**Creating a Safe Environment for Children and Young People**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf>

*The House of Bishops’ Safeguarding Policy Statement states that ‘The Church will strive to create and maintain environments that are safer for all, that promote well-being, that prevent abuse, and that create nurturing, caring conditions within the Church for children, young people and vulnerable adults …The Church will strive to support all church officers to adhere to safer working good practice and to challenge the abuse of power’.*

All those working on behalf of **xxx** with children, young people and adults **must:**

• Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.

• Ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.

• Ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.

• Record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or Parish Safeguarding Officer. Sign and date the record.

• Obtain written consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.

• Administer any First Aid with others around.

**In addition, for children and young people, you should:**

• Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.

• Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.

• Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.

• Ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and its nature before the activity takes place.

All those working on behalf of **xxx** with children, young people and adults **must not:**

• Invade an individual’s privacy whilst washing and toileting.

• Use any form of physical punishment.

• Be sexually suggestive about or to an individual.

• Scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.

• Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.

• Show favouritism to any one individual or group.

• Allow an individual to involve you in excessive attention seeking.

• Allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person.

• Allow strangers to give children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group, lifts.

• Befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media.

• Take photographs on personal phones or cameras, as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

**In addition, for children and young people, you must not:**

• Give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).

• Smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people.

• Arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include adult family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

**Acceptable Touch**

Sympathetic attention, humour, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, is wholly appropriate.

The following guidelines regarding touching are suggested:

• Always ask permission.

• Be mindful of your body position.

• Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.

• Touch should be in response to a child or vulnerable adult’s needs and not related to the worker’s needs. It should be age appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the church officer.

• Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual and/or abusive/offensive.

**In addition:**

* You can allow people you support to give you brief hugs, if you feel comfortable with this.
* You can allow people you support to hold hands or link arms with you to help with travel and stability.
* You should discourage people you support from touching your face. You can offer your hand instead.
* You should discourage people you support from sitting on your lap. You can offer to sit side by side.
* You should avoid using touch if the person you support is very distressed and is unlikely to tolerate it.

Ensure that church officers at all levels take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. They should be encouraged to challenge one another if necessary. Concerns about possible abuse or inappropriate behaviour should always be reported.