



THE CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Policy, Procedures and Good Practice to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children and Young People

Diocese of Chichester 2009



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A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER

The dignity of the human person should be a prime concern for every Christian and every church. Once we recognise that every human being has been made in the image and likeness of God, it is our obligation to exercise the greatest possible care from conception to death. This highlights the importance of creating and sustaining a safe environment in which everyone can flourish.

In common with the rest of society the Church of England has in recent years become increasingly aware of the need to establish policies and practices for safeguarding, for the whole community of course, but very specifically for the sake of those least able to protect themselves. It is also necessary to be clear about how to act when things go wrong and abuses of various kinds occur.

I welcome this revised text as a significant contribution to this work and commend it to the Diocese. The implementation of its principles, guidance and requirements will help us all maintain the highest standards and provide necessary protection not only for those who may be vulnerable but also for everyone working with them.

Yours in Christ,

+John

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BLUE

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- B2. Criminal Records Bureau
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All relevant information for the safeguarding of children and young people can also be found on the Diocesan web site:-

- The House of Bishops' Policy - Protecting all God's Children (2004)
- The Diocesan policy and procedures & practice guidance – The Care and Protection of Children (2009)
- Recruitment and Criminal Records Bureau procedures and advice at www.diochi.org.uk

The procedures and recommended good practice contained in this document are issued on the authority of the Bishop of the Diocese, and are to be used by the cathedral, parishes and all organisations, which are under the auspices of the Diocese. Careful implementation of this policy and clear communication of its elements to the congregation, including parents and children, will play a vital role in the Diocese of Chichester's commitment to safeguard children. It will help to ensure that children and young people can participate fully in the wide range of pastoral, social and other general activities in an environment in which they will be safe from harm and abuse. This is the responsibility of the whole church community and is in accordance with House of Bishops' National Policy statement on Child Protection Policy .

Introduction

The Church's commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential as described in the Department for Children, Schools and Families guidance "Every Child Matters" and in "The Children Act 2004" to:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being.

The Church of England is committed to this agenda and recognises the necessity to keep children safe within the community of the Church. The Diocese and each parish wish to play their part together with parents, carers, schools and other agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Everyone responsible for congregations and organisations in the Diocese should make themselves familiar with and implement the House of Bishops' policy document "*Protecting all God's Children 2004*" and this accompanying Diocesan Child Protection Document "*The Care and Protection of Children 2009*". This document is based on the relevant legislation "The Children Act 1989/2004" and its accompanying guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006". It complies with the Sussex Safeguarding Children Boards' child protection and safeguarding procedures.

This policy document provides a safe framework within which church workers can conduct their important ministry to children and young people. Failure to implement the policy could invalidate any third party liability insurance or leave a Parochial Church Council open to the possibility of being sued for negligence should a child or young person come to harm whilst involved in church activities.

Information to help with applying for disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau is issued separately. This is because changes occur at regular intervals. Important changes to the scheme will begin to be implemented in Autumn 2009. Please contact the CRB administrator at Diocesan Church House (01273 421021) if you are unsure whether you have the most up-to-date guidance.

The Diocese will be providing advice on the protection of vulnerable adults in the near future.

A child is defined as a boy or girl under 18 years of age.

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Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and covers activities undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm, that is physical injury, neglect, emotional or sexual abuse. Most abuse of children and young people is committed by someone known to them and trusted by them, either within the family, among their friends, or in the local community.

While there is no single way to prevent opportunities for abuse, various measures can be used to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These measures include:

- 1. Creating a safe environment by all those working with children and young people following working practices that helps to:**
 - a) Keep children safe by clarifying what is safe practice for adults and what practice is to be avoided
 - b) Enable adults working with children to work safely and responsibly
 - c) Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations
 - d) Reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused
- 2. Procedures for both the Diocese and parishes and other church organisations to follow in responding to allegations and concerns of child abuse**
- 3. Procedures to be followed for the appointment of those holding the Bishop's licence and for employees and volunteers who have access to children**

By careful recruitment the church seeks to prevent previous abusers and potential abusers from gaining access to children for whom it is responsible. It is recognised that the checking of criminal records is only a minor part of this process.
- 4. A whistle-blowing procedure**

All paid or volunteers should know how to pass on concerns about colleagues.
- 5. Ongoing support and training**

For those who work with children is vital so that workers and volunteers feel confident in what they are doing.