism for making these checks.

The CRB has laid down guidelines as to how these checks should be obtained and the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds, as a Registered Body, has to abide by these guidelines. This registration enables parishes to operate under the same system to obtain disclosures for those requiring them. In order to seek a disclosure, the organisation has to make sure they are legally entitled to such information. The post that the worker, paid or voluntary, is to undertake, must involve the expectation of regular contact with children or supervising, training, caring for or being in sole charge of children. That is, they are posts which are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. When seeking a disclosure from someone in a position of trust it is necessary to ascertain that they could be in a position to have unsupervised contact with children.

NB: The CRB process does not replace but enhances good personnel practices. Those making appointments should continue to ask for the confidential declaration to be completed, take up references, and adhere to safe working practices.

At present the service is free for volunteers and the Diocese bears the administrative costs of the system. The process is now undertaken via the Archdeacon of Leeds's office Tel: 0113 269 0594 and enquiries should be directed to that office.

The Process

1. Identify those for whom a CRB disclosure is necessary. For clergy and readers, this is done directly by the Diocese. In parishes, all those who work directly with children, all who carry positions of responsibility within the church who may be expected to have direct contact with children, anyone whom a child might approach thinking they could be trusted (the wearing of robes is often an indication), and anyone participating regularly in mixed age activities should have a CRB disclosure.
2. Obtain the CRB form from the Archdeacon's Lodge. This can be done by the clergy, or a member of the parish who has been nominated to undertake these enquiries, such as the Child Protection Representative or a churchwarden, or a children's work leader.
3. The applicant completes the form (in Black ink).
4. The applicant takes the form with the identification specified in the information leaflet, to the validator. This will normally be the incumbent or other member of the clergy. In a vacancy, this could be done by the churchwarden.

5. The form is then sent to the counter-signer, usually the Area Dean. The form can be sent by the applicant, or more usually the validator. If in doubt, contact the administrator (no. as above).
6. The CRB administrator will check the form for errors and if satisfactory will send to CRB.
7. The CRB returns two copies of the form: one to the administrator and one to the applicant.
8. The administrator will check the clear returns, and will inform the parish that the person is clear for work.
9. Where there is a blemished return, the Assessors of the system (currently the Archdeacon of Leeds, the Legal Adviser, and the Child Protection Adviser), will determine whether there is a child protection issue. If so, further enquiries will be made appropriate to the circumstances, resulting in a determination whether there is a potential risk to children. If so, the applicant will not be able to proceed.
10. The outcome will be communicated confidentially to the appropriate responsible person(s).
11. There is an appeals process if the applicant is unhappy with the outcome and the applicant will be informed of this.
12. The Diocese will keep a simple record of those who have been checked under this process and of the outcome. These records will be confidential and kept according to the requirements of the CRB.

Portability Arrangements

The CRB offers a snapshot at the time of application of an individual's record. It is not a continuous process. In addition, information can at times be supplied to the Registered body about an individual that does not appear on the individual's copy of the CRB. This Diocese has taken the decision that it will not accept disclosures obtained through other registered bodies (portability) but will always undertake its own application for new appointments. Where an individual has been through the Disclosure process for one appointment, he or she will not have to apply for another Disclosure until the Disclosure has to be renewed. At present this will be every 5 years, but this is subject to a national review. Parishes will be informed by the system administrator when they need to undertake renewals.

Applicants from other countries

The recruitment process should be followed as for UK residents. The CRB has a limited international service. This does not function for all countries and the information obtained is only as good as that held by those countries. References should be taken up if at all possible in writing. For some groups of people, such as asylum seekers, this may not be possible and

may in fact endanger the applicant. If this is the case, proceed with the recruitment process, and ensure that safe working practices are adhered to.

If there is a plan for a group to come to a church from another country to work with children, allow enough time for the proposed activities to be agreed in writing, to take up references, and for confidential declarations and CRB checks to be completed before the group arrives.

A simple Risk Assessment for the Church's work with Children

These suggestions, which should not be onerous to implement, are intended to provide guidance for those responsible for Sunday Schools and similar activities in the Church on the physical environment in which we care for (particularly young) children. Implementation will depend on the age(s) of the children.

If followed, they should prevent some of the more common accidents and so contribute to the process of **keeping our children safe**.

⇒ They are based on guidance issued by the DfEE to Child Minders and are applied common sense and based on the experience of others.

⇒ We need to accept the principle that the Church should be no less caring for the children entrusted to us than the secular world in which we live.

⇒ **The basic principle is that we look at where we are caring for children through their eyes and at their level, remembering that the majority of children are inquisitive and like to explore.**

The way leaders implement this Risk Assessment will vary depending particularly on the type of room/building being used, the age of children and also the extent to which other groups share the accommodation at the same or other times.

Leaders will quickly become familiar with the issues and a quick inspection, carried out a couple of minutes before the children arrive, should normally suffice to ensure your premises have no obvious death traps!

These guidelines are intended to assist leaders to make decisions, not to take that responsibility away from them.

Young People and Older Children

Similar principles apply although, hopefully we can expect older children to be able to be more responsible for themselves.

Leaders should be particularly aware of the need to

- Keep a Register of attenders with Name and Address and Telephone Number
- Work with another Leader and not on their own
- Know if a child/young person has medical needs or a disability
- Ensure First Aid resources are available and also someone trained to use them.
- Ensure they have written permission of parents if children/young people are taken on a trip or visit off premises
- Be alert to the presence of strangers/others who might wish to do the children/young people harm.
- Ensure principles of ensuring a safe environment still apply.

With thanks to T.J. Atkins, Child Protection Officer of Newcastle Diocese who prepared these guidelines and allowed their reproduction.

Area	Issue	Remedy
Entrance and Exit	Are the doors to the outside world secure?	Ensure small children cannot wander off in the building or out of it. Consider whether the fitting of a child-proof barrier is necessary
Stairs	Does the building exit on to a safe area or a road? Are stairs safe for small children? Wooden or stone? Can they fall down them?	Ensure an adult is at the door when children leave and that children who need to be accompanied leave with an adult. Ensure small children are accompanied down stairs. Is a stair gate needed?
Heating	What type of heating? Could a child burn themselves if they fell against it?	Ensure heating has guard where necessary
Cooking and kettles	Is there child access to cooker, boiling kettle etc?	Ensure children do not have access to cooking unless in supervised activity. Never boil a kettle at child level. Ensure wires cannot be tripped or pulled over.
Electrics	Can children access electrical installations and sockets?	Ensure safety plugs are in sockets Ensure electrics are boxed and/or inaccessible.
Furniture	How child friendly is the furniture - sharp/metal corners/edges; old wood en objects which could splinter?	Remove or make inaccessible (in a corner?) child unfriendly furniture. Fit corner cushions in necessary.
Stacked chairs	Are chairs stacking variety?	Ensure stacks of chairs are safe and children have no access. Children should never be allowed to climb on stacked chairs.
Cleaning materials and poisons	Are cleaning materials, bleach etc accessible to an inquisitive child?	Ensure cleaning materials etc are in locked and inaccessible cupboard. Ensure cleaner(s) are aware of risks to small children of leaving materials out.
Craft materials	Glue, tippex, large markers are potentially noxious	Ensure craft materials are put/locked away when not in use.
Rat poison or pest control	Are poisonous pest controls used?	Ensure poison is put down in places inaccessible to children. Ensure those who put down the poison are aware of children's use of building.

Toilets	Are toilets sanitary?	Ensure toilets are clean
General cleanliness	Can a child lock themselves in the toilet?	Ensure toilet doors can be unlocked from the outside.
	How is the floor? How dirty will a small child get if s/he crawls? Is the floor covering adequate for crawling?	Ensure floor covering is appropriate to age group and activity. Check for loose carpet tiles, frayed carpet etc.
Fire	Are Fire Exits known and unlocked?	Ensure all adults know Fire Exit routes and that Fire Exit doors are unlocked.
	Are Fire Exits locked when building is not in use?	Ensure Fire Exits are unlocked and/or that keys are identified and accessible
Access by strangers/others	Can people from the outside world access the building?	Ensure entrances which are not Fire Exits are locked. Ensure that if children go to unsupervised parts of the building, they are accompanied
Cupboards/Storage	Could things fall out of a cupboard onto a child?	Ensure cupboards are filled safely. Should cupboard locks/fasteners be fitted?
Carbon Monoxide	If gas used is there a Carbon Monoxide detector?	Fit Carbon Monoxide detector
Registration/medical needs	A register of children attending (and the responsibility of the Leaders) MUST be kept. Is it?	Keep Register which allows all children to be traced in the event of Fire or Accident. This will include parent Name and Address/Telephone for easy contact.
Medical	Are there children who have special needs by reason of health or disability?	Leaders need to be aware of special needs
	Medical needs must be covered. Is there a First Aid Box? Is there a First Aider?	The First Aid Box needs to be checked regularly for contents A First Aider needs to be present or easily accessible.
Accidents	Do you have accidents? Do you keep an Accident Book?	In the event of incidents or accidents the keeping of an Accident Book enables identification of causes and remedy if appropriate. Accident Book should be easily available and on show if possible
Plants	If plants are in the building are they poisonous?	Some common and decorative plants are poisonous. Ensure they are not accessible to children. Preferably remove them

Taking Care Procedures

(Draft policy for parishes)

Parish of

1. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children and young people.

This P.C.C. adopts the policy statement of the Diocese and will display it prominently in all church premises.

2. Ensure the policy is reviewed and understood.

All new workers, whether paid or voluntary, working for church-based organisations, will be informed of the policy by the Vicar, or the group. They will be expected to accept the policy and guidelines and work according to their requirements.

All new members of the P.C.C. will be required to accept the policy and guidelines.

The P.C.C. will appoint a group to oversee the Policy, and it will be placed on the Agenda of the P.C.C. at least annually, for a review.

The P.C.C. will appoint a co-ordinator for the policy, and will inform the Diocesan Office of their details.

Any organisation booking the use of church premises will be informed of the need to observe the policy via a statement on the Booking form. Individuals booking church premises for private functions will have the policy drawn to their attention and accept their responsibility for protecting children at that function.

3. Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.

The P.C.C. will follow the recruitment process included in the Diocesan Handbook.

4. Gain at least TWO references from people who have experience of the applicant's work with children.

The P.C.C. will follow the procedures in the Diocesan Handbook.

5. Explore all applicant's experiences of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.

The P.C.C. will ensure that the Taking Care group or leaders of the activity group interview all applicants for posts working with children.

If there is any doubt about suitability the applicant must be interviewed again and must not take up work until the interviewers are satisfied as to suitability.

6. Establish procedures to attempt to find out whether an applicant has any conviction for offences against children.

The P.C.C. will use the Diocesan CRB disclosure system to assist in their decision about suitability. It will ensure that the Confidential Declaration (in the Handbook) is completed.

7. Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.

All appointments will be subject to a period of probation commensurate with the duration and timing of the activity. Each activity group should decide on the appropriate time and make it clear to the applicant that there will be a period of probation. The applicant will be given a named supervisor, who will report on the person's suitability at the end of the probationary period. The supervisor should be satisfied as to the worker's competence and to their commitment to safeguarding children in their care.

8. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.

All activities undertaken with children will involve at least two adults in a supervisory capacity, and will adhere to the recommended staffing ratios.

Any adult supervising a child should ensure they are not left alone with a child where there is no opportunity for the activity being observed.

No adult worker will meet a child in secret.

The Diocesan guidelines on safe working practice will be observed.

9. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.

There will be no exceptions made to the application of this policy.

10. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.

Job descriptions will be prepared by all church-based organisations when requiring anyone to undertake a task involving contact with children.

All job descriptions will have a clause drawing attention to these guidelines and have a duty imposed to adhere to them.

All job descriptions should contain the name or specified role of the group leader.

11. Use supervision as a means of protecting children

Each group working with children should meet regularly, according to the frequency and duration of its work. Part of the meeting should address the issues of child protection, so that it does not become a forgotten issue.

These meetings should review their work, plan future work, discuss relationships with the children and raise any issues of concern.

12. Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.

Appropriate training for groups of staff will be arranged through the Diocesan Training Officer, the Diocesan Child Protection Advisor, or the Diocesan Youth Work Advisor. All those working with children and young people should be given a blue advice card, and expected to familiarise themselves with safeguarding procedures.

13. Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.

It is a common feature of situations where children have been abused that the adult has exploited the power they have over the child to gain silence from the child. The P.C.C. will display the number of Childline 0800 1111, and/or any other similar organisation, prominently in places where it can be seen by children and young people. Adults with concerns about a child must follow the guidance in the Taking Care Handbook.

14. Issue Guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.

The P.C.C. will follow the Diocesan Guidelines in the handbook. If the knowledge that a person who presents a potential risk to children is a member of the congregation comes to light then the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser must be consulted.

DIOCESE OF RIPON AND LEEDS

Job Description

Parish of

Post.....

.....

Name of group.....

Description of group.....

Name of group leader.....

Contact number and address.....

.....

.....

Range of work to be undertaken

.....

.....

.....

Age range of children.....

Days and times of meetings/activities.....

.....

DIOCESE OF RIPON AND LEEDS

Confidential Declaration

For beneficed clergy, those who hold the bishop's licence or permission to officiate, employees, ordinands and volunteers who are likely to be in regular and direct contact with children and young people under eighteen years of age.

This form is strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of law, will be seen only by those responsible for the appointment and, when appropriate, the diocesan/bishop's child protection adviser. All forms will be kept securely under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. If you answer yes to any question, please give details, on a separate sheet if necessary, giving the number of the question you are answering.

1 a Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence (including any spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974)? *

Please tick YES NO

1 b Have you ever been cautioned by the police, given a reprimand or warning or bound over to keep the peace?

Please tick YES NO

1 c Are you at present under investigation?

Please tick YES NO

1 d Have you ever been found by a court exercising civil jurisdiction (including matrimonial or family jurisdiction) to have caused significant harm ** to a child or young person under the age of eighteen years, or has any such court made an order against you on the basis of any finding or allegation that any child or young person was at risk of significant harm from you?

Please tick YES NO

2 a Has your conduct ever caused or been likely to cause significant harm to a child or young person under the age of eighteen, or put a child or young person at risk of significant harm?

Please tick YES NO

2 b To your knowledge, has it ever been alleged that your conduct has resulted in any of those things?

Please tick YES NO

If yes, please give details, including the date(s) and nature of the conduct, or alleged conduct, and whether you were dismissed, disciplined, moved to other work or resigned from any paid or voluntary work as a result.

- 3 Has a child in your care or for whom you have or had parental responsibility ever been removed from your care, been placed on the Child Protection Register or been the subject of a care order, a supervision order, a child assessment order or an emergency protection order under the Children Act 1989, or a similar order under other legislation?
Please tick YES NO
- 4 Have you any health problem(s) which might affect your work with children or young people under the age of eighteen?
Please tick YES NO
- 5 Have you, since the age of eighteen, ever been known by any name other than that given below?
Please tick YES NO
- 6 Have you, during the past five years, had any home address other than that given below?
Please tick YES NO

* All previous convictions, with the exception of technical motoring offences leading only to a fine, should be disclosed.

** Significant harm involves serious ill-treatment of any kind including neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or impairment of physical or mental health development.

Declaration

I declare that the above information (and that on the attached sheets * * *) is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signed.....
 Date..... Date of Birth.....
 Full Name.....
 Address.....

*** Please delete if not applicable.

Please return completed form to:

.....

Before an appointment can be confirmed applicants must provide an enhanced/standard disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau. Consult with your bishop’s office, incumbent, or child protection coordinator for details of the process.

DIOCESE OF RIPON AND LEEDS

POLICY ACCEPTANCE FORM

Parish of

To be completed by the worker with children and young people

I confirm that I have read the P.C.C.'s policy on protecting children and young people.

I will do my best to carry out the policy, and seek help from the group leader/child protection representative/incumbent if there are things I do not understand, or if I become concerned about a child/young person with whom I am working.

Signed.....

Dated.....

A copy will be placed on the group file and a copy given to the worker.

DIOCESE OF RIPON AND LEEDS

Parish of

ACTIVITY CONSENT FORM

Part One (To be completed by the group leader)

Name of group.....

Description of group activities.....

.....
.....
.....

Time and venue of group.....

.....
.....

Name of group leader.....

Contact telephone number.....

Part Two (To be completed by the parent/carer if the child is under 18, or by the participant if he/she is over 18)

Full name of participant.....

Date of Birth.....

Permission

I have read the above information and give my permission for the above-named person to take part in the activities of the group.

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

Medical Details

Please provide details of any medical problems or disability which may affect participation

.....
.....
.....
.....

Does your child suffer from any allergies? Yes / No

If Yes, please specify.....
.....

Medication

Please provide details of any medication required during the time of the activity. This should be clearly labelled and handed to the group leader at the beginning of the activity. If the parent /carer wishes the medication to be administered by the group leader, please specify in writing the time(s) and dosage required.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Name and address of family doctor

.....
.....

Child's NHS number.....

In an emergency and/ or if I am not contactable I give my permission for my child to receive any necessary dental, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic

Signed.....Dated.....

Please print your name clearly.....

Address.....
.....

Telephone numbers:

Day.....Evening.....Mobile.....

Other Emergency Contact Number.....

Your relationship to child.....

Please note your child will not be able to participate in the group's activities until this form has been completed and returned to the group leader.

DIOCESE OF RIPON AND LEEDS

Parish of

Date.....

Address.....
.....

Dear

.....has applied for a position of.....
.....
.....

This post involves working with, or having responsibility for, children and young people. The applicant has given your name as a referee for his/her suitability for the post.

We would be grateful if you could supply such a reference, including details of how long you have known the applicant, in what capacity, and whether you believe they would be suitable for such a post.

We enclose a stamped, addressed envelope for return.
If you have anything you wish to discuss about this reference, please contact.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your assistance,

Yours sincerely

RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Government Publications

Dept. of Health: Working together to Safeguard Children, 1999. The current national framework of the child protection system.

Home Office: Safe from Harm; a Code of Practice for Safeguarding the welfare of Children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales, 1993.

Dept. of Health: What to do if You're Worried a Child is Being Abused, 2003.

Church Publications

House of Bishops: Protecting All God's Children: The Child Protection Policy for the Church of England. 2004 Church House Publishing.

Time for Action: A report of Sexual Abuse Issues. 2002. Church House Publishing.

Statutory Agencies

Social Services Area Office (please enter your local office number and out-of-hours numbers)

Police - Public Protection/Child Protection Units

999 for emergencies, otherwise each force has a direct number for direction to these units.

National Health Service

999 for emergencies

0845 4647 for NHS Direct nurse advice

Voluntary Organisations

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 50000

Childline 0800 1111

Women's Aid 08457 023 468

Samaritans 0845 790 9090

NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood) 0800 085 3330

RESPOND (For survivors or abusers with learning difficulties) 0808 808 0700

Christian Survivors of Sexual Abuse (self-help support)

Address only: 38 Sydenham Villas Road, Cheltenham, Glocs.

MACSAS (support and networking for survivors of sexual abuse by those in ministry)
Address only: PO Box 46933 London E8 1XA

KIDSCAPE **0207 730 3300**
(Support for young people experiencing bullying or abuse)

National Domestic Violence Helpline **0808 200 0247**

Parentline Plus (helpline for parents) **0808 800 2222**

Stop It Now (helpline for abusers, potential abusers and others concerned with sexual abuse) **0808 1000 900**

Diocesan contacts

Diocesan Child Protection Adviser: Sue Booth **0113 275 5266**

Diocesan Youth Work Adviser: Capt. Nic Sheppard **01937 585440**

Diocesan Training Officer: Liz Williams **0113 200 0540**

CRB enquiries and processing: Archdeacon's Lodge **0113 269 0594**

Pastoral Care

Holyrood House: Centre for Health and Pastoral Care
(offers counselling and psychotherapies) **01845 522850**

Useful web-sites

Dept. for Education and Skills: www.dfes.gov.uk/index.htm

Dept. for Health: www.dh.gov.uk/Home/fs/en

Home Office: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/

Criminal Records Bureau: www.crb.gov.uk/

Church of England: www.cofe.anglican.org

NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk

Offences against children: Home Office Circular 16/2005

Application for Premises Hire

Name of Organisation.....

What does the Organisation Do?

.....
.....

Will the booking be a One-off event/Regular weekly/fortnightly/monthly
(please delete as applicable)

Date and times of bookings:.....
.....

Organisation Contact:

Name.....

Address.....

.....

e-mail.....

Is the organisation insured Yes / No

Name of Insurer.....Policy No.

Amount of liability covered.....

(It will be necessary to produce a copy of the Insurance certificate before a booking can be confirmed)

Does the organisation work with under 18s? Yes / No

If yes, does the organisation have a Child Protection Policy? Yes / No

If not, the organisation agrees to work within the Parish Child Protection Policy.

Are those leading the activity (if participants are under 18) checked in relation to child protection including CRB checks? Yes / No

Does the organisation sell food (other than light refreshments)? Yes / No

Have those preparing food obtained the necessary qualifications under the Health and Hygiene regulations? Yes / No

Please note that while the PCC/Trustees of the premises make every effort to ensure the safety of all who use the premises, your Organisation will be solely responsible for premises, personnel and its activities during the period of your booking.

I make application for the use of the premises as set out above and agree to abide by the Conditions of Hire. On behalf of my organisation I accept liability for the property, personnel using the property and all activities during the period of this booking.

Signed.....

Date