

IMMANUEL CHURCH HIGHTERS HEATH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy was revised by the PCC on 10 November 2015

Statement of Values

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Immanuel Church Highters Heath recognises the need to safeguard the children and young people in our care and guard against the possibility of any form of abuse of children and young people by persons who may be acting in the name of our parish.

We aim to create a welcoming, secure and safe environment for the nurture and development of children and young people, in order for them to feel valued and confident to ask for help and support.

Children and young people are a precious gift from God; their welfare is our first priority, over and above the interests of the establishment. We have a clear responsibility to do all that we can to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people. We will treat them with dignity and respect, take their views seriously and always take appropriate action to ensure their welfare is given priority. We will treat children and young people as individuals and pay attention to anyone who has special needs (e.g. physical, behavioural, learning or from minority ethnic groups) to ensure their full integration and protection within the church family.

We welcome children and young people as an integral part of our church life now and regard them as partners with us in the journey of faith. Their spiritual welfare is particularly important. We recognise our responsibility to nurture them but also what they in turn can teach us.

We will create policies and procedures that uphold the importance of our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to our care. A Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator will be appointed to ensure the implementation of this policy.

The current Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator is Mrs Alvis Witcomb; she can be contacted on 07549 629496.

Our Policy

- We commit to providing a safe physical environment for work with children and young people.
- We will ensure the children and young people in our care know who they can talk to if they have any concerns.
- We will seek to be honest and open in our relationships with our children and young people and ensure that we listen to them, taking into account both what is said and what may be communicated by posture, tone or gesture.
- We will always listen to and take seriously any child or young person who reports that they have been abused, following our procedures.

- We recognise our responsibility always to respond to and report abuse in whatever context, inside or outside the church environment.
- We will always report allegations of abuse and concerns about a child or young person in according with our procedures.
- We will always report all allegations of abuse to the appropriate statutory agency and to the Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser.
- We will keep all records in relation to safeguarding concerns, allegations and the recruitment of volunteers and paid workers securely.
- We will commit to informing the whole church community about our child protection policy and procedures.
- We commit to the safe recruitment of all new and current volunteers and paid workers who have contact with children and young people.
- We will challenge unacceptable behaviour e.g. bullying.
- We will respect personal privacy of children and young people and be sensitive if they wish to opt out of an activity.

Everyone in the church community is called upon to adhere to these values. Anyone who had a concern about a child has a responsibility to take action.

PARTICULAR RESPONSIBILITIES

In the Parish

Clergy and those who have a position of responsibility within the church

- Those with a leadership role within the church are expected to work with the whole congregation to promote the welfare of children in the church and the community.

Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator (PSCC): Mrs Alvis Witcomb

- Acts as parish representative on all matters relating to the protection of children and young people and helps to develop a culture of 'informed vigilance' within the parish.
- Acts as a link between the parish and diocese in terms of information sharing and training opportunities.
- Is available to offer support and/or advice to the clergy and children/youth workers in matters relating to welfare of children.

The Parish Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator is appointed by the PCC and responsible to the PCC and the vicar.

Children's Advocate: Mrs Alvis Witcomb

- Has regular contact with children and leaders in the parish.
- Reports to PCC meetings and will raise any issues regarding children, representing their views and needs in regard to ministry, worship and pastoral care.

PCC

- Appoints PSCC and receives regular reports from Children's Advocate.
- Ensures issues relating to children within the church are considered at PCC meetings (to be a standing item on the agenda).
- Reviews Parish Child Protection Policy annually and ensures it is being implemented.
- Ensures all leaders are recruited and appointed in accordance with the Parish Child Protection Policy.
- Ensures insurance cover is adequate.
- Ensures premises where young people meet are of a good and acceptable standard. This includes a regular (at least quarterly) fault-finding inspection of premises in regular use.

In the Diocese

The Bishop's Adviser for Children's Ministry: Claire Wesley

- Supports clergy, lay leaders and volunteer workers in the nurture and development of children and the effective delivery of children's ministry.
- Will offer training opportunities and support and advice relating to working with children and young people.

The Bishop's Child Protection Adviser

- Is available to give advice on child protection issues and must be informed if a referral is to be made to Social Services.
- Will work with parishes to set up a child protection agreement if a known perpetrator of abuse joins the church.
- In the event of a child protection enquiry in a parish, the BCPA is responsible for helping diocesan and parish staff manage the impact. This includes ensuring appropriate support is offered to those who are involved.

If an allegation of child abuse is made against a member of the clergy or someone holding the Bishop's License the procedure outlined in Section 10 of 'God's Children: Our Diocese' will be followed.

**PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Parish Safeguarding Children Co-Ordinator

Mrs Alvis Witcomb 07549 629496

Children's Advocate

Mrs Alvis Witcomb

Bishop's Adviser for Children's Ministry

Claire Wesley: 0121 426 0432

Bishop's Safeguarding Children Adviser

0121 427 1163

Bishop's Adviser for Youth Work

0121 426 0433 (Helen Tomblin)

Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service

0845 120 4550

CHILDLINE

0800 1111 (for children)

NSPCC

0808 8005000 (for adults concerned about a child)

Kings Heath Police

Emergency number 999

Non-emergency number 0845 113 5000

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

During Office Hours Monday to Thursday 08.45am – 17.50pm

0121 303 1888

Outside these hours

0121 675 4806

Our Procedures

At Immanuel Church it is recognised that the following people have contact with children and young people or are in a position of responsibility and trust within the church community, which gives them the opportunity or expectation that they might have regular or unsupervised contact with children:

- Clergy and Reader
- Church Wardens
- Junior Church leaders and helpers

These people must complete an enhanced disclosure with a check of the relevant barred list every five years.

Recruitment procedures

The Vicar and the PCC have overall responsibility for the recruitment of paid workers and volunteers in all church-sponsored organisations.

At Immanuel Church the following groups are covered by the Parish Child Protection Policy:

- Junior Church
- Tots Time

We will require all hirers of our premises who run regular activities for children and young people, but are not covered by the Immanuel Church policies, to have their own child protection policy and procedures and to provide us with an assurance that these are implemented and to provide us with a copy.

Responsibilities of the Church in Safer Recruitment

- We will provide every worker and volunteer with clear instructions and information in respect of their role, adequate support and supervision and regular opportunities for review (See Appendix A).
- We will assess all new and current volunteer and paid worker roles and, where the role is deemed to be eligible, apply for an appropriate level criminal record check (Appendix D gives guidance as to which roles require a check. Appendix E has the forms to be completed).
- We will keep a Parish Information Log of Disclosure and Barring applications and renew applications every 6 years (Appendix G).
- We will keep a record of volunteer contact information (Appendix H).
- We will formally commission people into the role and confirm the appointment in writing.
- We accept responsibility for initiating and providing initial and on-going training for all out paid workers and volunteers.
- We will suspend a worker or volunteer about whom there are concerns or against whom an allegation has been made as a neutral act whilst an investigation into the allegation/concern is conducted.
- We will ensure appropriate supervision of anyone who is known to have offended against a child or young person who attends activities organised by the Parish Church Council of Immanuel Church Highters Heath.
- We commit to the support of adult and child survivors of abuse.

- We commit to providing appropriate support and guidance to any individual within our church community who is accused of causing harm to a child or young person in our care.
- We will review our Child Protection Policy annually to ensure that it meets all current legislation, House of Bishops policies and 'Safeguarding Policy – God's Children: Our Diocese'.

Safer Recruiting: Responsibilities of Volunteers and Paid Staff

It is expected that leaders and regular helpers of church groups who work with children and young people will:

- Complete an application form (Appendix B) and confidential declaration (Appendix D)
- Name 2 referees, one of whom should be from a current employer or previous church
- Complete a disclosure if required
- Have an appropriate interview
- Sign a volunteer agreement (Appendix F)
- Be open to support and review
- Receive supervision and support in their role
- Inform the Vicar in writing of any relevant change in circumstances.

All Appendices and Forms to be completed are found in 'Safeguarding Policy – God's Children: Our Diocese' (www.cofebirmingham.com)

Please refer to 'Model Code of Safer Working Practice, House of Bishops: Protecting All God's Children 4th Edition 2010, Appendix A5.

Attached to this policy, together with guidelines: NSPCC Factsheet April 2014 'Recognising signs of abuse at different stages of a child's development'.