



POLICY

General statements of principle and intent

Church of England - House of Bishops' policy on child protection

P1. Introduction

The House of Bishops' policy and its accompanying guidance "Protecting all God's Children 2004" has been agreed by all the bishops of the Church of England. With the most recent government guidelines "Working together to Safeguard Children 2006" it forms the basis of our Diocesan document. The House of Bishops' policy is accepted by the church insurance company Ecclesiastical Insurance Group as the minimum required to fulfil insurance requirements.

P2. Principles of the House of Bishops' child protection policy

- We are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of the children within our church community.
- We will carefully select and train ordained and lay ministers, volunteers and paid workers with children and young people, using the Criminal Records Bureau, to check the background of each person.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that a child or young person for whom we are responsible may have been harmed.
- We will fully cooperate with statutory agencies during any investigation they make into allegations concerning a member of the church community.
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse.
- We will care for and supervise any member of our church community known to have offended against a child.

P3. Policy statement

The Church of England, in all aspects of its life, is committed to and will champion the protection of children and young people both in society as a whole and in its own community. It fully accepts, endorses and will implement the principle enshrined in the Children Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Church of England will foster and encourage best practice within its community by setting standards for working with children and young people and by supporting parents in the care of their children. It will work with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith communities to promote the safety and well being of children and young people. It is committed to acting promptly whenever a concern is raised about a child or young person or about the behaviour of an adult, and will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse is necessary.

P4. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006

States: To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children all organisations that provide services for children, or work with children, need to have in place:¹


- Clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children explicitly stated in strategic policy documents
- A clear commitment by senior management to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Recruitment and human resources management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people including arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff and volunteers
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers
- Arrangements to ensure that all staff undertake appropriate training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities effectively, and keep this up-to-date by refresher training at regular intervals; and that all staff, including temporary staff and volunteers who work with children, are made aware of the establishment's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and their responsibilities for that
- Have policies in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including a child protection policy, and procedures that are in accordance with guidance from the Local Authority and locally agreed inter-agency procedures
- Have arrangements in place to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including arrangements for sharing information
- A culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with children – seeking their views in ways appropriate to their age and understanding, and taking account of those both in individual decisions and the establishment or development of services; and
- Appropriate whistle-blowing procedures and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed

P5. Faith Communities²

Churches, other places of worship and faith based organisations provide a wide range of activities for children and young people. They are some of the largest providers of children and youth work, and have an important role in safeguarding children and supporting families. Religious leaders, staff and faith-based organisations need to have appropriate arrangements in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to include:

¹ Working together to Safeguard Children 2006 section 2.8

² Working together to Safeguard Children 2006 section 2.152

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- Procedures for staff and volunteers to report concerns that they may have about the children they meet that are in line with “What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused” and Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures
 - Appropriate codes of practice for those working directly with children
 - Recruitment procedures
 - Training and supervision of staff.