

# The Bridges Group of Parishes: Safeguarding – Code of Conduct

## Purpose of this Code of Conduct:

To ensure the effective implementation of the Coventry Diocese Safeguarding Policy (07/11/15)

### Safeguarding Policy of the Church of England

The Church of England, in all aspects of its life, is committed to and will champion the safeguarding of children, both in society as a whole and in its own community. It fully accepts, endorses and will implement the principle first enshrined in the Children Act 1989: the welfare of the child should be paramount. The Church of England will foster and encourage best practice within its community by setting standards for working with children and young people and by supporting parents in the care of their children. It will work with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith communities to promote the safety and well-being of children. It is committed to acting promptly whenever a concern is raised about a child or about the behaviour of an adult or someone under the age of eighteen in a position of trust and will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse is necessary. It is also committed to the support of those who have been abused and to listening to the voices of survivors, who can help the Church learn lessons from the past. [“Protecting All God’s Children” 2010]

### As the local Church, each PCC will:

- Hold a register of every child involved with an activity when parents/carers are not present. This should include relevant information and consent forms, medical details and emergency contact name and telephone number
- Consider arrangements for the collection of children after meetings when parents/carers are not present
- Ensure adequate, appropriate supervision is available for regular meetings, outings or special events, including the transporting of children and young people when parents/carers are not present (See Appendix C for recommended staffing levels) & that written permission has been given.
- Have a first aid kit, accident book and qualified first aider (minimum qualification being the “First Response” training) available during any activity involving children and young people when parents/carers are not present
- Ensure all records are kept securely and confidential in line with legislation on Data Protection
- Review this Code of Conduct annually; checking that all procedures including the DBS process and checks are up to date and making sure that those working with children, young people or in a position of trust have attended the training required
- Display a Parish Safeguarding Statement and Childline poster on the noticeboard
- Make a copy of this Code of Conduct available on request

This Code of Conduct will be achieved through the provision of full support to everyone working with children and young people within the church, maintaining links with the local school, supporting parents as part of the ministry of baptism, giving young people a role in the church, working with non-church youth organisations in the area, attempting to connect the Christian faith with young people who do not come to church, and providing a budget for work with children and young people.

This Code of Conduct was reviewed & approved at the [name of] PCC meeting on .....

**Signed: PCC Chair:** .....

**Incumbent:** .....

**Church Warden:** .....

**Parish Safeguarding Officer:** .....

## Good practice for adults working with children and young people

### ALWAYS:

- Remember that you are seen as being in a position of trust and a role model for children and young people within the church and therefore should be mindful of your behaviour at all times
- Be aware of individual's medical, dietary, educational needs and disabilities
- Maintain a safe environment
- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful
- Aim to work within sight of another adult
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet
- Organize toilet breaks for young children
- Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern
- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around
- If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around
- Obtain parental consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed before they are taken
- Obtain parental permission to have email addresses and mobile phone numbers for members of your group record
- Be alert to the presence of strangers
- Challenge a fellow worker if you feel that their behaviour towards children or young people is inappropriate
- Share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the Group Safeguarding Officer

### DO NOT at any time:

- Initiate physical contact - any necessary contact (e.g. for comfort) should be initiated by the child
- Invade a child's privacy while washing or toileting
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- Use any form of physical punishment
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying
- Show favouritism to any one child or group
- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature
- Send emails or text messages to individual members of your group
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children
- Drink alcohol when responsible for young people
- Share sleeping accommodation with children
- Invite a child to your home alone
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organized group occasions
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person
- Allow strangers to give children lifts

### **Guidance for responding to a child or young person who makes an allegation of abuse**

- Listen to what they have to say and accept what you hear without passing judgement.
- Let the child or young person tell you their story and do not interrupt or ask questions.
- Reassure the child or young person that they are doing the right thing in talking about what has happened and that they are not to blame.
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep e.g. not to tell anyone else.
- Tell the child or young person what you are going to do.
- Inform the incumbent or the Parish Safeguarding Officer of the information that you have received without delay.
- Do not try to investigate the allegations yourself.
- If you are concerned about the immediate safety or well-being of the child or young person, contact the police or Children's Social Care immediately.
- Make careful notes of the incident as soon as possible, using the pro-forma in the Diocesan Guidelines (see <http://www.dioceseofcoventry.org/safeguarding>). Include as much information as you have about the child or young person and their parent or carer. Write down exactly what the allegation was, what you did, who you spoke to, who else was present. Sign and date the notes, giving a copy to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and sending a copy to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- Inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser of the incident at the earliest opportunity.
- DO NOT talk to the alleged perpetrator

**Recommended staffing levels**

The recommended minimum staffing levels for children's groups are given below. More help may be required if children have special needs, are being taken out, are undertaking physical activities or if circumstances require it.

0 – 2 yrs	1 adult for every 3 children	1 : 3
2 – 3 yrs	1 adult for every 4 children	1 : 4
3 – 8 yrs	1 adult for every 8 children	1 : 8
Over 8 yrs	1 adult for the first 8 children then 1 adult for every 12 children	

- Each group should have at least two adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.
- If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them then it is possible to have only one adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity.
- Young people (under 18 years) who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding