

Christchurch Winchester

Safeguarding Appendix to the Parish Safeguarding Handbook

This Appendix is intended to provide local operational safeguarding context, and act as an 'aide memoir' to compliment the policies outlined in the Church of England Safeguarding Handbook. The information in this document 'sits underneath' that contained in the Church of England Safeguarding Handbook, with the Handbook being the formal policy that the Christchurch Winchester PCC has ratified.

Engaging in 1:1 meetings with children and young people (including University Students over 18yrs).

It is recognised that providing pastoral support and guidance to children and young people is an important part of our ministry to the children and young people of our church. This is mainly achieved via the numerous children's groups and activities.

There may be occasions where children and young people approach staff and volunteers for advice or teaching on a 1:1 basis. There may also be occasions when staff and volunteers approach children and young people to meet up 1-to-1, for example if a child says they're being bullied or if they are going to be doing a talk in the group. This could be on either a planned or adhoc basis.

Meeting with Children (under 18yrs)

Whilst there are no definitive guidelines issued by the Church of England, CCW staff and volunteers are asked to work to the following principles for children under 18yrs:

- Consideration must always be made of the child's age and vulnerability.
- Staff and volunteers must never meet with children on a 1:1 basis alone in a private place. Any meeting should be conducted in a public or open place e.g. café, park, or in an agreed venue such as within the church building. Even within the church building, if the doors are locked and an adult is alone in the building with a child, this is not a public place. Meetings should only take place in spaces that are not enclosed / non visible to others e.g. ensure that there are windows to provide visibility and / or doors are left open.

Ad hoc meetings (say, after the group)

- Another member of staff / volunteer should be nearby, or the child's parent/carer.
- If the child is a member of the opposite sex, consider asking another leader to join the conversation. This should always happen if you are going to pray for the child or if a child is talking about very personal issues e.g. a teenage girl wanting to talk to a male leader about her boyfriend.
- Conduct the conversation in an open forum, e.g. quiet part of the room, other room with door open / windows, in common areas such as hallways. If you are not in the same room, tell another leader who you are meeting with / where you will be.
- Consider whether it would be more appropriate to suggest scheduling in a meeting to enable another person to attend.

Planned 1-to-1 meetings

- These should always be organised publicly and **the meeting will always happen in a public place.**
- A one-to-one meeting will nearly always be male leader with male young person and female leader with female young person. Very rarely, the senior youth leader may be best suited to meet with a group member, even though they are of the opposite sex, for example, if meeting for a theological discussion or to discuss the group, rather than for an emotional need. This would only ever happen in the church, during work hours, with other people around.
- Meetings should only be occasional, not regular, unless for mentoring or there is some sort of pastoral emergency and in that case, parents will be informed before they start. Even so, these should only continue for a short time.
- Consider whether more may be gained by meeting with a small group of young people, e.g. year 9 boys rather than a particular young person.
- Parents need to be informed you are meeting their child.
- We will never plan a 1-to-1 meeting with a child under year 6. Any meeting with a year 6 child must be very, very rare and undertaken with great care. Another staff member must know this is happening and the parent should leave the child with you and pick up the child from you.

Meeting with university students (over 18yrs of age)

When providing ministry to university students and young adults (normally 18 – 25yrs) it is acknowledged that all parties are legally adults and do not fall under the same supervision ratios etc as children. The nature of student ministry is as much based on informal catch ups and adhoc meetings as it is structured activities and groups therefore it is likely that staff and volunteers will engage with students in a variety of ways, some planned and others unplanned. However, there are still best practice principles that staff and volunteers should adhere to when engaging young people within their work at CCW:

- Avoid meeting students / young people of the opposite sex on a 1:1 basis.
- Avoid meeting in private/ enclosed spaces such as homes and student accommodation. For both planned and unplanned meetings meet in open / public spaces such as café's, university common areas, parks, or in the church itself.
- If planning a meeting, or having an adhoc meeting on a 1:1 basis let another member of staff know who you are meeting and where.

Guidance for meetings on online platforms

All staff and volunteers should follow the Church of England advice on using online platforms (e.g. Zoom) for video meetings with children and young people - [Being connected with ZOOM safely.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#).

Taking images on mobile phones / cameras of children and young people at CCW activities for promotional purposes

The CofE Safeguarding Handbook states the following:

Wherever possible, church officers should be supplied with a mobile phone dedicated for work purposes. This allows for the phone to be switched off outside working hours, and for usage to be accountable. This means that the work phone number is the only number that young people or adults are given, and the church officer's personal number can remain private. Texts or conversations that raise concerns should be saved and passed on to the named person or the PSO/incumbent (or if unavailable the DSA)

CCW has confirmed its position in that no member of staff or volunteer is permitted to take or store images on personal phones / devices / cameras.

As per the Safeguarding Handbook and CCW's practice, written consent from parents and carers must be obtained in order to take photos of children and young people, store and use photos from CCW events and activities and / or use for promotional purposes (including hard copy publications, flyers and on social media).

Further detail and information can be found in the CofE Safer Environments and Activities policy - [Safer Environment and Activities Oct19 0.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#).

Engaging with children and young people via phone / social media

CCW has ratified the CofE Safeguarding Handbook which states that church officers (including staff) should not:

- Use a personal social media account in your work with children / young people and vulnerable adults
- Add children, young people or vulnerable adults that you engage with in your work as friends on your personal social media accounts
- Comment on photos or social media posts, or share content on platforms unless appropriate to your church role [and using one of the CCW media accounts].
- Use visual media (e.g. Skype) for one to one conversations with children and young people. These platforms are suitable for group settings only.
- Engage in 1:1 communication with a child or young person (under 18yrs).

There is a comprehensive section on the use of social media for church purposes outlined in Section 12 of the [Safeguarding Handbook](#) which all Church Officers are required to make themselves familiar with.

The Safeguarding Handbook states that the PCC must approve the use of social media and mobile phones by the church, and that the PCC must ensure that there is a named person (a church officer) to whom all workers are accountable for any online groups or media set up on CCW's behalf.

The named person for CCW is Liz Ord. All communications should be accessible to the named person and shared with them.

The Safeguarding Handbook states that:

- The written consent of parents / carers should be sought to communicate with children and young people via telephone / text message / email or online chat platforms (e.g. WhatsApp).

- The written consent of parents / carers should be sought to allow children and young people to connect to CCW's social media pages.
- All communications with children, young people and vulnerable adults should be conducted via the official CCW communication channels. The Named Person should be able to access and review any conversations.
- Online communications should be saved.

Further detail and information can be found in the CofE Safer Environments and Activities policy - [Safer Environment and Activities Oct19 0.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](#).

Images of children and young people.

CCW has confirmed its position that no member of staff or volunteer is permitted to take or store images on personal phones / devices / cameras. CWW will issue a dedicated church memory card to be used to store any photos taken during church events or activities.

Care should be taken when using apps, such as BeReal, that require the user to take photos in their current environment. If a BeReal notification comes up during a youth or children's group, you must be conscious of who's around you, and not take a photo with a child on it.

Unexpected safeguarding disclosures

Within the nature of our ministry to the members of CCW it is possible that both children and young people, and adults, may make safeguarding disclosures to both staff and volunteers. This could be as part of scheduled meetings or during adhoc conversations.

If a child makes a disclosure it is important that the member of staff / volunteer does not make any promises to keep the disclosure a secret, and, that they confirm that they will need to pass the information onto others if they suspect that the child or indeed someone else is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed. Whilst it is always best practice to seek the individuals consent to pass on any disclosure that is made to you, it is not necessary if there are concerns regarding a child's safety and wellbeing. Following receipt of the disclosure information should immediately be passed to the senior staff member for that area / age group of ministry and the Parish Safeguarding Officer for onward referral where appropriate.

If an adult makes a disclosure, again it is important that the member of staff / volunteer does not make any promises to keep disclosures a secret. The area of seeking consent is different for adults. If the disclosure contains information that warrants referral to another agency or service, consent should be sought from the individual to do so. The exception to this is if the disclosure contains information relation to a crime that has been committed and needs to be reported to the police.

Safeguarding in small groups (for adults)

CCW operates small groups for adults to enable ministry and relationships to be nurtured in smaller groups. During the nature of discussions in small groups or with small group leaders it is possible that adults may disclose safeguarding issues or concerns. The same steps should be taken by the small group leader as per the section above on 'unexpected disclosures'. However it should be noted

that it is not the responsibility of the small group leader to provide any advice, or make any referral if appropriate to any onward agency. If a small group leader is concerned about the wellbeing of any church or group member they should speak to the staff member responsible for Home groups in the first instance or the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding in online church

It is important to remember that conducting or streaming church services online can be a positive way to help members of the congregation stay connected with each other and their church when they may not be able to attend events in person. It is also now an accepted way of providing ministry to people alongside in-person church and events.

All staff and volunteers should follow the Church of England advice on using online platforms (e.g. Zoom) for video meetings with children and young people - [Being connected with ZOOM safely.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/Being%20connected%20with%20ZOOM%20safely.pdf) ([churchofengland.org](https://www.churchofengland.org)). Whilst this advice is primarily directed to meetings involving children and young people the principles should be applied to any online events that CCW may be hosting regardless of the likely audience.

Due to the open nature of online platforms, it is acknowledged that it can be difficult to identify individuals joining events, particularly for events that are open to all with the log in details being publicly available.

When conducting online services or meetings there should be at least two CCW Officers present to enable one to lead the event and provide input, and another to monitor any chat function and ensure that comments and engagement from attendees is appropriate. Where practicable (depending on the facilities available in the online platform), external guests should be held in a waiting room to enable CCW Officers to identify participants where possible. At the start of each event, the 'ground rules' for the meeting will be shared which should cover appropriate online meeting etiquette and behaviour.

If there are any concerns about the behaviour or comments of any participant the CCW Officer can consider taking steps such as putting participants on mute or hold, deleting comments, or conducting a separate conversation with the individual to ascertain who they are and reinforce the ground rules of the event. If the person is not able or willing to engage appropriately they can be asked to leave and not permitted to re-enter the event.

Assistance provided to vulnerable adults

All CCW Officers and volunteers who regularly work, lead ministry or provide support to vulnerable adults within the congregation should read and make themselves familiar with the following:

1. Section 4 of the CofE Safeguarding Handbook – Abuse and Neglect of Adults - <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>
2. Section 3 of the CofE Safer Environment and Activities Policy – Working with Vulnerable Adults - https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/Safer%20Environment%20and%20Activities%20Oct19_0.pdf

Providing home visits to vulnerable adults

Visiting adults at home can be a valuable aspect of pastoral care. This will often be done on an informal, neighbourly basis. Such arrangements fall outside of the scope of this document, which only applies to 'formal' visiting conducted by CCW Clergy and Licensed Lay Staff. Visiting at home is especially important for adults who are home-bound, for instance through disability or illness, and can contribute greatly to the quality of their lives and provide the opportunity for individual ministry. Care must be taken, however, both for the protection of those being visited and for the those doing the visiting. There should be accountability and transparency in the manner in which church officers engage in lone working or visits to homes. More information on a range of good practice principles relating to home visiting is outlined in the [Safer Environment and Activities Policy](#) however the following should always be adhered to:

- Most visits will be initiated or requested by the person(s) being visited. However this is not always the case. Regardless of who initiated the visit, agree a time in advance and let people you are visiting know in advance that you are going to visit, particularly if it is your first visit.
- If this is a first visit, or if the conversation is likely to move onto sensitive pastoral matters, ensure that the person is aware that the conversation is confidential, but also what the boundaries of confidentiality are.
- If possible, visit in pairs - again, especially if it is the first visit. However, it is recognised that much pastoral visiting undertaken by clergy, is done alone and this document nor the formal CofE guidance does not place a restriction on that, as long as the other aspects of safer working practice (see separate CofE policy) are followed.
- Carry a mobile phone and let someone know where you are and when you expect to return
- Ask the person whether they would like repeat visits, whether and how they would like to be contacted again, and so on. Leave them feeling fully in control of your contact with them.
- Make a note of the visit; store all such notes in accordance with data protection requirements. The note does not need to be extensive, but the date, time of arrival and departure, and any significant observations or points of conversation should be recorded.
- If you are asked to make any purchases on behalf of the person, always retain receipts and return both them and any change to the person immediately. Keep a record of any transactions and the reason for them.
- Set appropriate boundaries: be wary of over-promising. If you do not have the ability to meet the needs of the person you are visiting, say that you will try and find suitable help, but avoid getting drawn into a dependant relationship that ultimately disempowers the person you are visiting.

If conducting a visit to a home that you or no-one else in the staff has been to before it is suggested that the person visiting complete the CofE [Model Risk Assessment Checklist for Home Visiting](#). It is recognised that not all fields will be relevant but it provides a good framework for preparing for a visit. Once completed the form should be stored securely in the CCW office so that other members of staff can review it should they conduct a future visit.

Providing home visits to families

As above, visiting families is an important part of our pastoral ministry especially to welcome new families and children into the church family. When conducting home visits to families, staff should

consider the best practice principles outlined above (section re visiting adults at home) and also the following:

- Ensure that a parent / adult is always at home particularly when children are present or in the home. As per the above never visit or see a child on their own, always ensure that there is another adult present.
- Ensure that the meeting takes place in a 'public' area of the home. For example in the kitchen / dining or living room with doors open / curtains open so that others can see and hear what is being discussed. Meetings should not take place in bedrooms or in closed spaces.

Providing private transport to CCW services / events

Members of CCW run an informal rota whereby members of the congregation provide lifts to adult members who do not have their own transport or means to travel to in-person services and events. This is a highly valued form of ministry and enables those that wish to attend services to do so.

All volunteer drivers will be asked to complete the locally adapted CCW volunteer driver form. This outlines the expectations of any drivers providing transport under a voluntary arrangement to members of the CCW congregation as well as providing prompts on things to consider such as providing appropriate assistance to move in and out of vehicles whilst also protecting the health of the volunteer providing assistance.

Any concerns relating to either a volunteer driver or an individual being transported should be raised to the lead for the transport rota in the first instance and then the CCW staff lead for Pastoral Care.