

SECTION 4

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING SAFE

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ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION, PHOTOGRAPHS AND WEBSITE

Information and communication technology are very much part of our every day social and working lives. The majority of families now have a computer in their homes and may use the internet for research, communicating with family, friends and colleagues and learning new things. For children and young people in particular, it is the norm to communicate electronically through mobile phones, e-mail and social networking sites such as Facebook.

Although these new technologies offer a wealth of new experiences and possibilities, we also need to be aware that they can be used inappropriately by men, women and young people. Adults who work with children and young people need to know how to make the most of these technologies but at the same time ensure they are used appropriately and responsibly, in order that children are protected and the integrity of workers safeguarded.

All communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit boundaries, and only for reasons related to the work of the church, so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.

Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny, and maintain a good and open relationship with parents and carers regarding communication with their children.

PROTECTING YOURSELF WHEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA

There are many internet social media tools that can be used. The most common are:

- **Blogging sites:** these are personal websites or online diaries. You posts thoughts and musings alongside links to other areas you are interested in. Others can comment on your posts - this can lead to debates.

- **Facebook:** This is the most well known and used social media site. Here you can build networks of friends and join pages dedicated to particular areas of interest. People use Facebook to organise events, launch campaigns or simply keep in touch. It is similar to having several conversations about things that interest you.
- There are other similar sites – **Linkedin, Bebo, Ning, MySpace, Tumblr and Pinterest** for example –that do similar things for different audiences.

All these sites can link to each other and can include videos and photos.

- **Twitter:** This is known as a micro-blogging site where users follow people or organisations that interest them and are followed in turn. On twitter users post short 140 character messages (tweets) to their followers but can also send private messages. You can also include links to pictures and other sites in a similar way to Facebook.
- **Flickr:** This is a website for sharing photos where users can upload and share pictures. You can also search for photos
- **YouTube and Vimeo:** These are websites for sharing videos and is organised in a similar way to Flickr. You can add comments to videos (and others can comment on your work)
- **Discussions and forums:** Many websites have discussion boards and forums for debate and comment – these are particularly popular for news based sites

If an account is set up in the name of the church or youth group, it is essential that an adult leader becomes a member of it and oversees the content and activity. Other considerations to be aware of include:

- Leaders should maintain boundaries between their personal and professional lives by customising their privacy settings and avoiding uploading inappropriate personal information. It is not advisable to be facebook friends with youth group members.
- Events or parties at a private address should be reserved for the group's private area
- The guidelines on photographs in this section should be followed when uploading images.

The key things you must do to protect yourself online

Ask yourself the following questions.

Who is the audience?

Nothing is really private in the world of social media, even if you think it is.

Would anyone find my message offensive or discriminatory?

Some level of self monitoring is needed. You are subject to the law of the land

Is what I am saying defamatory?

Does it bring me or my group into disrepute?

Your facts need to be correct. Your opinions should not bring the organisation into disrepute.

When I am going for my next job interview would I want my potential employer to see this?

You are the representative of the church. What does your message say about it?

THINK ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS

You need to think about who you accept as friends on Facebook (and to a certain extent followers on twitter). Reaching out to a wide network of people who may share different views and express them in colourful ways may have many benefits. But you may need to think through the challenges of reaching a diverse group of people online and how you disassociate yourself from those who may cause you embarrassment.

Be careful about any pictures or videos you post. They may seem innocuous and fun to you but many people have fallen foul with the image of an unguarded moment.

Similarly your friends may post messages, photos or videos that could be very harmful. You could also be "tagged" in these photos bringing more attention. You need to make sure they are removed.

Anything you say is permanent. Anything you say is in the public domain

You may think you are speaking to a controlled private group of friends but anything you put online can be regarded as published. Even if you put safeguards around whom you accept as friends or followers information can still be passed on.

You can protect yourself by only putting comments that you would also make in a public meeting; in your parish magazine or in local media.

You may be able to delete a comment or entry made in haste but records could still have been seen. Your comment could have been reposted or copied to other sites. Even if you sent a direct message or personal email the recipient could find a variety of ways to keep a valid record of the comment. People could take a screen dump to save information that you may have thought is deleted.

E-MAILS

When using e-mail to communicate with children and young people, you should:

- Make sure the child's parents/carers know and have agreed to this method of Communication
- Use clear, appropriate language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation
- Where possible, have a separate e-mail account for church activity communications, which can be accessed by other adults in the group as required
- Never use terms such as 'love' or 'xxx' to end the message
- Not forward chain e-mails to young people
- Make sure images, if sent, are appropriate
- Make sure that any hyperlinks do not lead to inappropriate content
- Always copy another adult into the e-mails, and save copies sent.

Mobile Phones and Text Messages

Most young people have a mobile phone, and with these also come text messages. The benefit of text is the ability to communicate and respond immediately in a given situation, but it is important to ensure that the content of the message cannot be misinterpreted.

When using mobile phones and texting to communicate with children and young people, you should:

- Make sure the child's parents/carers know and have agreed to this method of Communication
- Where possible, use a separate mobile phone from your personal one. This way all calls and texts can be accounted for via an itemised phone bill
- Only give out to young people contact details that the church has placed within the public domain
- Use appropriate language, and do not include words or phrases which could be misinterpreted
- Never use a kiss, or love, or xxx at the end of a text or within a signature
- Always copy another adult into the text message
- Be conscious of the time when sending messages or making calls, avoid late at night or early morning.

COMPUTERS

Where children and young people have access to computers as part of church activities, the Leader has a duty to ensure that:

- Measures are in place to ensure that the likelihood of children accessing inappropriate materials is reduced e.g. parental controls and software to filter out internet material
- Children and young people are aware that their personal details e.g. last name, address, school, passwords, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers are private and should not be disclosed unless approval is given by the Leader
- Children and young people know that they should never send photographs and should be wary of chat-rooms
- Children and young people are aware that they should advise a leader about any e-mails or anything on line that makes them feel uncomfortable or bothers them
- Shopping and downloading (especially music and games) should be forbidden.
- Limit the time each young person is on the computer
- Always ensure that the PCs are running up-to-date antivirus and anti Spyware

software whenever connected to the internet and perform a complete Virus and Spyware scan after each session using up-to-date and licensed tools.

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

It is advisable for Parishes to adopt an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy and make it available for anyone to look at, particularly parents and carers. The ICT Policy should include guidance on both fixed and mobile internet technologies including PCs, laptops, web cams, mobile phones, etc.

Not only parents/carers but also children and young people have the right to decide whether they want someone to have their e-mail address or mobile phone number and shouldn't be pressurised in divulging information that they would rather keep to themselves.

Children and young people can find it easier to communicate via e-mail because nobody is physically present. This means the child or young person may be more willing to share personal and sensitive information about themselves or a given situation, than they would face to face. Whilst it is entirely appropriate to offer general advice and support, it should be recognised that text messaging and e-mail is not an appropriate response to a young person in a crisis situation or at risk of harm.

If you receive an e-mail or text message from a child or young person which causes concern, you should print it out and/or retain it on file and speak to the Parish Safeguarding Officer and/or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser as soon as possible.

SAFETY TIPS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In view of the fact that children and young people can communicate very easily, they are vulnerable to individuals who may wish to harm them. Because workers are in a position of trust, they have a unique opportunity to help children develop personal safety skills.

Opportunities should be provided to discuss the technology that children are using, and to adopt good online habits.

- **MEETING:** someone from online is dangerous. Never arrange to meet someone unless you are sure of who they are, and you have your parent's/carers permission.
- **ACCEPTING :** e-mails, messages or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they mainly contain viruses or nasty messages.
- **RELIABLE:** Someone online may be lying about who they are, and information found on the internet is not always reliable.
- **TELL:** your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried. You can also report online abuse to the police at www.thinkuknow.co.uk

TAKING AND PUBLISHING PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

The church is committed to Creating a Safe Space. Implicit in this, is the commitment to ensure that all published images represent participants appropriately, and with due respect, and are taken and displayed in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The key concerns regarding the use of images of children and young people relate to:

- The possible identification of a child when a photograph is accompanied by personal information
- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use in child pornography websites
- The taking of inappropriate photographs or recorded images of children and young people.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Photographs taken purely for personal use are exempt from the Data Protection Act. Where the Act does apply, a common sense approach suggests that if the photographer has permission to take the photograph, this will usually be enough to ensure compliance. For more information about this or any other aspect of data protection, visit www.ico.gov.uk

Consent

When planning community celebrations or public events, e.g. the crib service, a church fete, at which parents may wish to take photographs and/or professional photographers may be present, those attending should be advised of this in advance. If they decide to participate in the event, their consent to photographs being taken will be assumed.

In all other circumstances, the consent of parents and carers must be obtained before taking and using images of children and young people, and a chance to opt out must be given. Consent need not be in writing if it is not proposed to publish the pictures in any way, but if they are going to be displayed on a notice board, used in a parish magazine or put on the internet, then specific consent should be obtained using the **Photo Consent Form**.

Those taking photographs need to bear in mind that parents and carers may have good reasons for refusing consent, e.g. some children may have been involved in legal disputes, local authority care, or adoption, and their whereabouts may not be widely known. Parents and carers of the affected children will know this and will appropriately withhold consent without giving the reason.

ADULTS AT RISK

For adults at risk, images should only be used for a purpose which is explained to them, and to which they give their recorded and preferably signed consent, i.e. they understand and agree. They should see the photograph before being asked to give consent. All images must respect

the dignity of the person being photographed. If the adult at risk cannot give informed consent, the images should not be used, unless the individual cannot be identified from the photograph.

Storage of Images

Be clear about whether the image is to be retained and if so for what purpose. Store the image securely, and ideally store consent forms with the image/s for future reference.

Good Practice Guidelines

- Pictures of children or adults at risk should not be taken without another adult present.
- The photograph/video should focus on the activity rather than a particular child, avoiding full face and body shots and taking into consideration the age of the children involved. All children and young people featured in photos or recordings must be appropriately dressed.
- Photographs submitted for publication where young people and/or adults at risk are recognisable and there is insufficient evidence that their consent has been obtained should not be published. Permission **should not** be assumed, even if images have been submitted by parishes for publication.
- If at a church-related event, children or adults at risk may use cameras to take photos of each other, or if parents or carers take photos of children other than their own, they should be advised that these can be used for personal use only, and should not be displayed in any publicly accessible space including on internet or web-based communication channels such as Facebook.

Schools, including church schools will have their own policies, which apply to children on school premises or engaged in school-sponsored activities.

Online Safeguarding is great importance

You need to be very aware of making sure you are safe, public and open in your communication with people – particularly those at risk. You should think very carefully about accepting “friend requests” and in no circumstance should you initiate a request with an at risk person all communication online should be open and transparent.

Similarly you need to respect other people’s confidentiality.

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PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- Familiarise yourself with the Safeguarding Guidelines.
- Welcome each child and treat each child with dignity and respect.
- Be sure each child has a completed health and consent form where appropriate.
- Always keep a register of who is present at any event or regular activity, including contact details and emergency contact numbers.
- Always work in twos: you should never be more than a few seconds and an open door from another authorised leader. If the group included girls, there must be one woman present.
- Plan activities that are age appropriate and inclusive.
- Before you talk to a child about their behaviour, consider what might be happening in other parts of their life which may be causing it.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour eg bullying, ridiculing, rejection and mockery. Never use abusive language or behaviour yourself and ensure your own behaviour is acceptable.
- Respect personal privacy and space.
- A child / young person should never be hit or shaken or in any way physically disciplined.
- Be aware and alert. Take seriously what you see, hear or feel. If you are concerned, talk to someone whom you trust, seek advice from an appropriate source. Eg Parish Safeguarding Officer, Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser
- Know where to find the telephone number of your Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
- Remember that you are responsible for your actions and that the child's welfare is paramount.
- Be ready to listen to a child sensitively.
- Undertake a Health and Safety check of the rooms to be used for activities.

SAFE PEOPLE

Be aware that it **might be risky to:**

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone on car journeys, however short. In an emergency ask the child to sit in the back seat. Seat belts must be worn. Check that insurance covers the vehicle and passengers.
- Take children to your home. Never invite a child or young person to your home alone. If you invite a group ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents are aware of the situation and have given their consent

Leaders and volunteers should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child even in fun;
- ignore allegations a child makes, or fail to make a record;
- do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves; It may sometimes be necessary for leaders or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or are children with disabilities. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations it is important that all leaders are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.
- There should always be at least 2 workers with any group of children.

GUIDELINES ON TOUCH

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

- Do not hug and touch other adults without their agreement ie do not invade their personal space
- If a child is upset always ask if it is alright before comforting them.
- Touch should be related to a person's needs.
- In the case of a child touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the them.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or could be construed as, sexually stimulating to the adult or child.
- Children are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances, i.e. when they need medical attention.
- Only leaders of the same sex should accompany small children to the toilet. Casual visitors should never accompany children to the toilet.
- We should all take responsibility for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. People should be free to constructively challenge a colleague if necessary.

ORGAN LESSONS IN CHURCH

Music lessons are normally arranged through a school or as a private arrangement between parent and teacher. However, if the church organ is going to be used, the PCC retains a general responsibility for health and safety in activities carried out on its premises and needs insurance cover.

The organist should complete a *confidential declaration* and have a DBS Disclosure if this has not already been done.

The organist should be given a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and section 4 from the handbook: Procedures for Keeping Safe

An agreement should be drawn up on church headed paper, which at least one parent of the child should sign, in which the parent gives their agreement to the teacher teaching their child the organ at the church and accepting that this will not be supervised. This

should include the provision that the parent understands that from time to time it may be necessary for some physical contact between teacher and student as is appropriate in the context of the particular lesson being taught.

This should be signed also by the organist and by someone appropriate in the church (incumbent or church warden). The signed agreement should be retained by the church.

BELL RINGING WITH CHILDREN

Safeguarding in Towers in relation to Children

There are moral and legal responsibilities placed upon all adult ringers to protect children (i.e. those under 18 years of age) and adults who may be vulnerable who may join in ringing activities. There are expectations and legal requirements contained in legislation, church and government guidance, the details of which are set out in the Council's Guidance Note 3 "Child protection on Towers". Full text can be found on the website

<http://www.cccbr.org.uk/towerstewardship/notes/GN3v8.pdf>

This brief note, which relates to Towers where children ring highlights the principal requirements which must be met together with guidelines for good practice in organisation and behaviour.

Tower Captains and their Deputy / Assistant should be properly recruited in line with their ability to ring, manage a tower and train adults and children. The Tower Captain and Deputy / Assistant should have safeguarding training which should be refreshed every three years.

The Church of England requires those that are eligible for a DBS check to have one in the following roles:-

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Supervision by¹</i>	<i>DBS checking by²</i>	<i>Any new checking</i>
Directly caring for, teaching, training or supervising children by tower captain, deputy/assistant or visiting tutor ³ .	Tower Captain / Deputy or Assistant	PCC	PCC

Activities/roles not eligible for a DBS check

- Adult ringing at practices, meetings and outings
- Unplanned one-off teaching or deputising in an emergency⁴
- Transporting children as part of arrangements between families

Guidelines for maintaining safe environment for children in the belfry

1. Parents' consent in writing should be sought prior to commencing teaching, outings or Guild meeting visits and they should be made aware, in advance, of the content and arrangements for such teaching, outings or visits. Any medical conditions of the child should be established in advance.
2. Touching should be only that appropriate for teaching, supervision and/or in an emergency. Those helping children by ringing another bell or standing nearby should be aware of the need to protect personal space.
3. Two adults (preferably one of each gender) should be present whenever children are ringing or when children are transported.
4. An attendance register should be kept.

¹ Supervision: The Church of England defines supervised activity as being where the supervisor, who has been safely recruited and holds DBS check, is **always** able to see the supervised worker's actions during their work.

² DBS checks to be requested by the PCC according to the DBS system used in the diocese. It is illegal for an organisation to knowingly allow a person to work with children or adults who may be vulnerable if they are on the DBS barred list.

³ A visiting tutor is one invited to teach bell ringing in a Home Tower and will be in charge of the teaching. This may have been arranged through the Guild or by the Home Tower. The tutor should present their DBS certificate to the Tower Captain or Deputy who will still supervise overall activities.

5. Children must be supervised at all times and should only be allowed into hazardous locations, such as the bell chamber, when accompanied by the Tower Captain / Deputy or Assistant
6. Relevant health and safety procedures should be followed and first aid available.
7. Local tower arrangements should always be known by and approved by the Parish.

Recommended Additional safeguards

1. All local ringing societies should appoint a Safeguarding Officer to oversee the performance of safeguarding matters in their area.
2. Good liaison should be established between Tower Captains and PCCs and between the Safeguarding Officer of local societies and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.
3. Please note that it is the responsibility of all visiting groups to ensure that those leading/supervising a group have had all relevant checks and it is not the responsibility of the host church, unless the host church is providing the leader/supervisor for a visiting group. All visiting groups should be provided with a copy of this General Statement on Safeguarding Towers in relation to children
4. If there is a child who it is believed is at immediate risk of harm call the emergency services on 999 and then inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser. Any behaviour of adult ringers which gives cause for concern should be discussed with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser who will advise about any further action.

Guidelines for those Exercising Pastoral Ministry

All those involved in pastoral ministry, whether paid or unpaid, clergy or lay, should be working to these guidelines. Following these guidelines should both ensure that people at risk are protected and that visitors are not wrongly accused of abuse or misconduct.

Conversations in a ministry context

Informal conversations in a ministry context are pastoral encounters. Visitors should be aware of their language and behaviour. For example, innuendos or compliments of a sexual nature are always inappropriate. When a person asks questions or seeks advice around topics of a sexual nature, the visitor should be discerning about the motives and needs of the person and question their own ability to assist.

The visitor should consider in advance:

- The physical distance between people determined by hospitality and respect, being aware that someone may have suffered abuse or harassment in the past.
- The appropriateness of initiating or receiving any physical contact.
- The timing of the visit.
- The personal safety and comfort of all participants.
- Establishing at the outset the duration of the visit,
- The need for confidentiality.

Pastoral Relationships

Exercising any kind of ministry involves visitors developing an understanding of themselves and how they relate to others, how they increase the well-being of others and how they ensure their own well-being and safety.

Visitors are in a position of trust and this means others think that they have power, although this may not be apparent to them, therefore respecting boundaries is particularly important. Many pastoral relationships can become intertwined with friendships and social contacts.

Visitors should exercise particular care when ministering to persons with whom they have a close personal relationship or family relationship.

Visitors should be aware of the dangers of dependency in pastoral relationships and seek advice when these concerns arise.

Visitors should recognize their limits and not undertake any ministry that is beyond their competence or role (e.g. therapeutic counselling, deliverance ministry, counselling victims of abuse and domestic violence, or their perpetrators, or giving legal advice). In such instances, the person should be referred to another person or agency with appropriate expertise.

Visitors should avoid behaviour that could give the impression of inappropriate favouritism or the encouragement of inappropriate special relationships.

Visitors should treat those with whom they minister or visit with respect, encouraging self-determination, independence and choice.

Care should be taken when helping with physical needs, washing and toileting, always respecting the choices of the individual concerned.

Pastoral relationships may develop into romantic attachments and such situations should be handled sensitively. Visitors need to recognize such a development and make it clear to both the person concerned and the clergy so alternative arrangements can be made for the ongoing pastoral care of the person concerned. It is never appropriate for visitors to take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with anyone with whom they have a pastoral

relationship.

Visitors should be aware of the power imbalance inherent in pastoral relationships.

Visitors should not undertake any pastoral ministry while they are under the influence of drink or non-prescribed drugs.