

Promoting A Safe Environment and Activities

(Ref: section 11 of The Church of England parish safeguarding handbook 2018)

The House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policy Statement states that 'The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults... The Church will strive to support all church officers to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge the abuse of power'.

Although you may believe that some of the points are irrelevant to your particular role it is important that everyone is aware of appropriate conduct to guide their own practice and to influence that of others.

Code of safer working practice

All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.
- Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer. Sign and date the record.
- Obtain written consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored (see Model Consent Form –Photographs – Images).
- Administer any First Aid with others around.
- Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and its nature before the activity takes place.

All those working on behalf of the parish with children, young people and adults must not:

- Invade an individual's privacy whilst washing and toileting.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one individual or group.
- Allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking.
- Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person.
- Allow strangers to give children, young people and adults who maybe vulnerable in the group, lifts.
- Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media.
- Take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices. In addition, for children and young people, must not:
- Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).
- Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people.
- Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include adult family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.