



St Helen's  
Bishopsgate

# Safeguarding policy part A: children (ages 0–11)

ST HELEN BISHOPSGATE AND ST PETER-UPON-CORNHILL

Revised: June 2021

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## Safeguarding policy aims

As a church, we desire to bring glory to God by knowing Jesus and making him known.

To that end, the aims of our safeguarding policy are:

- to uphold the honour of God's name.
- to keep the gospel from disrepute.

We do this by:

- protecting the children, young people, and vulnerable adults in our care.
- protecting the caregivers who serve in this ministry.

Safeguarding is an important part of our service in the gospel and one which we take seriously, aiming for a standard of excellence as we implement this policy.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) has adopted "Promoting a Safer Diocese: A Safeguarding Policy for the Diocese of London." It can be accessed in full from the website: [www.london.anglican.org/support/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/](http://www.london.anglican.org/support/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/)

This policy is designed to be read together with the Church of England's House of Bishops, Parish safeguarding handbook – 'promoting a safer church' which you can access on: [www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf](http://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ParishSafeGuardingHandBookAugust2019Web.pdf)

The St Helen's Church safeguarding policy applies the Diocesan safeguarding policy to the particulars of this parish. The full St Helen's policy can be found on the website: [www.st-helens.org.uk/about/safeguarding/](http://www.st-helens.org.uk/about/safeguarding/)

This policy is one part of the whole St Helen's safeguarding policy, which is formed of the following documents:

- General safeguarding policy
- Safeguarding policy for children (part A)
- Safeguarding policy for youth (part B)
- Safeguarding policy for vulnerable adults (part C)
- Safeguarding policy supplement A: small group leaders
- Safeguarding policy supplement B: one-to-one Bible studies
- Safeguarding policy supplement C: church staff team
- Safeguarding policy supplement D: video conferencing and social media with young people
- PCC policy statement A: responding to domestic abuse
- PCC policy statement B: recruitment of ex-offenders

For the purposes of this document and all associated documents listed above, the 'St Helen's safeguarding policy' refers to the sum of all the documents listed.

# Key safeguarding roles

## Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO)

The CSO is appointed by the PCC and given responsibility for safeguarding within the church family and all its various ministries.

Given the size of our church and the diversity of our ministries, it is necessary for the CSO to delegate their responsibilities to ministry area leaders. The CSO will assist and advise the ministry area leaders if a safeguarding issue or risk arises and needs to be addressed.

The CSO will also be included in decisions about whether to permit someone to be involved in ministry with children where their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate is blemished or information is provided about them on their DBS certificate.

## Ministry area leaders

The ministry area leaders are responsible for safeguarding within their ministry area. This includes:

- Ensuring all caregivers within their area are recruited in accordance with this safeguarding policy.
- Acting as safeguarding officer for any disclosures of abuse within their ministry area.

## Caregivers

A caregiver is anyone serving in any role within church which involves any oversight of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

All caregivers share a particular responsibility for:

- Loving those in their care as Christ loves them.
- Setting an example of proper Christian conduct.
- Praying for those in their care and pointing them to God's word.

Every applicant who wishes to serve in any ministry area involving children or young people must complete a screening process prior to serving. Full information on the screening process can be found in the full policy.

If an existing caregiver moves to serve in a different ministry area, they must read the relevant information for the new area before commencing their role.

All caregivers are encouraged to complete the online diocesan safeguarding training. Additional training is provided for Sunday school and youth helpers, and we are working towards implementing regular safeguarding training more widely.

Caregivers should note the following:

- All caregivers must read **Section A** of this policy.
- They must then read any additional information from **Section B** that is relevant to the area of ministry they are serving in.
- A list of key **contact details** can be found on the last two pages of this document.

# SECTION A

## Guidelines for recognising and responding to potential child abuse

Child abuse is serious. All caregivers need to know how to respond to signs of abuse or allegations of abuse. The following guidelines are in place to meet that need.

### 1. Definitions

#### **Who is a child?**

Any person under the age of 18 years.

#### **What is abuse?**

'Working together to safeguard children'<sup>1</sup> states that 'somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.' It recognises four areas of potential abuse for children: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. Abuse can be described under any one of these four categories or a combination of categories, and can be carried out by an adult or another child.

- 1. Physical abuse:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- 2. Emotional abuse:** including conveying to a child that they are inadequate, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, verbal abuse, isolation, seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying).
- 3. Sexual abuse:** involvement of children or adolescents in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, or to which they are unable to give informed consent, or which violates the social taboos of family roles.
- 4. Neglect:** including failure to meet the basic essential needs of a child, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, to provide adequate supervision and / or access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

### Bullying and cyberbullying

Bullying is behaviour that hurts someone else – such as name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It is usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there is no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

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<sup>1</sup> Published by HM Government, 2013, quoted in Policy for safeguarding in the Diocese of London, 2015.

## 2. Recognising signs of abuse

The following are not necessarily proof of abuse, but they are nonetheless warning signs which should be noticed.

Abuse type	Physical signs	Behavioural signs
Physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bruises, black eyes, broken bones</li> <li>▪ Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly</li> <li>▪ Untreated or inadequately treated injuries</li> <li>▪ Injuries to parts of the body where accidents are unlikely, such as thighs, back, abdomen</li> <li>▪ Bruising which looks like hand or finger marks</li> <li>▪ Cigarette burns, human bites, scalds and burns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Becoming sad, withdrawn or depressed</li> <li>▪ Having trouble sleeping</li> <li>▪ Behaving aggressively or being disruptive</li> <li>▪ Showing fear of certain adults</li> <li>▪ Showing lack of confidence and low self-esteem</li> <li>▪ Using drugs or alcohol</li> </ul>
Sexual abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in the genital or anal areas</li> <li>▪ Genital discharge or urinary tract infections</li> <li>▪ Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting</li> <li>▪ Sexually transmitted infections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A marked change in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unusually aggressive. Or they may start suffering from what may seem to be physical ailments, but which can't be explained medically</li> <li>▪ A young person may refuse to attend school or starts to have difficulty concentrating so their school work is affected</li> <li>▪ They may show unexpected fear or distrust of a particular adult or refuse to continue with their usual social activities</li> <li>▪ They may start using sexually explicit behaviour or language, particularly if the behaviour or language is not appropriate for their age</li> <li>▪ The child may describe receiving special attention from a particular adult, or refer to a new, "secret" friendship with an adult or young person</li> </ul>
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abandonment</li> <li>▪ Unattended medical needs</li> <li>▪ Consistent lack of supervision</li> <li>▪ Consistent hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene</li> <li>▪ Lice, distended stomach, emaciated</li> <li>▪ Inadequate nutrition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Regularly displays fatigue or restlessness, falls asleep during activities</li> <li>▪ Steals food, begs from classmates</li> <li>▪ Reports that there is no carer at home</li> <li>▪ Frequently absent or late</li> <li>▪ Self-destructive</li> <li>▪ School dropout (adolescents)</li> <li>▪ Extreme loneliness and need for affection</li> </ul>
Emotional abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delayed physical development</li> <li>▪ Substance abuse</li> <li>▪ Ulcers, severe allergies</li> <li>▪ Speech disorders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Habit disorder (sucking, rocking, biting), antisocial, disruptive</li> <li>▪ Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition of play)</li> <li>▪ Passive and aggressive – behavioural extremes</li> <li>▪ Delinquent behaviour (especially adolescents)</li> <li>▪ Developmentally delayed</li> </ul>

Many symptoms of distress in a child can point to abuse, but there are other explanations for them too. This has sometimes been the reason for falsely accusing parents of abuse.

It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicators that abuse has definitely taken place. Nonetheless, the possibility that abuse has occurred should still be seriously considered. These signs should make us stop and think but not cause us to jump to conclusions inappropriately.

### 3. Guidelines for when a child tells us they have been abused

The following general points may be of help:

- Above all else, listen, listen, and listen.
- Keep calm, and show acceptance of what the child says, however unlikely it seems.
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else - don't promise confidentiality.
- Be aware the child may have been threatened.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let the child know that you are always ready to listen.
- Avoid leading the child and ask only what is necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said - you might put something into their mind that was not there. If the case were to end up in court, the case could be thrown out if it is thought that the child had been led.
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and that you believe them.
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to social services or the police to prevent the child returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse).
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking to you, but always within 24 hours), writing down exactly what the child said and when they said it, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (eg a description of the activity). Record dates and times, including when you made the record. Keep all handwritten notes even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place. A copy of these notes must be passed onto the relevant ministry area leader.

#### **Helpful things you might say or convey:**

- 'I am glad you have told me'
- 'It's not your fault'
- 'I will help you'

### 4. Responding to concerns of abuse

If you suspect or witness abuse, or someone discloses information about a safeguarding concern or allegation:

- If a child is in immediate danger or emergency medical attention is necessary then this should be sought immediately, informing the doctors of any suspicions you may have.
- You must contact the ministry area leader or CSO immediately. Please refer to the end of this document for email addresses. If the allegation is against your ministry area leader, please contact the CSO.
- At all stages in the reporting process, you retain the right to report serious matters directly to social services or the police. Even if you do so, you must also contact the CSO as soon as possible (and within 24 hours).
- Under no circumstances should a church volunteer or employee investigate concerns of abuse themselves. Our responsibility is to refer concerns to statutory authorities who will do the investigating required in consultation with the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST).
- Apart from telling your ministry area leader/CSO, this information must be treated as confidential. Do not inform/confront any alleged perpetrator under any circumstances.
- You should also consider your own feelings and ask your ministry area leader for pastoral support if needed.

Even if you may feel the child's story is unlikely, this must not prevent appropriate action being taken. For example, a child may say that they have been abused by a younger person. In reality, the perpetrator could be a parent or a close relative but naming another person may be the only way in which this child can seek help.

## 5. Procedures for responding to abuse—outcomes

When a safeguarding concern is reported to the Diocesan safeguarding officer (DSO) by a ministry area leader/CSO:

If the DSO advises **further action**, the ministry area leader/CSO must act upon all directions given by the Diocese in the timescale given.

If the DSO advises **no further action** required, this is not the end of the process. The CSO or the relevant ministry area leader must arrange a further meeting in the parish to discuss whether alternative action should be taken or whether to accept that no further action is required.

This meeting should include the CSO and they can involve others as necessary. This includes churchwardens, the Operations Manager and the relevant ministry area leader.

### Guidelines for responding to a disclosure of historic abuse

In the course of their work, ministers and those offering pastoral support may hear disclosures from adults regarding abuse that happened to them when they were children or from children regarding abuse that happened to them when they were younger. Historical abuse must be treated as seriously as recent abuse and each individual must be treated with great pastoral sensitivity.

The church is required to take advice from the diocese and may need to report allegations or disclosures of criminal acts to the police.

When someone tells you they have been abused, or have committed abuse, whether recently or many years ago:

#### General points:

- Above all else, listen.
- Keep calm, and show understanding/acceptance of what is said, however unlikely it seems. Reassure the individual that they were right to tell you.
- Never push for information. Avoid leading questions and ask only what is necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said.
- Let the individual know what you are going to do next and that you will keep them informed. Let them know that you will need to tell someone else—do not promise confidentiality.

#### Action you must then take:

- You must contact your ministry area leader and tell them what you know (you do not need to disclose any names at this stage unless told otherwise). If the allegation is against your ministry area leader, contact the CSO.
- You retain the right to report serious matters directly to Social Services or the police. Even so, as soon as possible (and within 24 hours), you must also contact either your ministry area leader or the CSO.
- Apart from telling your ministry area leader/CSO, the information must be treated as confidential and not shared with co-leaders, Bible study leaders or other church members.
- Under no circumstances should you investigate concerns of abuse yourself.
- The contact details for your ministry area leader and the CSO can be found on the back page of this document.
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour, but always within 24 hours), writing down exactly what was said and when, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (eg a description of the activity/situation). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all handwritten notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept for an indefinite period in a secure place. A copy of these notes must be passed onto your ministry area leader.
- Consider your own feelings and ask your ministry area leader for pastoral support if needed and consider with your ministry area leader what pastoral support is needed for the individual involved.

# SECTION B

## Supplementary information for specific ministry areas

### 1. Sunday creche and Sunday school

#### Safeguarding children as they arrive and depart

##### **Transfer of responsibility for a child from the parents/guardians to the caregivers**

The St Helen's Church safeguarding policy is applied during the time period a child is in the care of the leaders of the advertised activity. This time period is clearly marked at the beginning and end by a formal system of handover between parents/guardians and the caregivers. Parents/guardians are responsible for their children once they have been collected from their groups or returned to them by caregivers.

##### **Registers**

All children and caregivers present in each group must be registered. Completed registers will be filed and kept secure for an indefinite period. If any allegation of abuse is made in years to come then the church can immediately find who was present on any given date.

A child registration form must be filed for each child in creche/Sunday school. These forms should be filled out by a parent/guardian and available in registration folders for the leaders to consult. Leaders should familiarise themselves with any health issues of the children in their specific group.

#### Safeguarding children whilst they are in our care

##### **Caregiver ratios**

Caregivers should adhere to the 'two-caregiver rule': two caregivers must always be present in each room.

It is not necessary for the two caregivers to be of opposite genders. In an emergency setting the emergency takes priority over the ratios. However, children should not be left unattended in a room. At other times with some planning this scenario need not occur.

In addition to always having two caregivers present, we have adopted the Church of England's **minimum** requirements which are:

Age of children	Number of adults	Number of children
0–2 years old	1	3
2–3	1	4
4–8	1	6
9–12	1	8
13–18	1	10

Each group should have at least two workers, even for smaller groups, and if possible one male and one female. Staff ratios for all groups should always be based on a risk assessment. For example, staffing numbers would need to be increased for outdoor activities and more so if that activity is considered higher risk, potentially dangerous or when children with disabilities or special needs are involved. Where more than one group meet in the same venue, and the groups can be seen by others, the total number of adults to children within the room should be within the ratio suggested but the individual group may have fewer adults.

If there are not enough caregivers turning up on the day, the caregivers must either:

- recruit another DBS-screened individual to help or;
- meet in the same venue as other screened caregivers, in full view of those caregivers.



For all groups and activities:

- Undertake a health and safety risk assessment.
- A registration form must be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities. This should include up-to-date information on parents' contact numbers, medical information (eg allergies) and any special needs.
- An attendance register must be kept and be available at all group meetings.
- A first aid kit must be available on any premises that are used by children.
- An accident and incident logbook must be available, and all accidents recorded. The logbook should be stored in a secure place. Any significant incidents must be recorded (eg a fight between children). There should be access to a telephone, if possible.
- In premises where children's groups meet, the Childline and Family Lives telephone numbers should be displayed.
- Parents must sign a consent form before children are transported in a private car and before any photography or images are taken.

In addition, when taking children offsite:

- The church leadership must be informed and agree to the activity.
- Details of the activity and any itinerary must be given in advance to parent/s and consent forms received in advance of the activity taking place.
- Details of the activity and a list of contacts must be left with someone in the church.
- Details of the activity and arrangements must be given to the incumbent and/or CSO.
- A risk assessment must be undertaken, and confirmation obtained that the activity is covered by PCC insurance.
- A leader must be designated to take responsibility for first aid.

### **Discipline**

All caregivers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere in which children can learn, play and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behaviour and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behaviour.

Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behaviour include correcting the child verbally, withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating them from the group for a brief time (particularly if their behaviour is endangering or upsetting other children).

Caregivers should never use any form of physical punishment. If behaviour is uncontrollable or the child does not respond to the discipline measures above, the parents/guardians will be contacted. Caregivers should never yell at a young person except in circumstances where the young person is in danger or is at risk of causing danger to others.

### **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'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 helper.
- Avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual and/or abusive/offensive.
- Allow the child to determine the degree of physical contact with others except in exceptional circumstances (eg when they need medical attention).

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.

**Can I have a child sit on my lap when we're all sitting on the floor?**

You should discourage children you support from sitting on your lap. You can offer to sit side by side.

**Can I play rough and tumble games with children?**

Yes you may—as long as you are in public and there is no way your actions could be misconstrued by a third party. Bear in mind that the chummier you are with children in this way, the less likely you are to have any authority in their eyes. Remember too that they are not as strong as you.

**Can I hold hands with a child?**

Yes you may if there is a clear reason to do so—as long as you are in public and there is no way your actions could be misconstrued by a third party. Reason could include walking a child across a road, or to the bathroom, playing a game requiring hands held. For younger children this might happen frequently. For older children there will be very few occasions when this is ever appropriate.

**Can I ever hug a child?**

Yes you may if a child is clearly distressed—as long as you are in public and there is no way your actions could be misconstrued by a third party. There may be other occasions when this might be appropriate, like congratulating them. Bear in mind your normal character—if you rarely hug anyone you should probably not ever hug a child in your care. If hugging is one way you interact with all kinds of people you might need to rein yourself in a bit but not necessarily completely. Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the caregiver's, and should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the caregiver. Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child

**Can I ever tickle a child?**

It is difficult to see why a child would need to be tickled by a caregiver. It is best avoided when acting as a caregiver. This is not to say that a child should not be tickled but there is a time and a place.

**Can I ever physically restrain a child?**

Yes. If a child is being a danger to themselves or to another person restraint, used in proportion to the situation, may be necessary. Outside these scenarios physical restraint should be required rarely.

**Can I take a picture of a child in my care?**

No. Caregivers must never take any pictures of children they are caring for unless they have received explicit permission from the child's parents/guardians. For the avoidance of doubt, caregivers must also never post any pictures of the children in their care on social media platforms including but not limited to Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and Snapchat.

**Toileting**

A caregiver may change the nappy for any baby if required.

If a preschool or school-aged child requires assistance in going to the toilet, it is best for assistance to be given by a caregiver of the same gender where possible. The caregiver should wait outside the closed cubicle door unless the child requires assistance. The cubical door must not be closed with the caregiver and child inside. The child and caregiver must wash their hands with soap before returning to the class group. School-aged children should be able to take themselves to the toilet without assistance.

**Food**

The only foods caregivers can give to children are:

- Biscuits, plain crackers and popcorn provided by the church
- Food provided by a parent/guardian for a specific child

No other food is given. Food for a specific child must not be shared with any other child. Some children in our care have severe allergies to certain foods and giving them the wrong food could be serious.

**Risk management/illness/accidents**

Caregivers should consider the health and safety of all children and caregivers when organising activities or planning games.

Children with infectious illnesses must be kept at home and not join the children's groups. If a young person appears ill while in the church's care, caregivers will use their discretion to determine whether the young person should be isolated from other

young people by a caregiver (who will remain with them), and whether parents/guardians should be contacted to collect their child.

A basic first aid kit must be readily available at all times. All caregivers should be familiar with its location. In the event of a life-threatening illness or injury, emergency medical services will be called first and the parents will be located and informed immediately. Caregivers will report all injuries, whether major or minor to Philip Beek by emailing [p.beek@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:p.beek@st-helens.org.uk).

Caregivers should be familiar with evacuation procedures, including where the fire exits are located and where the meeting point is, should the fire alarm sound.

## Safeguarding children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND)

Safeguards for young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are essentially the same as for all young people. Young people with SEND have exactly the same human rights as any other children to be safe from abuse and neglect and to be protected from harm.

However, research suggests that children with SEND may be generally more vulnerable to significant harm through physical, sexual, emotional abuse and / or neglect than other children. Children with SEND can be abused and neglected in ways that other children cannot, and the early indicators suggestive of abuse and neglect can be more complicated that. They face an increased risk of abuse and neglect, including bullying, for a variety of reasons including:

- Greater dependency on parents/ carers for practical assistance in their day to day lives, such as feeding or personal care;
- Impaired capacity to recognise, resist or avoid abuse, or feeling too scared to report abuse/ bullying;
- Speech, language and communication needs/ barriers which can make it more difficult to tell other adults what is happening and get them to understand;
- Increased likelihood of social isolation, with fewer outside contacts than non-disabled children, resulting in less access to someone they trust to disclose abuse to;
- An embedded cultural/ societal assumption that abuse and neglect does not happen to disabled children, leading to a lack of vigilance, spotting of the signs of abuse and reporting of concerns;
- Empathy on the part of professionals/ practitioners with parents/ carers, who are felt to be under considerable stress, leading to certain behaviour/ treatment being accepted by other adults rather than concerns being raised;
- Behavioural/ physical indicators, such as (self-)injury or withdrawal, can be interpreted as part of the child's disability or condition rather than as the result of abuse/ neglect (or vice versa), and therefore abuse/ neglect can be missed and go unreported;
- Being perceived as physically or behaviourally different from others, and therefore more likely to be the victim of bullying or intimidation.

Where the participants in a group/ activity at St Helens includes a child with SEND, caregivers must be especially vigilant to the potential increased risk of abuse and neglect, and the additional action that will be needed to ensure this policy and procedure is enacted for that child as it would be for any other child.

Caregivers must be additionally aware of the following possible indicators of abuse or neglect for a child with SEND:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on a non-disabled child, such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child;
- Malnourishment, potentially due to not getting enough help with feeding;
- Force feeding;
- Unjustified/ excessive use of restraint;
- Rough handling/ extreme approached to behaviour modification (e.g. withholding of liquid, food, medication, clothing);
- Poor grasp of a child's means of communication;
- Ill-fitting equipment, e.g. calipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting;
- Misappropriation of a child's finances;
- Invasive procedures that are unnecessary or carried out against the child's will;
- Misuse of medication, or deliberate failure to follow medication or therapeutic programmes;
- Age or culturally inappropriate care and support

Even subtle changes in behaviour may be a child communicating that something is wrong and/ or that they are being abused. It is vital caregivers for children with SEND are aware of changing patterns of behaviour and potential causes.

Where there are concerns about the welfare of a child with SEND, caregivers should act upon them in accordance with this policy as they would for any other child. Where a child with SEND has communication needs, special attention should be paid to gaining a clear understanding of the child's perception of events, wishes and feelings. This may require the involvement of children's social care or speech and language clinicians for non-verbal children.

## Guidance on communicating electronically with children

### What you should do:

- Only use an approved church / ministry account to communicate with children. The named persons should be able to access this and review conversations where applicable, and the account should be visible to children and their parents. Children must be made aware that any communication will be viewed by all users. Save any messages and threads through social networking sites, so that you can provide evidence to the named persons of your exchange when required.
- Have your eyes open and be vigilant.
- Maintain the upmost integrity – honesty, transparency, consistency and accountability are key. Treat online communication with children as you would communication that is face to face. Always maintain the same level of confidentiality.
- Report any safeguarding concerns that arise on social media to the CSO.
- Always assume that everything you write is permanent and may be viewed by anyone at any time; and that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues or the church. Always think before you post.
- Draw clear boundaries around your social media usage associated with your private life and your use of different social media for public ministry. Keep church accounts and profiles separate from your personal social media accounts e.g. only use a Facebook page, Twitter or blogs for public ministry, while keeping a separate Facebook profile for private life.
- Always ask parents/carers for written consent to:
  - Use and store photographs of children from activities or events in official church publications, or on the church's social media, website and displays.
  - Use telephone, text message, email and other messaging services to communicate with young people.
  - Allow young people to connect to the church's social media pages.
- Avoid one-to-one communication with a child.
- Use clear and unambiguous language in all communications and avoid abbreviations that could be misinterpreted.
- Save and download to hard copy any inappropriate material received through social networking sites or other electronic means and show immediately to the named persons.
- Use passwords and log off promptly after use to ensure that nobody else can use social media pretending to be you.

### What you should not do:

- Use a personal Facebook or any other social media account in your work with children.
- Add children as friends on your personal accounts.
- Facebook stalk (i.e. dig through people's Facebook pages to find out about them).
- Say anything on social media that you would not be happy saying in a public meeting, to someone's face, writing in a local newspaper or on headed notepaper.
- Comment on photos or posts, or share content, unless appropriate to your church role.
- Use visual media (e.g. Skype, Facetime, Zoom) for one-to-one conversations with children – use only in group settings.

In particular, do not allow content to contain or share links to other sites that contain:

- Libellous, defamatory, bullying or harassing statements.
- Breaches of copyright and data protection.
- Material of an illegal nature.
- Offensive sexual or abusive references.
- Inappropriate language.

- Anything which may be harmful to a child or which may bring the church into disrepute or compromise its reputation.

Apart from in exceptional circumstances, no communication should occur between 10pm and 8am.

## Specific guidelines for different services

### 1. Creche in St Helen's

Creches are located in the St Helen's ministry rooms (or in St Peter's vestry and St Michael's vestry for the 2.30pm service). Parents/guardians should take their creche-aged children there at the point indicated in the service. Upon arrival each child is given a numbered security tag. The person who brought them is given a tab with a number on it matching the number on the child's security tag.

The children are registered at this point and this marks the official start of the caregiver's responsibilities.

At the end of the service, a parent/guardian must pick up their child from creche. If the parent/guardian is unknown to the caregiver, they must produce the security tab which matches their child's tag and the caregiver must check that they match. If they cannot produce a matching tag and are unknown to the caregiver co-ordinating the handover, another known adult must vouch for them being the parent/guardian of the child. This marks the official end to the caregivers' responsibility for the child.

The tagging process ensures that no child can be taken by a stranger.

### 2. Sunday school in St Andrew Undershaft

For the 10.30am service, groups for children in preschool and year 1 are located in St Andrew's. For the 4pm, all groups for children in preschool to year 6 are located in St Andrew's.

Registration takes place in the South Transept of St Helen's before the service begins. Upon registering, preschool children are given a numbered security wristband. The person who brought them is given a tab with a number on it matching the number on the child's security tag. Though now registered, the children remain in the care of their parents/guardians for the opening of the church service.

At the point indicated in the service, children gather with their caregivers in the South Transept. The caregiver's responsibilities officially start once the registered children are gathered in the South Transept.

Children are walked to St Andrew's by their caregivers in three clear stages. The caregivers will set an example in following basic road safety and instruct the children to do the same.

Stage 1: Caregivers take a final head count and lead registered children round the edge of the St Helen's building to the corner of the road where

St Mary Axe meets Undershaft.

Stage 2: When the road is clear, caregivers lead children across the road.

Stage 3: Caregivers lead children along the pavement to St Andrew's. All this is done at a walking pace.

For the 10.30am service: At the end of Sunday school, the children are brought back to the South Transept via the same route. A parent/guardian must collect their child from the South Transept.

For the 4pm: A parent/guardian must collect their child from St Andrew's.

At both services, if the parent/guardian of a preschool child is unknown to the helper, they must produce the security tab which matches their child's tag and the caregiver must check that they match. If they cannot produce a matching tag and are unknown to the caregiver co-ordinating the handover, another known adult must vouch for them being the parent/guardian of the child.

This marks the official end to the caregivers' responsibility for the child.

### 3. Sunday school in St Peter's Cornhill

At the 10.30am service, groups for children in years 2–6 are located in St Peter's. Registration takes place in the South Transept of St Helen's before the service begins. At the point indicated in the service, children gather with their caregivers in the South Transept. The caregiver's responsibilities officially start once the children are gathered in the South Transept.

The caregivers walk the children to and from St Peter's via Leadenhall Street. This route has minimal road traffic on a Sunday. At the junction with Cornhill, caregivers keep the children waiting together until the pedestrian crossings go green. Children will only begin walking across the road when there is a green man and an adult gives permission to cross.

At the end of Sunday school the children are brought back to the South Transept via the same route. A parent/guardian must collect their child from the South Transept. This marks the official end to the caregivers' responsibility for the child.

### 4. Food at 5s

Each week food is provided for the 4pm congregation. For the duration of the Food at 5s children are in the care of their parents/guardians. The children may mingle freely with any adults in the building at the discretion of their parents/guardians.

## 2. Weekends away and City Summer School

### Weekends away

If any weekend away advertises childcare, or if provision is made for volunteers to help in addition to parents or designated guardians, the childcare for that weekend must be treated in the same way as other weekends that provide childcare. It comes under our Safeguarding Policy and must be run accordingly, following the same procedures as Sunday creche and Sunday school as detailed in this policy. All caregivers must be screened as outlined in the main policy, and the same regulations concerning ratios, registration, discipline, toileting, food and accidents must be followed as in Sunday creche/Sunday school, with the following alterations/additions:

#### Registering

Children are registered for the weekend when initially signed up so no further registration is needed when their specific groups meet. However, parents must drop off and collect their children at the beginning and end of the advertised children's programme slots. This marks the official start and end of caregiver responsibilities for these children.

#### Night patrol

Parents/guardians are responsible for putting their children to bed. Once children are in bed, their parents/guardians may leave them at their own discretion.

Important: during night patrol parents/guardians are still responsible for their children.

Between the advertised times, pairs of volunteers will patrol the corridors of sleeping areas listening for any children who are disturbed. If volunteers hear of a child who is disturbed they will contact a parent/guardian immediately to ask them to return to their child.

Volunteer pairs **must always** stick together. Volunteers **must not at any time** enter a child's bedroom. Volunteers are merely providing a listening service to be the first point of contact if a child needs their parent/guardian. Volunteers do not need to be DBS screened as volunteers should not come into direct contact with children.

All night patrol volunteers and parents must be given a copy of this guidance before night patrol can begin.

### City Summer School

The creche and children's groups at City Summer School come under our safeguarding policy and must be run accordingly, following the same procedures as Sunday creche and Sunday school as detailed above. All caregivers must be screened as outlined in the policy above, and the same regulations concerning ratios, registration, discipline, toileting, food and accidents must be followed as in Sunday creche/Sunday school, with the following alterations/additions:

- Caregivers are not responsible for any children (ie under 18s) outside the advertised times of the children's or youth programmes. In all such times children are the responsibility of their parents or a designated guardian.

- Any excursion offsite or any activity onsite organised outside the advertised times for the children or youth programmes are not part of the safeguarding arrangements. Throughout such activities children and young people remain in the care of their parents or designated guardians. Caregivers are free to join in with these excursions or activities but do not do so as caregivers.
- Night patrol on City Summer School follows the same principles as on St Helen's weekends away as detailed above.

### 3. Little Pickles

All children attending Little Pickles will attend with a parent or carer. At no time will they be out of the direct care of their parent/carer.

#### **Registering**

All children and their parent/carers will be registered when they arrive and parent/carer will sign out when they leave. All helpers present will be registered on a separate register. For the duration of the morning these registers will form the fire register, and thereafter the completed registers will be filed and kept secure for an indefinite period.

#### **Restricting access to outsiders**

At all times someone will be on the door to welcome people as they arrive. It is also the responsibility of the welcomer to ensure that no one who is not associated with Little Pickles or is not a member of St Helen's staff enters the building for the duration of Little Pickles.

#### **Discipline**

Children will be at all times under the care of their parent/carer and signs will be around the building to remind carers of this. If appropriate, helpers can remind parent/carers of their responsibility. It is therefore inappropriate for carers to discipline a child in any way. However, helpers should be vigilant about potential safety issues, and where a child is engaging in activity that is likely to be a danger either to themselves or others, or is likely to be upsetting to other children, it is the responsibility of the helpers to take action. This may be either to draw the parent/carer's attention to the child's actions, or in extreme circumstances to intervene. The safety of the children should take precedence over the fear of being seen to interfere by the parent/carer.

#### **Appropriate contact**

Children are the responsibility of their parent/carer, but as the parent/carer gets to know and trust the helpers they may ask a helper to care for their child on a temporary basis (eg if they are attending to the needs of another child). This is fine but should be the exception rather than the rule. Helpers need to be aware in such situations that they must be above reproach in all that they do, and wisdom is often required to know what that looks like in different situations. Two good questions to ask in any situation are 'What is the worst that could happen?' and 'What is the worst way that this could be perceived?' All helpers must be willing to receive advice from a fellow helper if their behaviour is beginning to stray from what is wise.

#### **Food and drink**

Coffee will be provided for the parents and it is their responsibility to behave sensibly with their coffee. However, because of the risks to children with hot coffee, it is strongly recommended that helpers do not drink coffee when they are around the children. Snacks will be provided for the children, but nothing other than the snacks provided should be offered and these should only be offered with the permission of the parent/carer.

#### **Toileting**

Toileting is the responsibility of the parent/carer.

#### **Risk management/illness/accidents**

It is the responsibility of the Little Pickles team to consider the health and safety of all children when planning zoned activities.

Toys should be scrutinised regularly to ensure they are not broken and could not constitute a danger to children.

Parent/carers will be asked not to bring children to Little Pickles if they have an infectious disease, or appear unwell.

A basic first aid kit should be readily available at all times. All helpers should be familiar with its location, contents and use. One helper will be designated to take responsibility for first aid each week.

All accidents and injuries, however minor, should be recorded in the Accident Report book kept in the first aid kit. In addition a specific Little Pickles incident book will be kept. This will record not only accidents and injuries, but any other incident where a child has caused potential danger to a child. This is for the purpose of monitoring such incidents.

All helpers should be aware of where the fire exits are and what the meeting point is. If the fire alarm sounds helpers should usher parent/carers and their children to the nearest exit and take them to the meeting point. The fire officer should ensure that they bring the register with them so that they can check that the building has been evacuated.

## **4. Central and local Women on Wednesday (WoW)**

### **Central WoW**

Creches are provided for children aged 3 and under in St Andrew's. This comes under our safeguarding policy and must be run accordingly, following the same procedures as Sunday creche and Sunday school as detailed above. All caregivers must be screened as outlined in the policy above, and the same regulations concerning ratios, registration, discipline, toileting, food and accidents must be followed as in Sunday creche/Sunday school.

### **Local WoW**

Local WoW groups meet during the week in homes throughout London. Women are free to bring their own children to a local group, but they remain responsible for their own children throughout the time the group meets.

Women in a local group are free to join together amongst themselves and co-ordinate childcare for their own children while the group meets. This may include using an au pair or nanny, or arranging for additional volunteers to cover childcare.

This is a private arrangement happening in a home and is akin to babysitting. The women in the group must take responsibility for assessing the suitability of any volunteer. Local WoW is not covered by the St Helen's safeguarding policy, and as such it is not guaranteed that a volunteer from the congregation is DBS-checked (although they may be).

## **5. Other events/activities**

From time to time the Sunday congregations will organise extra events which include children.

### **Occasional seminars/training days**

(For example Marriage day, Parenting day, Central Focus training).

If childcare is required for children, it must be requested in advance. All caregivers must be screened in accordance with the church safeguarding policy. Caregiver ratios must be maintained.

A parent/guardian must drop off and collect their children at the prearranged venue. This marks the official start and end of caregiver responsibilities for these children.

### **Open House weekend**

Informal activities may be arranged for children visiting the church buildings. Any caregiver involved must be screened in accordance with the Church safeguarding policy.

Any child involved in an activity must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. For the duration of the activity children remain in the care of their parents/guardians.

### **6pm service**

No provision is made for children during the 6pm service. Children are welcome in our midst but remain in the care of their parents/guardians. The children may mingle freely with any adults in the building at the discretion of their parents/guardians.

### **Midweek small groups**

Creche-aged children are welcome to the small group evenings at the discretion of the small group evening leader, but remain in the care of their parents/guardians throughout.



**Babysitting**

Babysitting is an area in which we are unable to provide formal provision. Families can make informal arrangements within the church family and must take full responsibility for assessing the suitability of the volunteer.

# Key contacts

## Church safeguarding sub-committee

Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)  
Beccy Scott  
[safeguarding.officer@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding.officer@st-helens.org.uk)

Deputy Parish Safeguarding Officer  
Evidence Checker & Safeguarding Administrator  
Abraham Sin  
[safeguarding@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@st-helens.org.uk)

Youth Worker & St Peter-upon-Cornhill  
Church Safeguarding Officer  
Will Waugh  
[w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk)

Operations Manager  
Jason Barrington  
[j.barrington@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:j.barrington@st-helens.org.uk)

Children's Champion  
Anna Lamb  
[childrens.champion@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:childrens.champion@st-helens.org.uk)

Alison Glover  
[alison Glover205@btinternet.com](mailto:alison Glover205@btinternet.com)

Children's Worker  
Matt Bridges  
[m.bridges@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:m.bridges@st-helens.org.uk)

Tracey Huizinga  
[tracey.huizinga@gmail.com](mailto:tracey.huizinga@gmail.com)

## Ministry area leaders

### **Sunday morning meeting**

(including creche, Sunday school, Central Focus, Central Focus weekend, Long Weekend Away, 10.30 weekend, occasional seminars, Christianity Explored)

Phil Hudson  
[p.hudson@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:p.hudson@st-helens.org.uk)

### **Sunday Mandarin meeting**

(including creche, Sunday school, IGG, IGG weekends)

Henry Eatock-Taylor  
[h.eatock-taylor@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:h.eatock-taylor@st-helens.org.uk)

### **Sunday afternoon meeting**

(including creche, Sunday school, Food at 5s, 4pm weekends)

Aneirin Glyn  
[a.glyn@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:a.glyn@st-helens.org.uk)

### **Sunday evening meeting**

(including RML, RML weekends, RML training weekends, Leaders' Weekend, Christianity Explored)

Luke Cornelius  
[l.cornelius@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:l.cornelius@st-helens.org.uk)

### **Little Pickles and Women on Wednesday**

Rachel Anderson  
[rachel.anderson@btinternet.com](mailto:rachel.anderson@btinternet.com)

### **City ministry**

(including Partnership, City Summer School, City weekend, City Offsite)

Wes Illingsworth  
[w.illingsworth@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:w.illingsworth@st-helens.org.uk)

### **Student ministry**

Tim Sheppard  
[t.sheppard@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:t.sheppard@st-helens.org.uk)

### **Youth**

Will Waugh  
[w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:w.waugh@st-helens.org.uk)

### **East End outreach**

(including Shantir Boi and Asha)

Rob Scott  
[r.scott@st-helens.org.uk](mailto:r.scott@st-helens.org.uk)

## **DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING ADVISER (DSA)**

Andy Munro

Email: [andrew.munro@london.anglican.org](mailto:andrew.munro@london.anglican.org)

Tel: 020 3837 5092

## **NATIONAL CONTACTS**

### **Thirtyone:eight**

Helpline: 0303 003 11 11

<https://thirtyoneeight.org/>

### **City of London Corporation Children and Families Team**

020 7332 3621 (Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

020 8356 2710 (weekdays after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays)

### **City of London Social Care Services**

020 7332 1224 (Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)

020 8356 2300 (weekdays after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays)

### **NSPCC**

Freepost 1111, London N1 0BR

Tel. 0800 1111 (for children) 0808 800 5000 (for adults)

(full number is just these 8 digits)

**Family Lives (previously Parentline)** 0808 800 222

**Domestic Violence Helpline (for females)** 0808 2000 247

**Mankind (for males)** 01823 334244

## **FURTHER RESOURCES**

- 'Protecting all God's children: The Child Protection Policy of the Church of England', 2010
- 'Policy for Safeguarding in the Diocese of London', 2015
- 'The Church of England, House of Bishops, Parish safeguarding handbook' – promoting a safer church, October 2018
- 'The Care Act 2014, and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2016' (Chapter 14)
- London Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures 2015
- [www.london.anglican.org/support/safeguarding](http://www.london.anglican.org/support/safeguarding)
- Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance (2009) [www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-disabled-children-practice-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-disabled-children-practice-guidance)
- Safeguarding children with special needs: [learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/safeguarding-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send](http://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/safeguarding-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send)