

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Church is a community of volunteers, with members contributing to its life in different ways. In today's busy world it is often difficult for people to take on new responsibilities, but in the care and nurture of children especially, a long-term commitment is needed. It is nevertheless important that those working with children and young people should be carefully selected, supported and trained.

**The PCC should designate people to carry out the following roles. They do not all have to be carried out by different people, they can be combined. All these people should have a clear channel of communication with the PCC.**

### **Parish Child Protection Representative**

Each Church Council must appoint a Child Protection Representative to be responsible under them for implementing the Diocesan policy in the parish. This should be a lay person, preferably with some professional interest in children, for example, a teacher, health visitor, social worker, etc. Ideally, the representative should be someone who is not already an office holder or responsible for children or youth work in the parish, so that independence is maintained.

The parish child protection representative, appointed by the PCC, will be responsible for:

1. Implementing the Diocesan Child Protection Policy and Procedures in the parish.
2. Making any extra recommendations required for the particular circumstances of a parish and having those agreed by the PCC.
3. Ensuring that all volunteers and paid lay staff who work with children and young people have completed a declaration form, and Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Application.
4. Receiving, with the incumbent, any concerns about children or adults in the parish and making sure that proper advice is sought and proper referrals made; concerns about the incumbent should be raised with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.
5. Ensuring there is a Child-line poster and details of the NSPCC on a notice-board at every church and place where children meet, and that it is at a height at which it can be easily read by children.
6. Being a member of the Appointing Body for any new appointments to represent child protection concerns.
7. Overseeing the process for new appointments, taking up references, and ensuring Confidential Declaration Forms are completed.
8. Being the link person between the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser and the parish.
9. Arranging attendance at Diocesan training in child protection matters for all workers (both volunteers and paid staff).

The Parish Child Protection Representative should work closely with the incumbent and if possible be co-opted onto the PCC. He or she should make a report to the PCC at least once a year.

**Appointing Body**

Selection of people to undertake work with children and young people should be confirmed at an interview conducted by an Appointing Body. This should include at least two people, with the incumbent or a churchwarden and the Child Protection Representative being among them. One member of the Appointing Body, normally the Child Protection Representative is responsible for ensuring that the formal processes are completed and acting as a point of liaison between the parish and the Diocese.

**Parish Identity Validator**

This person is responsible for verifying the identity of applicants as part of the CRB process. (See Page 12 for more information in relation to this).

The incumbent is expected to retain the Confidential Declarations in a secure place.

## **Implementing the Diocesan Policy and Procedures in the Parish**

The PCC is responsible for **all** parish activities and must satisfy itself that everything is being done to provide a safe environment for its children and young people. It is also equally important that we recognise that children and young people are often members of mixed-age groups, and therefore have contact with adults who are not necessarily the leaders or helpers. It is also responsible for making sure, as far as possible, that no false accusations can be made against its workers and volunteers.

**The Incumbent, Child Protection Representative and probably a small working party should compile a work programme showing how the policy is to be implemented in the parish. The document should cover the following areas:**

- Decide who should fulfil the roles set out above.
- Inform the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser of any people in the congregation who are known to have offended against children or young people, and work out an agreement with that person (See page 18).
- Identify all outside groups that use the church premises (see page 23).
- Identify all children's and young people's activities and mixed-age activities that are the responsibility of the PCC and therefore come under the procedures.
- Check whether any of the under-8 groups need to be registered with Ofsted (see page 29).
- Check that every group has enough helpers, and if possible, there is a gender balance.
- Identify all leaders, helpers and adults in mixed-age activities who will need to follow child protection procedures.
- Identify any adults in the congregation who have significant informal contact with children - verger, caretaker, mini-bus driver etc. These people will come under the child protection procedures.
- Ensure that all current paid employees, volunteers and adult members of mixed-age groups have an interview, sign the Confidential Declaration Form (Form PPP/3), and complete a CRB Disclosure Application if this has not already been done.
- Decide how new workers will be appointed (see Page 11).
- Inspect premises used by children and young people to make sure they are physically safe and any health and safety issues addressed.
- Implement a Parish Drinks and Drugs Policy. An outline policy is given at PPP/13. This policy should also be reviewed annually by the PCC.
- Make sure the parish insurance policy covers all activities on and off the premises and includes legal protection insurance for employees and volunteers.

## **Recruitment Procedures for Parishes**

As part of their implementation policy the PCC should agree which adults come under these procedures, that is, any adult looking after or responsible for any child or young person under the age of 18, who is not their own. Do not forget staff who have easy access to children, for example, caretakers, vergers or mini-bus drivers.

The Appointing Body should:

- Agree what the task or job is
- Determine the experience required
- Agree the level of responsibility
- Determine the time commitment
- Agree who the individual is responsible to
- Prepare a job description, as prospective appointees should be regarded as job applicants and have a defined role.

Seek possible workers. Distribute a notice or advertisement and do not rely simply on word on mouth, as people with the required skills may not be known to you. Normally one should not recruit people until they have been part of the congregation for at least 6 months.

The Appointing Body should interview all applicants, regardless of whether the post is voluntary or paid, to determine that the person has the necessary personality, experience and integrity for the particular work. This is especially important if the person is new to the church.

Ask successful applicants to complete the Confidential Declaration Form and return it in confidence to the incumbent. See PPP/4. If there are any matters disclosed regarding children contact the Diocesan Child Adviser to discuss the matter. The incumbent should ensure that the Parish Child Protection Representative knows that the Declaration Form has been completed satisfactorily. All forms should be stored securely and retained indefinitely by the incumbent.

Successful applicants must complete an application form for the CRB disclosure. Blank application forms are available from the Child Protection Administrator at the Diocesan Office. These should be processed by the Child Protection Representative or Parish Identity Validator.

Two references must be sought, of which at least one should comment on the person's suitability to work with children. If the person currently holds a paid or voluntary position involving responsibility for children, they must be asked to give their manager or equivalent as a referee. If the person has come from a different church, they should be asked to give the incumbent or equivalent as a referee. Model Pro-forma Reference forms for these can be found at PPP/5 and PPP/6.

Successful applicants will be required to read the Diocesan Child Protection Guidelines and agree to follow the Child Protection Policy to the best of their ability. (See PPP/3).

Each new worker should have a six month probationary period, at the end of which their position should be ratified by the Appointing Body. New appointees could be commissioned to the work through a formal process, e.g. at a Sunday Service, so that the whole congregation is aware of their role.

### **Helpers Aged Under 18**

Young people aged under 16 should **NOT** be asked to take formal responsibility for work with children. Helpers aged 16 or 17 should be interviewed and asked to complete a Confidential Declaration Form and sign a contract agreeing to follow the Child Protection Procedures and recommended good practice. They should **NOT** be asked to apply for a CRB disclosure, as they should never be solely responsible for a group or crèche. They should always be supervised and supported by an adult. Once they reach 18 they should be treated as adults and asked to apply for a CRB disclosure.

### **The Criminal Records Bureau**

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is an executive agency of the Home Office which provides in one process a check of whether an individual has a criminal record, has been under police investigation, has been banned from working with children by the courts or by having their name placed on lists maintained by the Department for Education and Skills or the Department of Health.

Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 it is an offence to recruit anyone to work with children and young people who has been convicted of an offence against children, or is otherwise disqualified from such work. Information disclosed by the CRB will protect employers and organisations from committing such an offence. Knowledge of the existence of this procedure will deter people with such disqualification from seeking paid posts or voluntary work with children, providing they know that churches and other groups who work with children are using this opportunity to protect children.

So far, our experience in implementing child protection procedures has worked well, and we have an excellent record in taking sensible precautions to protect children and young people and people working with them. Access to information through the CRB enables us to maintain our good record, and it is important that we take advantage of the opportunity:

- in the selection, appointment and deployment of clergy
- in the selection and appointment of accredited lay workers
- in the selection and appointment of readers
- in appointing to salaried posts in parishes
- in appointing volunteers to work with children and young people in parishes.

It is Diocesan policy that any individual applying for work with children should be asked to complete an enhanced CRB Disclosure. This applies both to new and to existing children's workers.

### **Advertising a post or seeking volunteers**

Advertisements for posts and information provided for prospective volunteers must say that Disclosure will be required and that **it must prove satisfactory before a person can be confirmed in a post, or be permitted to continue acting as a volunteer.**

### **Completing a CRB Application Form**

The procedure for completing CRB applications is liable to change from time to time, and therefore can be found in the Appendices at the back of these guidelines. All parish CRB applications must be completed by the applicant and verified by the Parish Identity

Validator, before being sent to the Child Protection Administrator, Diocese of Portsmouth, First Floor, Peninsular House, Wharf Road, Portsmouth, PO2 8HB for countersigning.

### **Receiving a Disclosure**

The CRB will carry out their checks. Their stated aim is to complete disclosures in 2-4 weeks. When the CRB has completed its checks, it will send two copies of each Disclosure: one to the applicant and one to the relevant Registered Body countersignatory, who is the Diocesan Child Protection Administrator. The Parish Incumbent will receive a letter from the countersignatory confirming the absence of a concern. Such correspondence must be stored securely and retained indefinitely.

A proportion of the population have convictions for offences. These may be old, minor and unrelated to the safety of children, or they may be more serious. The policy of the Diocese is that for all positions where a CRB disclosure is recommended, receipt of a positive disclosure will lead to a risk assessment. The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will contact the Incumbent to discuss this, in complete confidentiality.

### **Recording, Confidentiality and Data Protection**

All forms and relevant correspondence relating to appointments should be retained while the person is in post. Once the person relinquishes the post, the date of their departure should be noted and the papers retained, as this information may be needed later. Any forms should be passed to the incumbent for safe keeping in a locked filing cabinet. In an interregnum they should be held by the Churchwarden, or the Rural Dean. If there are any concerns about keeping a particular record, you should consult the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

It is important to keep accurate records of any child protection concerns, disclosures or allegations. Facts observed or disclosed should be accurately recorded, signed and dated. Opinions should not be included. If any records are to be kept without the subject of the record's knowledge, it should be made clear why this is so, for instance if there appears to be a worrying pattern of behaviour which needs to be monitored. Try to be consistent about what is kept so that it can be justified if necessary. Actions taken and decisions made should all be noted. A note should be made of who is aware of the information, for example, the subject of the record, the child's parents, etc.

The Data Protection Principles enshrined in the Data Protection Act 1998 are included for information:

Personal Data should be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Processed in line with your rights
- Secure and,
- Not transferred to countries without adequate protection

## **Procedures to follow if there are allegations or suspicions of child abuse**

**Any suspicion, allegation or disclosure that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm must be referred to the local Social Services Department.**

There are several ways in which concerns about a child can become apparent:

- By allegation made by the child directly;
- By reports or allegations made by a parent or another person;
- By observing signs and symptoms of abuse;
- By admission from someone who says they are harming a child.

Each PCC, as part of their implementation documentation, must make clear who should be told about concerns regarding children and young people. This will usually be the Parish Child Protection Representative with the support of the Incumbent and perhaps the Churchwarden/s. The Parish Child Protection Representative should make sure that all people working with children and young people are aware of their responsibilities in the event of any child protection concern and what to do.

Social Services is the lead agency in matters of child protection and co-ordinates any response. The police can be contacted in an emergency. Details of local offices can be found on page 44.

### **Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Child Abuse**

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser must be informed, as soon as possible, of all incidents concerning the church and of any referrals made or being considered. If an allegation concerns a member of the clergy, the Bishop must be informed as well as the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

If the Child Protection Adviser and/or the Parish Child Protection Representative is not immediately available, and the child or young person needs urgent medical help, the appropriate emergency services should be called – police or ambulance – or the child taken to the nearest Accident and Emergency department. The hospital staff should be told of your suspicions.

If the child is not in immediate danger or you are not sure whether child abuse is involved, discuss your concerns with your group leader and Incumbent and the Parish Child Protection Representative, who will decide with you what action to take. If you are not happy with that advice, you have a duty as a citizen to take your concerns directly to Social Services or the police.

Referrals to Social Services must be made by the person who received the disclosure. The Parish Child Protection Representative and /or the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will facilitate the referral.

In the case of serious allegations or if it is possible that a criminal offence has been committed; for example a physical or sexual assault, care should be taken not to inform

the alleged offender so that any investigation is not compromised. An agreement should be made with the police and Social Services Department about who should be given information and when that information should be given.

During most child protection investigations it will be necessary for the alleged offender to be withdrawn from any contact with children or young people. Consult the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser with regard to this.

All actions regarding a child protection concern must be recorded, signed and dated.

### **Making a Child Protection Referral to Social Services**

The person directly involved with a disclosure or observation should give as much detail as possible, and be prepared to have further discussions with Social Services and the police.

The social worker should be given as much detail as possible – descriptions, dates, times, verbatim conversation. Distinguish between fact and opinion; what was seen and has been told by others.

After you have made a referral social services will decide whether what you have told them constitutes child abuse, and/or whether they need to offer advice and support for a child in need. They may decide not to do anything.

If they decide to investigate, they may require a letter confirming the details of the referral to them. The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser is available to assist with this, and any other matter concerning the formal referral process.

The Social Services will normally investigate the matter with specially trained police officers. They will gather information from people who know the child e.g. school staff, GP, etc. They will interview the parents, and they will interview the child.

If it is concluded from the interview that the child or young person has suffered and/or is likely to suffer significant harm, a multi-agency child protection case conference will decide whether the child needs protection and how that can be achieved. The child's name may be placed on the child protection register.

The police will decide, together with the Crown Prosecution Service, whether a criminal act has been committed and whether a person should be charged with an offence and taken to court.

If the case is taken to court the child will probably have to be a witness, unless the person pleads guilty. There are special provisions to help a child through this process. The referrer may be required to give evidence.

### **Pastoral support**

Consideration should be given to the pastoral care of all those affected by the allegation. The Diocese will make arrangements as appropriate for the emotional and spiritual support of the child and its family, the accused person and his or her family, and the parish community.

Arrangements should be made for communication with any of the congregation affected by the allegation and, where relevant, for their care. This will be essential if the accused person is well known to the congregation or is a member of staff, and is therefore suspended from duty or asked to take leave of absence.

In the event of an incident, all communications both within and outside the Diocese will be handled by the Diocesan Communications Adviser who will consult with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. Particular care should be taken regarding any public statements or public prayer.

### **Attending a Child Protection Case Conference**

A Child Protection Case Conference is a multi-agency meeting, which includes the parents and the child, if old enough, to consider whether a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering in the future any form of significant harm. The Conference decides whether to place the child on the child protection register and what plans are required to protect the child and support the family.

A case conference cannot decide to remove a child from its parents, although it could recommend that this course of action be considered by Social Services. Only a court can order the removal of a child, although a child can be placed away from home by social services with the parents' agreement.

In very exceptional cases, church workers may be invited to a Case Conference because they have first hand knowledge of abuse, the child has told them about abuse, they know the child or the parents well and can give background information and/or they are a family friend and are offering them support.

If the child is placed on the child protection register the child protection conference will re-convene within 3 months to review the situation. The worker may be invited to attend if they are still involved.

### **Investigating an Allegation of Child Abuse**

All allegations should be taken seriously and dealt with in conjunction with the statutory authorities. The highest degree of confidentiality must be maintained.

Support will be needed by the various parties involved with an allegation. Those supporting the alleged offender and those supporting the alleged victim or victim's family should not discuss the situation with each other. This is to avoid any possible contamination of evidence. If necessary the police should be asked for advice about the extent of the contact which should take place with each individual concerned.

During child protection investigations it is normal for the accused person to be withdrawn from any contact with children or young people.

Following the outcome of an investigation, appropriate disciplinary procedures will apply. The result of an investigation may be inconclusive, there may or may not be a prosecution, or it may be decided that a person's behaviour has been ill-advised and foolish rather than criminal. After taking advice, the Bishop or employer may need to put restrictions on a person's future employment, or require them to undertake counselling, training, supervision or spiritual direction.

There are no formal disciplinary procedures for volunteers; normal good practice will apply.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, in conjunction with the Bishop as necessary, will be responsible for passing relevant information to statutory authorities.

### **Untrue Allegations**

Occasionally an untrue allegation may be made. It is important not to make judgements, and to allow any allegation to be carefully investigated to try to ascertain the truth. Untrue allegations can be the result of some other concern or unhappiness in a child's life. It is very important that clergy or people working with children do not put themselves in vulnerable situations.

In cases where allegations may be shown to be unfounded or malicious, the Bishop, with advice from the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, will find appropriate means to make clear that the person has been exonerated.

### **Disclosures from Abusers**

People who abuse children rarely admit to what they have done. It is, however, possible that admissions may be made to clergy and pastoral counsellors.

**Whilst there is a general presumption in favour of confidentiality and indeed the secrecy of pastoral conversations of all kinds, this cannot apply in the case of admission of the abuse of children. Thus while a person's right to confidentiality is of great importance, it is not absolute. If a person hearing an admission considers that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm he or she must follow the procedures set out in these guidelines. The Children Act 1989 states that if there is a conflict between the needs of a child and an adult 'the welfare of the child is paramount'.**

It is also possible that abuse may be admitted in the particular and privileged context of confession. The 'seal of the confessional' should be regarded as absolute. Nevertheless, a priest should not only urge the person to report his or her behaviour to the police or Social Services, but may indeed either make this a condition of absolution or withhold absolution until this evidence of repentance has been demonstrated.

It is in everyone's interest to recognise the difference between what is heard in confession (however this might take place) 'for the quieting of conscience' and leading to absolution, and disclosures made in other kinds of pastoral conversation. For this reason it is helpful if confessions are normally heard at advertised times or otherwise by arrangement.

Anyone concerned about matters of confidentiality should consult the Bishop, Archdeacon or Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

Those who admit to offences against children should be assured that, within the constraints of the law and subject to the obligation to safeguard the welfare of children, they will continue to receive pastoral care from the Church.

### **Survivors of Abuse**

The church will be involved with survivors of abuse in many ways;

Abused children may come to the Church for help

Adult abuse survivors may turn to the Church for help

Some clergy were sexually abused as children, and may need the support of colleagues, congregations and colleagues

Children may be abused by Christian family members

Children may be abused by clergy or church workers

Each parish should consider the fact that they almost certainly have survivors within their community and should think about ways of responding in a sympathetic and practical way. This means creating a loving environment within which healing can happen, and which may require providing access to factual information and sources of professional help. The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser can help with access to counselling services if required.

### **Disclosures of Historical Abuse**

In the course of their work, many ministers and those offering pastoral support in the Church, will find themselves hearing disclosures from adults of abuse that happened to them when they were children.

There is no single correct procedure for dealing with a disclosure of historical abuse by an adult. The wishes of the person disclosing abuse will be very important. For some adults, just being able to talk to a trusted person about their experiences can be a powerful healing event. The pastoral care of the person who has been abused should be a priority. A referral to the police will not always be necessary unless the individual wishes to report the offence; however, they should be encouraged and supported to do so. Adults do need to be made aware, however, that if the alleged abuser is still working with or caring for children a referral to Social Services will be made by the person hearing the complaint or the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, who must in any case be informed. People who have committed sexual abuse against someone years ago could well be abusing children today.

### **Ex-Offenders against Children and Known Former Abusers**

The Church is a community where everyone is welcomed. When sex offenders are released from prison, they will sometimes seek support and fellowship from our churches. Whenever help and support is offered to an ex-offender, the protection of children in the church must come first: only then can we respond pastorally and inclusively to the ex-offender. Remember that abusers of children are usually people who get on well with children and to whom children relate.

Present research suggests that paedophilia/sexual offending can be a kind of addiction that is very hard to control and may be impossible to cure. This must be borne in mind when welcoming an ex-offender. Some sex offenders are deeply religious and will want to worship God in our parishes. Many will seek God's forgiveness for their crimes. Genuine repentance implies that the person concerned will accept that further help is required to prevent a re-occurrence of the offence and to deal with the human and social effects of the sin. As well as professional therapy, this may require continuing supervision and discipline within the church as part of the ministry to the offender. An ex-

offender will need to accept that no further contact or work with children can be permitted, and that a continuing pastoral role may be impossible. Sensitive care of the offender is needed in these circumstances.

Incumbents who discover that they have a person convicted of sexual abuse against a child within their church community must inform the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser and the appropriate Archdeacon in order to set up a three-way discussion. There is sometimes a tendency to keep these matters confidential to the parish, but it is essential for the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser to have an overview of such situations in the Diocese in order to offer appropriate advice and support.

The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will advise on any precautions that are needed to be taken, including:

- Any information you may need to ask for or pass on to the police or social services
- Who 'needs to know' this information both within your church and beyond
- What help there is available to your church in supporting the offender, in order to ensure that the best balance of protection and support is reached.

**Please do not take any action in advance of this three-way discussion as every situation is different and there may be other legal implications.**

### **Planning the Integration of Known Offenders into the Parish**

Should a known offender join a church, the leadership will need to ensure that a frank discussion takes place with the person concerned and efforts are made to sustain open communication. However, it will be necessary to establish clear boundaries both for the protection of children and young people and to lessen the possibility of the adult being wrongfully accused of abuse. The following points should be addressed in liaison with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser:

- The Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will maintain close links with the offender's probation officer (if any) and will prepare a contract which includes:
  - attending designated meetings only
  - sitting apart from children
  - staying away from areas of the building where children meet
  - attending a house group where there are no children
  - declining hospitality where there are children
  - never being alone with children
  - never working with children
  - not being part of an activity that includes children
  - attending only agreed social events.
- Enforce the contract – do not allow yourself to be manipulated. If there are problems with this, seek the advice of the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.
- Consider with the offender, following discussion with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, whether to tell the congregation. This will be an unusual occurrence.
- Ensure key leaders know the situation (if you do not tell the congregation). It must be made clear that no-one else should be informed of the facts without the offender's knowledge. The highest levels of confidentiality should be maintained.

- Provide close support and pastoral care.
- If the agreement is broken, be prepared to ban the offender from the church and inform the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. If the person lives in the parish and therefore by law cannot be banned, a high level of supervision must be put in place in conjunction with the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser.

## **Taking Young People Out**

No child under the age of 8 can be taken away on residential activities without being accompanied by his or her parent or guardian.

### ***Information for Parents***

It is important that parents should have full information before giving consent. This should include:

- Aims and objectives of the event or activity.
- Date of the event and its duration.
- Details of the venue, including arrangements for accommodation and supervision.
- Travel arrangements.
- Name of the group leader and contact numbers.
- Information about financial, medical and insurance arrangements.
- It may be helpful to hold a briefing session for parents before the event.

### ***Parental consent***

Each child or young person under the age of 18 (unless they are over 16 and living away from home or married) must have the written consent of his or her parent or guardian; this gives authority to the person named as responsible for the activity to take the young person away and to act as a careful parent would. It does not transfer 'parental responsibility'.

Parental consent forms should clearly set out the activities, risks and safety measures that will be adopted. See Form PPP/9. The Group Leader should take the consent forms with them on the trip.

### ***Insurance***

Make sure that insurance is adequate for the activities planned, especially any potentially hazardous activities.

### ***Accommodation***

Boys and girls must have separate sleeping and washing facilities which are private to them. Mixed groups must include adults of both sexes. Adults should have separate accommodation but be in close proximity to the young people.

Any other arrangements e.g. sleepovers, etc. should be carefully explained to parents beforehand and their consent obtained in writing for the arrangements.

### ***Supervision***

One person must be designated overall Group Leader. Ratios of helpers to young people should be strictly followed.

- For over-8s there must be at least one helper for the first 8 children and then one helper for every additional 12 children.
- Every group must be led by at least two adults.
- When physical activities are planned staffing levels should be increased accordingly. (*Swimming requires one adult in the water with every three children under the age of 8*).
- Adults should avoid being alone with children or young people.
- Each adult should have a list of all children.
- Children must return with the adult they came with if travelling in groups.
- Ground rules about behaviour and expectations should be made explicit.

- Parents should be informed beforehand if it is intended to allow groups of young people to go off unsupervised, e.g. for shopping.

### ***Recruitment of volunteers***

All volunteer helpers must sign or have signed the confidential declaration form regarding criminal convictions (see PPP/4) and have satisfactorily completed a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Application. They must also be aware of your Parish Child Protection Policy and agree to follow the code of behaviour. (See Form PPP/7).

All volunteer helpers should be clear about their responsibilities, e.g. in charge of the money, First Aider, etc. and they should also know who to go to if they have a concern about a child or have any worries.

### ***Premises***

Insurance, First Aid kit and fire precautions should be checked.

### ***Permission for the event***

A detailed description of the event should be presented to the PCC so that permission may be given and the event covered by the parish insurance. If there are to be any potentially hazardous activities undertaken this description must include an assessment of the risks involved.

### **Holiday Clubs and Missions**

These are situations when there are likely to be extra helpers for part or all of an activity.

- Plan the activity carefully. If in the course of one year several events for under-8-year-olds extend over more than 6 days there is a requirement for the activity to be registered with the Ofsted.
- Ensure that all the usual health and safety recommendations are in place. Make sure you have enough helpers for the activities, possibly having one or two helpers spare in case of emergencies.
- If there are many new helpers or one-off helpers divide them into teams ensuring that there is a known, properly appointed leader responsible for each team. All helpers must complete a confidential declaration form, and a CRB Disclosure Application. Occasional or one-off helpers may not require a CRB check, but you then need to ensure that they are not left alone with children. Good practice is what is required at all times. Many of the leaders and helpers may already have completed forms due to other positions held within the church.
- If using volunteers from other churches make sure they have complied with that church's child protection procedures.
- Ensure all leaders and helpers know about child protection and what that means for them during the event.
- Ask the children's parents to fill in a consent form to cover all the activities.

Sometimes an outside organisation is used for an event for children or young people, or a mission. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that the organisation is bona fide, has its own child protection procedures and is properly accountable. Contact the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser or the Diocesan Youth and Children's Work Adviser for information or advice.

## **Insurance**

The PCC should make sure that they have adequate insurance, including Public Liability Insurance to cover all their activities both on and off site. The Council should also make sure that the policy includes Legal Protection Insurance to cover legal costs resulting from allegations made against its employees or volunteers.

Under such policies, Public Liability (Third Party) insurance, where in force, will operate to protect the interests of the insured where they are found to be legally liable for accidental death of or bodily injury to a third party or accidental loss of or damage to third party property, subject to the policy terms, conditions and exceptions.

Parishes may be insured through a number of different companies whose policies will be subject to various terms, conditions and exceptions. However, the majority of PCCs, parish groups etc. will be insured with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group plc, which is committed to working in harmony with the provisions of the House of Bishops' Policy and its implementation in all dioceses, parishes and church organisations.

The policy will provide an indemnity to the insured if they are held legally liable as a result of their negligence for an incident leading to accidental bodily injury or illness as a result of abuse.

It is not the EIG's intention to provide indemnity to the perpetrator of an incident of abuse.

With the publication of this comprehensive policy by the Church, courts are likely to view its adoption or failure to do so as a major factor in establishing legal liability. In the absence of legal precedent, the recommendations for implementation should be viewed as a practical basis required to fulfil the obligation of 'reasonable care'.

- **Policies of insurance require the insured to take all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring. Failure to take such precautions may prejudice the insurance arrangements in force. A duty therefore exists upon policy-holders to adopt 'best practice' based upon current and ongoing guidelines.**
- **The EIG therefore considers that the implementation of the policy by all church organisations is essential for the maintenance of public liability insurance in the field of child abuse.**

The insurance company must be notified immediately of any incident or allegation which is likely to affect the insurance held by the parish. Failure to comply with this requirement may prejudice any cover provided by the policy.

Public Liability insurance indemnity should be kept under regular review. Guidance is available from the EIG.

## **Hire of Church Premises**

Many churches have halls that are regularly used by outside groups and organisations or hired for private functions either as a regular or one-off booking. Every PCC must decide which groups and which activities are their responsibility. Although other groups and functions that involve children on church premises are not the PCC's direct responsibility, there is a duty of care, and a responsibility for health and safety which means ensuring that outside groups follow an appropriate procedure. (See Form PPP/12)

### **All Bookings**

The following clause should be incorporated in any booking form for church premises for which the PCC is responsible, both for one-off and regular bookings:

***'You are required to ensure that children are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, loss or damage occurring'.***

### **One-off Bookings**

Give the responsible person booking the premises sight of your parish's child protection policy statement, and ask him/her to sign a statement which confirms that he/she has seen your policy and agrees to abide by it (this could be included in your lettings agreement). It is not reasonable to expect all helpers to obtain declaration forms for a one-off booking (e.g. children's birthday party). You should also advise the organiser of the numbers of helpers required for the numbers of children expected. (See page 29). If it should come to your notice that they have contravened your policy then you have the right to cancel the booking and/or refuse future bookings by that person.

### **Regular Bookings**

You need to ensure that your policy is being practiced. It is not your responsibility to obtain the declaration forms, keep a list of adult helpers, etc. This is the responsibility of the group or individual booking the premises. However, you do have to take reasonable steps to ensure that this is being done.

Some groups will be registered with OFSTED, in which case you should ask to see their registration certificate and record the date on which it was seen. Registered organisations and some others (Guides, Scouts, playgroups, etc.) will already have their own Child Protection procedures which they must follow.

Other groups must follow the recommendations in *Safe From Harm*, the Home Office Code of Practice safeguarding the welfare of children in voluntary organisations (See Page 35 for summary). They should also be given a copy of your child protection policy and procedures, and advised that they should adhere to these. Hiring premises could be made contingent on implementing the policy.

As landlord, the PCC is also responsible for providing and/or ensuring certain health and safety requirements are fulfilled. Further details on health and safety can be found on Page 29.