



**A summary of
Children in the Diocese of London
the Child Protection Guidelines for the
Diocese of London**

Issued July 2005

This summary is not a substitute for the full Guidelines



Useful Contacts

*This booklet is a summary of
Children in the Diocese of London
(the Diocesan Child Protection Guidelines)
to help parishes provide a safe environment for their work with
children and young people.*

It is not intended to replace them

*Jesus took a child.....put his arms round him and said to the disciples,
'Whoever welcomes in my name one of these children, welcomes me...'
Mark:9:36,37*

We want churches in the Diocese of London to be places where children are welcomed in Jesus' name and cared for in the best possible way.

Children in the Diocese of London (Third Edition, 2005) has been written to help congregations make sure that their church is a safe, welcoming place for children. It gives guidance for recruiting and supporting children's leaders and helpers. It highlights good practice that should be followed when working with children. It also outlines the procedures that should be followed if abuse is suspected or disclosed

This booklet summarises the main points contained in *Children in the Diocese of London* (copies of which are held in each parish). It forms part of the Church's wider commitment to nurturing and supporting children. By following its guidance, we will be helping to reduce the possibility of children coming to harm within our communities.

This booklet is only a summary of the Diocesan Child Protection Guidelines. It is not intended to be a substitute for them. Any Parish Policy must be based on the full Guidelines, and not on this booklet.

The Diocesan Children's Adviser

London Diocesan House
36 Causton Street
London SW1P 4AU
020 7932 1255
e-mail: bacp@london.anglican.org

Social Services Department

These are now sometimes called 'social care' and may be integrated with Education Departments and Health Services. Details of your local council's arrangements should be easily accessible from libraries and the internet.

NSPCC

Child Protection Helpline: 0800 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine

Telephone 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

Kidscape

020 7730 3300
www.kidscape.org.uk

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service

0845 120 4551
www.ccpas.org.uk

Parentline

0808 800 222

Note the name and number of your Area Bishop's Adviser for Child

Protection here: *(it can be obtained from your parish priest, Children's Advocate, Area Office or the Diocesan Children's Adviser)*

The Advisers are happy to advise and discuss SPECIFIC cases and concerns. Any general queries about child protection should be made to the Diocesan Children's Adviser.

The Disclosure Service

of the

Criminal Records Bureau

What is Disclosure?

Disclosure is an information service provided by the Criminal Records Bureau to help employers and volunteering organisations make informed recruitment decisions. It makes checks against the records held by the Police National Computer and incorporates checks made against the lists of those banned from working with children, held by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills.

When is a Disclosure necessary?

If a person is employed or is volunteering to work with children in a capacity that requires them to care for or supervise children, then it is likely that an Enhanced Disclosure should be asked for. This should be made clear in any advertising or recruiting procedures.

How is a Disclosure obtained?

In order to start the Disclosure process, a Disclosure form needs to be completed. This can be obtained via the Area Office. The form needs to be filled in carefully, and various documents must be produced to verify identity.

Once the identity documents have been checked, the Disclosure form needs to be sent to the Area Countersignature. He or she will sign and complete the form, and then forward it to the CRB. When the Disclosure has been returned to the Area, the Countersignature will inform the parish or project of the outcome. The individual applicant will receive a copy of the Disclosure independently.

Further details of the Disclosure process are held by the Parish Incumbent and PCC Secretary.

Questions PCCs and Churchwardens might ask

Why do we need a Parish Child Protection Policy?

In law, the PCC is responsible for all parish activities and has a duty of care towards its children and young people. It must satisfy itself that everything is being done to provide a safe environment for them. A clear Parish Policy will help PCCs carry out this responsibility.

How do we put one in place?

The Diocesan Guidelines should be discussed so that everyone is aware of the policies and procedures in the document. A model policy (*which we advise you to adopt without embellishment*) is provided in the Guidelines. The PCC then needs to make sure it is implemented and regularly reviewed.

What about insurance?

The PCC should make sure that there is adequate insurance cover (including public liability insurance) to cover all its activities both on and off the church site. Most insurance companies will make reference to child protection within their policies. It is important that PCCs are aware of their need to comply with the insurers' requirements.

We rent out our premises to other groups. What should we do?

PCCs have a duty of care to advise organisations working with children who hire or use church property of their responsibility for the welfare and safety of the children in their care. The Diocesan Guidelines include a clause that can be used in hiring agreements.

What about private tuition?

People who are likely to give tuition to children and young people on church premises (e.g. choir leaders or music tutors) should follow their professional code of ethics. However, it is recommended that one to one tuition should not be given on church premises without another adult being present.

How can we learn more about Child Protection issues?

The Diocese regularly runs seminars on child protection issues. Details of these can be obtained from the Diocesan Children's Adviser.

The Diocese also has a video training pack which may be borrowed by parishes to run their own training course. Details are available from the Diocesan Children's Adviser.

The role of the Parish Children's Advocate

Each parish should appoint a Children's Advocate. The Children's Advocate should be someone who will ask the necessary questions to ensure the presence, needs and interests of children are recognised. (*The term 'Advocate' is not used in the legal sense, but as one who speaks up for and has a concern for children within the parish setting.*)

The Parish Children's Advocate need not be a children's leader, but should be someone who can bring wisdom, compassion and sensitivity to the role of ensuring that the Child Protection procedures and guidelines are implemented in the parish.

He or she will:

- make sure the question 'How does this impact our children?' is always asked
- speak up for the needs of children
- keep alive a general awareness of child protection issues and the Diocesan Child Protection Guidelines

If the Children's Advocate becomes aware of a suspicion or concern about abuse, these steps should be followed:

- if the child is in immediate need of medical treatment or protection, contact the ambulance service or the police
- contact the Area Bishop's Adviser for Child Protection. This will allow you to discuss your concerns with someone experienced, and to agree the best way of progressing the matter.
- consider telling the rector/vicar/priest-in-charge

It is important that the Children's Advocate is known and recognised by the wider congregation. If the Children's Advocate is not on the PCC, he or she might be invited to be an ex-officio member, or at least be invited to any meetings where the Parish Child Protection Policy is to be reviewed or discussed. S/he might also be asked to make an annual report to the APCM.

It is suggested that appointments to this post be for a maximum of three years in the first instance, with the possibility of renewal (after review by the PCC) for a further term. The name and address of the Children's Advocate should be sent to the Episcopal Area Office, and any changes notified as soon as possible.

The Area Bishop's Adviser for Child Protection and the Diocesan Children's Adviser are available to help and support the Children's Advocate in their role.

What if the unthinkable happens and abuse is suspected or disclosed?

If a child or young person discloses abuse, keep the following points in mind:

- **Remember that the child may want the abuse to stop**, but may still love the abuser
- **The child may think that you are able to stop the abuse** without anything else happening. This may not be possible, so do not make promises or reassurances that can't be kept.
- **If a child asks to tell you something in confidence** ALWAYS tell them that it will depend on the circumstances. You may have to tell someone else if they are being harmed.
- **If it's possible, try to have another adult present** whilst the child speaks, but do not prevent the child from speaking if this isn't a possibility or if it would unduly inhibit the child
- **Give your full attention** to what they say
- **Allow the child to talk** – but don't press for information or put words into his/her mouth
- **Reassure the child they are not to blame** for anything that has happened
- **Reassure the child that they were right to tell** and that you will support them in whatever may happen next
- **Let the child know that you will have to tell other people** so that the abuse can stop
- **As soon as you can, record** as carefully as possible what the child has said, how they said it, and how they appeared emotionally. Write down what you said. Keep these records securely and indefinitely.

Unless the child is in immediate danger, discuss your concerns with someone before deciding on the next course of action. The Bishop's Adviser for Child Protection is happy to be consulted in this way – and to help you think through what you have been told.

Pages 18 and 19 of the Diocesan Guidelines summarise what may happen following disclosure of abuse or suspicion of abuse. Appendix L has a flow chart outlining how things may proceed.

When working with children and young people.....

- **Do** treat all children and young people with respect
- **Do** watch your speech, tone of voice and body language
- **Do** learn to control and discipline children without using physical punishment
- **Do** try to ensure a gender balance of leaders wherever possible
- **Do** try to make sure another adult is present nearby if you need to see a child on his or her own
- **Do** respect a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting
- **Do** have the ChildLine and NSPCC Helpline numbers displayed prominently

- **Don't** allow unknown adults access to the children. Visitors should be accompanied by a known person
- **Don't** show favouritism to any one child
- **Don't** scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person
- **Don't** play rough physical or sexually provocative games
- **Don't** touch a child inappropriately or intrusively
- **Don't** permit abusive peer activities e.g. bullying, ridiculing, initiation ceremonies
- **Don't** give lifts to children or young people on their own. If it's unavoidable, suggest that the child sit in the back
- **Don't** lose sight of common sense!

Keeping registers and records

Appendix I in the Diocesan Guidelines has a sample form for gathering information about a child (date of birth, parents/guardians, allergies etc). These records should be kept safely but be easily accessible to children's leaders.

It is important to keep a register of children who participate in the activities each week (and the adults present). Should a query occur over something which happened, this makes information gathering easier.

Keep a log book in which accidents, incidents and activities can be recorded. Again, this makes information gathering about events easier.

Appointing people to work with children

Having a good recruitment procedure in place means that reasonable care and caution can be exercised when children's leaders (whether paid or voluntary) are being selected and appointed. As part of this the PCC should consider:

- **Providing a job description** which includes details of the role and responsibilities, a person specification, and explicit reference to the parish Child Protection Policy.
- **Asking for a Confidential Declaration form to be completed.** Appendix E of the Diocesan Guidelines provides such a form, requesting details of any previous convictions against children.
- **Taking up references.** This is particularly important when making new appointments. Appendix F of the Diocesan Guidelines suggests questions which could be asked of referees. If any answers are vague or ambiguous, clarification should be sought.
- **Making use of the Disclosure Service of the Criminal Records Bureau.** This carefully regulated service allows checks to be made against police records and other relevant lists in order to screen out candidates who may be unsuitable for certain kinds of work. The Diocese of London has registered as an Umbrella Body with the CRB so that parishes can make use of the Disclosure Service. Further details are available from your Area Office. However, making use of the Disclosure Service is no substitute for having good child protection practices in place.
- **Maintaining confidentiality.** Only the Children's Advocate or incumbent and churchwardens should see the Declaration forms and references. These should be retained (indefinitely) in a secure place. During an interregnum, they should be lodged with the Area Dean for safekeeping.
- **Providing opportunities for on-going training.** The Diocesan Children's Adviser can give details of relevant training courses which will enhance and extend the skills of children's leaders. The Resource Centre at Diocesan House has a wide range of books and videos which can be borrowed to give fresh ideas for the work.
- **Encouraging a sense of team.** Children's leaders and helpers often feel isolated and unsupported. The parish should encourage them to meet together as a team to review the work, air concerns, and make plans for the future. Regular meetings with the Children's Advocate should also be encouraged.

Day care registration requirements under the Children Act 1989

Most church groups will not need to register with Ofsted under the Children Act 1989. However, its requirements and recommendations provide a standard of good practice which churches should be aiming at. These are summarised below.

Registration

If you provide day care for children under the age of eight on premises other than domestic premises, for two or more hours in any day and for more than five days in a year, you are likely to have to register with Ofsted. Contact the Ofsted helpline if you need to check whether you should register: 0845 601 4771.

Even if your group does not need to register, it is good practice to follow as many of the requirements as possible. These include:

Staffing levels

Age of children		Ratio
0 - 2 years	1 leader for every 3 children	1:3
2 - 3 years	1 leader for every 4 children	1:4
3 – 8 years	1 leader for every 8 children	1:8
over 8 years	1 leader for the first 8 children and then one extra leader for every extra 12 children.	

- It is good practice for each group have at least two adults and it is recommended that where possible a gender balance between workers be maintained.
- If you are taking children off premises, it would be good practice to have extra leaders.
- No person under the age of 18 years should be left in charge of a group of children
- No group of children or young people under the age of 16 should be left unattended at any time.

Premises

- The place where the children meet should be safe, secure and suitable for their purpose.
- There should be adequate space for the number of children and the activities they engage in.

- 1 toilet and 1 handbasin per 10 children is the ideal. Try to use an alternative to roller towels.
- Furniture, equipment and toys should be well-maintained and conform to safety standards.
- There should be access to a telephone (possibly a mobile) on the premises.
- No smoking should be permitted in the areas where there are children.
- Alcohol and/or recreational or illicit drugs should not be used by those having children and young people in their care.
- If there is access to outside space, make sure the boundaries and exits are secure and in good repair.

Documentation

- A register should be kept and be available at all meetings noting both children and adults present.
- Up to date information on parents' contact details and any specific medical information on the children should be kept and be easily available. Appendix I of the Diocesan Guidelines has a sample registration form.
- Activities planned to take place away from church premises must have the permission of the PCC in order to be covered by insurance. Parental consent should be obtained for children to take part. Appendix J has a sample consent form.

First Aid

- All premises used by children should have a First Aid kit, with contents stored in a waterproof container and clearly marked. There is no standard requirement for the provisions in the kit, but Appendix C of the Diocesan Guidelines outlines the minimum provision recommended by the Health and Safety Executive.
- All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge and access to First Aid training.
- No medication should ever be given to children without written parental instruction.
- Good hygiene should always be practised, with use of disposable latex gloves and disposable apron when dealing with broken skin, body fluids and faeces.
- Confidentiality regarding a child's HIV status should always be maintained.