

# Victoria Baptist Church



## Safeguarding Policy

(Children and Young People)

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Original	<b>Church Network (electronic)</b>
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#### USEFUL CONTACTS

- Baptist Union [www.baptist.org.uk/](http://www.baptist.org.uk/)
- The Southeast Baptist Union – Jo Hayes email: [safeguarding@seba-baptist.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@seba-baptist.org.uk)
- The NSPCC website - <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- NSPCC 0808 800 5000

In an emergency, or for advice if unsure, contact below:

In an emergency call 999

Otherwise contact the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) team: Phone: 01323 464222

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

# Index

## Child Protection Policy

	Safeguarding Policy Statement
Part 1	Responding to Concern
Part 2	Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of workers*
Part 3	Safe Behaviour: A code of behaviour for workers*
Part 4	Safe Practice and Safe Premises
Part 5	Outings and Overnight Events
Part 6	A Safe Community

## Appendices

Appendix 1	Child and Young Person Consent Form
Appendix 2	Accident Form
Appendix 3	Incident Form
Appendix 4	Body Chart
Appendix 5	Flow Diagram

\* in this document, the term **children** refers to youngsters up to the age of 18

\*\* in this document, the term **workers** applies to all those who work with children , whether paid workers or volunteers.

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT FOR VICTORIA BAPTIST CHURCH**

**Victoria Baptist Church exists to see Jesus Christ honoured in Eastbourne and beyond.**

In fulfilling this purpose, we:

- Welcome children, young people and adults at risk into the life of our church community
- Run activities for children, young people and adults at risk
- Make our premises available to organisations working with children, young people and adults at risk.

### **Our Safeguarding Responsibilities**

Victoria Baptist Church recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children, young people under the age of 18, and adults at risk, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability.

As members of this church we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all associated with the church and will pray for them regularly. In pursuit of this, we commit ourselves to this policy and to the development of sound procedures to ensure we implement our policy well.

### **Prevention and Reporting of Abuse**

It is the duty of each church member to help prevent the abuse of children and adults at risk, and to respond to concerns about their well-being. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

### **Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of Workers**

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children, young people and adults at risk, whether paid or voluntary. All workers will be provided with appropriate training, support and supervision to promote the safekeeping of children, young people and adults at risk.

### **Respecting Children, Young People and Adults at Risk**

The church will adopt a code of behaviour for all who are appointed to work with children, young people and adults so that they are shown the respect that is due to them.

### **Safe Working Practices**

The church is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children, young people and adults at risk and will adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.

### **A Safe Community**

The church is committed to the prevention of bullying. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any individuals who may pose a risk to children, young people and adults at risk in the community of the church is managed appropriately.

**The Church Safeguarding Team will work together in ensuring the Safeguarding Policy is implemented well and address issues if and when they arise. However, each person has a responsibility to report allegations of abuse as soon as they are raised.**

## **Part 1 - Responding to Concern**

### **1 Understanding, recognising and responding to abuse**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

### **2 How to respond when someone wants to talk about harm or abuse**

- Listen - and keep listening
- Don't question
- Avoid passing judgement on what you are told
- Never promise confidentiality
- Explain what you intend to do and don't delay in taking action
- Contact one of the Safeguarding team (page 2) – or, in their absence, take action yourself
- Write down what is said – details below

### **3 What to do when a child talks about harm or abuse**

- Make a careful written record on a Safeguarding Incident Form (Appendix 3)
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking) including a description of any injury, its size and a drawing of its location and shape on the Body Chart. (Appendix 4)
- Write down exactly what the child has said and when s/he said it, what was said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (eg. a description of the activity).
- Write down dates and times of these events and when the record was made.
- Write down any action taken and keep all hand-written notes even if subsequently typed up.

These notes will be passed on to the Designated Person for Safeguarding to assist them should the matter need to be referred to the police or Social Care team. All documents will be kept securely at the VBC Church office.

### **4 Responding to concerns for a child or an allegation of abuse**

Where possible, concerns will be passed to one of the Designated Safeguarding team (page 2) but difficulty in contacting these individual(s) should not delay action being taken.

If there is a concern that a child may have been harmed or abused, the Designated Person for Safeguarding will act as follows.

- i) Where a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect:
  - Contact Children's Social Care Team on 01323 464222 if there are concerns that a child may have been deliberately hurt, is at risk of 'significant harm', or is afraid to return home. Do not tell the parents, or other people involved.
  - If a child needs urgent medical attention, an ambulance will be called or they will be taken to hospital, informing the parents/carers afterwards of the action that was taken.
  - The hospital staff will be informed of any child protection concerns.
- ii) Where there are allegations or concerns of sexual abuse:
  - Contact Children's Social Care Team. DO NOT try to investigate the matter.

- In the case of very severe sexual assault (such as rape), which may have occurred over the last few days, and where it has not been possible to get an immediate response from Children's Social Care Team, contact the police.
- Do not touch or tamper with any evidence, such as stained clothing.
- DO NOT tell other people including the parents / carers; they could be involved.
- Keep information on a need-to-know basis so that any alleged perpetrator is not 'tipped off'.

Should the Designated Person for Safeguarding not feel it necessary to refer the matter to Children's Social Care Team but you (or anyone else) have serious concerns for the child's safety, then you **should** contact the Social Care team directly. The safety of the child over-rides all other considerations and it is important to remember that sexual abuse of children is a serious crime.

If the allegation is against a Church leader who has responsibility for implementing the Policy, you will refer it directly to the Children's Social Care Team or seek appropriate professional advice, e.g. from the Regional Minister.

## **5 Third Party Allegations and Referrals**

Where a third party alleges abuse towards a child, your role is to gather as much information as possible from this person. The third party will be advised that the information they have provided will be shared with the Designated Person for Safeguarding and may result in a referral to the Children's Social Care Team Department with their details. This is so that Children's Social Care Team can contact them if necessary.

## **6 Allegations against Workers**

- The advice of the Children's Social Care Team and the police will be sought before taking any action such as suspension of employment.
- During an enquiry, the worker will be supervised as closely as possible without raising suspicion during the period between the matter coming to our attention, the authorities being informed, and the appropriate action being taken.
- The suspension of a worker following an allegation is by definition a neutral act but may be necessary because the priority is to protect children from possible further abuse or from being influenced in any way by the alleged perpetrator.
- It may be necessary, for the sake of the child (or to satisfy the needs of an investigation) for the alleged perpetrator to worship somewhere else and, in such cases, the new church leaders will be informed of the reasons.

## **7 Pastoral Care**

When an allegation/suspicion arises in the Church, a period of investigation will follow, which will be stressful for all involved.

- Support will be offered to the suspected perpetrator and the victim without compromising the children or their families.
- This is one reason for limiting information in relation to allegations of abuse on a need-to-know

- basis. In this way leaders not privy to the detail are free to offer support to other parties, including the suspected perpetrator.
- Where an investigation is under way, this support will be provided with the knowledge of the child protection authorities.
- The Church will ensure that one person is responsible for dealing with the authorities, another offers support to the victim and their family, and another gives pastoral care to the alleged perpetrator. It may be necessary to appoint another person to support the perpetrator's family.
- Those giving pastoral care to either party must take the greatest care to ensure that no inappropriate details are shared which may prejudice the enquiry.
- Where the perpetrator accepts some responsibility they will be encouraged to seek specialised interventions/treatment to reduce the risk of re-offending. This may only be appropriate once the investigation and legal processes have been completed.

## **8 False Allegations**

False allegations are possible: all allegations will be properly investigated in an endeavour to establish the truth.

## **9 Allegations against Children**

Children and young people are curious about sex. However, where a child is in a position of power, has responsibility over another child (as in a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abusive. Where one child introduces another child to some age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child this is abusive. Such situations will be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved, because the effects on the child victim can be as great.

Instances such as these are investigated by the child protection agencies in the same way as if an adult were involved, though it is likely that the perpetrator would also be regarded as a victim in their own right. The possibility is that they have also been abused. Since sexual abuse can be addictive and other children could be victims now or in the future, it is important to take the matter seriously and we will need to deal with this as they would any other allegation. It cannot be assumed that young people will grow out of it. Most adult sex offenders started abusing in their teens (or even younger).

# Part 2 - Safe Recruitment, Support and Supervision of Workers

## **1 Application**

Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is an offence for anyone disqualified from working with children to knowingly apply, accept or offer to work with children. The Act specifically includes trustees of charities working with children. This means that a person banned from working with children cannot serve as a trustee of a church. It is also a criminal offence to knowingly offer work with children to an individual who is so disqualified or to knowingly allow such an individual to continue to work with children.

It will be made clear in job advertisements, at interview and on application forms that all those having contact with children will be asked to agree to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check being carried out before the position is confirmed.

### **Recruitment of paid members of staff:**

#### **i) References**

- Formal references will be requested.
- Where applicable an applicant's UK residency status and/or right to work in the UK will be checked.

#### **ii) Interviews**

All prospective workers will have an interview.

## **2 Appointment and Supervision**

The Church's safeguarding policy as well as the practical expectations will be discussed with the applicant. The staff member will be required to sign their agreement in acceptance of and agreement to the procedures.

Any appointee will have a written agreement which includes a clear role description, lines of accountability to the church leadership and an assigned supervisor with regular opportunities for planned meetings so that work can be discussed, issues aired and areas of concern dealt with.

It is also advisable to have a probationary period (say 6 months) before the appointment is confirmed.

There will be regular team meetings to review procedures to ensure a common approach, sharing of concerns and identifying other matters that may need clarification and guidance.

### **All workers (paid and volunteers)**

#### **i) Training**

- It is important that all workers understand the agreed procedures for protecting children.
- Safeguarding training must be attended at least once every 3 years.
- Training for workers in relevant areas will be arranged, e.g. First Aid, Food Hygiene.

#### **ii) Young People**

Young people under 18 may be used as helpers but such helpers will be responsible to a named worker and will never be in a position where they are providing unsupervised care of children. As they will never be in unsupervised care they don't need a DBS. However, those under 18 years old will be required to provide a reference from an unrelated adult who has known them for 2 years.

When a young helper reaches the age of 18 the full recruitment process will be applied.



## Part 3 - Safe Behaviour

### A code of behaviour for workers (paid and volunteer)

#### 1 Overview/Code of Behaviour

The aim of these general guidelines is to ensure quality childcare, protect children and young people from possible abuse and workers from false accusation.

- Workers should treat all children /young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- Use age appropriate language and tone of voice.
- Do not engage in any of the following;
  - ◊ Invading the privacy of children or young people when they are using the toilet or shower.
  - ◊ Rough games including contact between a leader and a child or young person.
  - ◊ Sexually provocative games.
  - ◊ Making sexually suggestive comments.
  - ◊ Scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting a child or young person.
- When it is necessary to control and discipline children and young people, this should be done without using physical punishment. (It is acceptable to restrain a child or young person in order to protect them or a third person should the situation arise.)
- No one should normally be left working alone with children and young people, but as part of a team showing mutual responsibility for each team member.
  - ◊ If there are insufficient leaders for groups, then internal doors should be left open.
  - ◊ At least two people are present before external doors are opened for an event.
- If workers do find themselves on their own they should;
  - ◊ Assess the risk of sending child/young person home
  - ◊ Phone another team member and let them know the situation
  - ◊ Get a second trained leader as soon as possible
  - ◊ Write down a record of what happened
- If a child or young person wants to talk on a one-to-one basis you should make sure that:
  - ◊ You try to hold the conversation in a corner of a room where other people are.
  - ◊ Or if you are in a room on your own, leave the door open.
  - ◊ Or you make sure another team member knows.
- Consideration should be given to how many workers should be involved with the group and whether they should be male or female workers or both.
- The only adults allowed to lead children's and young people's activities are those who have been DBS checked and given appropriate training. Some occasional volunteers who have not been DBS checked may be allowed to participate as long as they are never left alone with a child or young person. The leader of the activity should be aware of any other adults who are in the building.

- The parents/carers may or may not attend church and it is important therefore they have been given information about the group including contact telephone numbers.
- The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- No person under 18 years of age should be left in sole charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.

Below are suggested ratios of adults to children, recommended for all activities with children:

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Adult Helpers</b>	<b>Number of Children</b>
2 years and under	1	3
3 years	1	4
4 to 7 years	1	8
8 years or older	1	10

## **2 Taking Care of Touching**

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the worker's.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Children are entitled to privacy to ensure personal dignity.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances when they need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream etc), encourage the child to do what they can manage themselves, but consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They are free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

### **3 Mentoring**

If a worker is working as part of a mentoring programme for the church with a young person:

- The parents of all young people involved in mentoring will sign a letter to say they are aware that the mentoring is happening and who it is with.
- A mentoring meeting should have an agreed start and end time and someone should be aware that you are meeting.
- Keep a basic record of dates of significant meetings, text messages and emails.
- Appropriate boundaries in regards to times and demand should be in place, i.e. not phoning during the night, etc.
- A written record should be kept of issues/decisions discussed at meetings.
- All digital and written communication should be retained.

### **4 Visiting Children at Home**

If a situation occurs where a worker needs to make a pastoral visit to children and their families at home, then it can only be done with agreement of one of the Ministers.

### **5 Children with Special Needs**

Children and young people who have a disability can be at greater risk of abuse. They will often require more help with personal care, such as washing, dressing, toileting, feeding, mobility etc, may have limited understanding and behave in a non age appropriate way.

It is good practice to speak with the parents of children/young people with special needs and find out from them how best to assist the child or young person.

### **6 Children with no Adult Supervision**

When children turn up to and want to join in with church activities without the knowledge of their parents, we will:

- Welcome the child and try to establish their name, age, address and telephone number, and record their visit in a register.
- Ask the child if a parent/carer is aware of where they are. Phone and make contact.
- On leaving, give the child a consent/group registration form and explain it needs to be filled in and brought back next time.
- Without interrogating the child, you will need to find out as soon as possible whether they have any special needs (e.g. medication) so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.

## **7 Peer Group Activities for Young People**

All youth activities will be overseen by named adults who have been selected in accordance with agreed recruitment procedures. It is accepted that groups aged 16+ may benefit from being led and run by peers. In this situation adult leaders will contribute to programme planning and reviews and will always be readily available on the premises when peer-led activities take place.

## **8 Electronic Communication**

### **i) Modern Technologies and Safe Communication**

A worker's role description will include an acknowledgement and approval of these technologies as a legitimate means of communicating with young people but should also include the expectations of the Church in relation to their use.

It is not appropriate to use these communication methods with primary school aged children, 11 years and younger.

On the general consent/registration form, parents/carers sign to agree that the young person can receive such communications.

### **ii) Workers' Communication with Young People**

All young people need to be aware of the protocols, as outlined in Section 8, that workers follow in relation to email, messenger services, social networks and mobile phones including texting. It is important to remember that as well as the parent/carer, young people will have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their email address or mobile telephone number and will not be pressurised into divulging information they would rather keep to themselves. Parents will be informed of the details in this section by the youth worker.

### **iii) Email**

Email is sometimes used by workers to remind young people about meetings. If email is being used, workers ensure messages are in the public domain by copying each message to the parents. It is important workers use clear and unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, and although it should be obvious when an email is ending, workers should never use inappropriate terms such as 'luv' to round things off.

### **iv) Social media platforms**

A worker should not allow a young person under the age of 18 to access their personal sites. Communication should be through designated and approved church/youth social media platforms.

### **v) Mobile Phones**

Particular diligence needs to be applied when workers use mobile phones to communicate with young people:

- ◆ All mobile phone use will be primarily about organising meetings and should take place on group chats which include workers.
- ◆ Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.

- ◆ Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on/shown to the worker's supervisor.
- ◆ No 1-1 conversations should take place between a worker and a child. Another worker or the parent should be included.
- ◆ Workers should use clear language, particularly when texting, and should not use words such as "luv" or abbreviations like "lol" which could mean laugh out loud or lots of love.
- ◆ Paid young people's workers are issued with a mobile phone under a contract that provides itemised billing.
- ◆ Workers should not take photos on their personal equipment.
- ◆ During sessions, young people should not be permitted to take photos or videos on their mobile phones unless as part of an organised activity.

#### vi) Taking Video and Photographs of Children

Care must be taken over the use of still or moving images of clearly identifiable children. There are several issues to be aware of:

- Permission must be obtained, via the consent form, of all children who will appear in a photograph or video before the photograph is taken or footage recorded.
- It must be made clear why that person's image is being used, what you will be using it for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from a crowd is not necessary.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by name or other personal details, including e-mail or postal addresses or phone.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.

## **Part 4 - Safe Practice and Safe Premises**

### **1 Consent and Registration Forms**

It is essential that we have important information about all children involved in any activities at the church. This information is recorded on our Child Consent Form (Appendix 1).

The first week someone attends we must have name, medical emergency information, and a contact name and number. These details must be updated annually.

### **2 Health and Safety**

All activities for children will comply with the Church's current health and safety policy.

Whenever possible at all events involving preparation of food at least one worker will hold a valid Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

### **3 Fire**

It is the responsibility of all group leaders/responsible persons within the building to ensure the safety of themselves and those who are in their control. In addition, it is a legal requirement that all group leaders/responsible persons are familiar with the emergency procedures in the event of fire.

### **4 First Aid**

VBC has a number of trained First Aiders. There is a list showing who they are can be found in the Church Office and Welcome Centre. First Aid kits can be found in appropriate areas around the church, along with accident forms.

The Church Office ensures that the contents of the first aid boxes are checked on a regular basis. Completed accident forms should be passed on to the church office.

All VBC groups will ensure that they have sufficient trained First Aiders on their regular team so that there is always a First Aider present at events and activities.

### **5 Supervision of Groups**

The person responsible for a group/activity must have registered the event in the Church Office so that it is apparent who the 'responsible person' for that activity is – even if you were already in the building or are staying on afterwards. You also need to make sure that you keep a register so that you know who is on the premises and in case it needs to be referred to at a later date.

### **6 Food Hygiene /Health and Hygiene**

The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 state that anyone who handles food must comply with the regulations. It follows therefore that those with responsibility for food will need to possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste, etc.)

## **7 Transporting Children**

These guidelines will apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children on trips organised by, or on behalf of, the Church. They do not apply to private arrangements for transportation made, for example, between parties with parental responsibility.

Our practice on transporting children is as follows:

- Usually only those who have gone through the Church recruitment procedures for workers will transport children. When this is not possible drivers will pick up and drop off at pre-arranged places.
- All drivers will have read the Church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by it.
- Parental consent will be given for all journeys.
- At collection or dropping off points, do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that children are collected by an appropriate adult.
- Drivers will be 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.
- The driver must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover: The driver should declare to their insurers that they are participating in the activity of transporting people for the church. 'Business Use' cover may be required. The response of the Insurance company may be different if the driver is being reimbursed. The vehicle will need to be roadworthy.
- Workers may be alone with a child for short periods, for example when dropping off the last child. Consideration needs to be given to dropping off the least vulnerable child last and routes planned accordingly.
- Drivers will not spend unnecessary time alone in a car with a child. If alone with a child in the car, the child should be in the back seat of the car.
- All hired minibuses used to transport children will have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance, and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus. If parents transport each other's children around other than trips organised by the church, for example, to and from activities, such arrangements are the responsibility of the parents involved and not the responsibility of the Church.

## **8 Risk Assessment**

Before undertaking any activity, the activity leader will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out. It is advisable to appoint someone specifically for this task.

## **9 Insurance**

Residential activity/camp organisers will ensure with the Church Office that there is adequate insurance cover for the event activity. If the trip is at a centre it is also important to establish that there is appropriate public liability insurance.

## **Part 5 - Outings and Overnight Events**

- Before undertaking any outing or overnight activity a special risk assessment must be carried out.
- Parents will be informed in writing of all the arrangements.
- Consent forms will be obtained for each overnight activity.
- There will be leaders with first aid and food hygiene certificates with the group.

### **1 Sleeping Arrangements**

Arrangements for residential holidays will be considered carefully. Workers will not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people. Arrangements will be age-appropriate, provide security for the child/young person and be safe for children/young people and workers. The activity leader will ensure that parents understand what the arrangements will be.

### **2 Adventurous Activities**

No child will participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent /carer. The residential activity/camp organisers will ensure that the staff engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996, the residential activity/camp organisers need to ensure that the premises are licensed.

### **3 Fire Safety**

The residential activity/camp organisers will have a fire safety procedure, which will include the following:

- Everyone will be warned of the danger of fire. If the residential activity/camp is in a building, then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. A fire drill will be practised on the first day of the residential activity/camp.
- When using a building as a residential facility, ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. It will also comply with fire regulations.
- In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children and young people with disabilities (e.g. a child who is hard of hearing).

### **4 Safety (Outings and Overnight Events)**

It is the responsibility of the workers to make young people and parents aware of expectations and boundaries.

General safety rules will be applied as appropriate (e.g. no running round tents due to the risk of injury from tripping over guy lines).

### **5 Swimming Trips**

There will be an increased adult to child ratio for all swimming trips and prior to the trip the swimming ability of a child/young person will be established. A swimming consent for each child (or a copy) will be taken by the group leader on the trip.



## Part 6 - Safe Community

### 1 Bullying

Bullying is another way in which children (or adults) abuse other children, and it can be verbal or physical. Bullying includes teasing, making unkind comments about a child, demanding money, "ganging up" on a child or physically assaulting a child. You might see evidence of torn clothes, bruising, burns, or scratches. A child might be afraid to attend school or other activities if they think the bully will be present.

The effect of bullying on the victim can be profound, both emotionally and physically.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Name-calling, taunting, teasing, mocking
- Kicking, hitting, pushing, intimidating
- Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature or sexually abusive comments
- Taking belongings
- Inappropriate text-messaging and emailing
- Sending offensive or degrading images by phone or over the internet
- Gossiping, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours
- Excluding people from groups
- 'Unofficial' activities such as initiation ceremonies or practical jokes which may cause physical or emotional harm.

Bullies will often pick on a particular feature of a person's appearance or character as a supposed 'reason' for bullying:

- racial difference; disability; sexuality; hair colour; gender

Bullies can be:

- Children or young people bullying others in their peer group, or other children and young people either older or younger
- Adults bullying children and young people
- Children and young people bullying adults.

Bullying will always cause a great deal of pain and harm for those on the receiving end. Many children and young people affected by bullying believe they have nowhere to turn. They are scared to speak out and often blame themselves. They can become fearful and reclusive.

Some signs that can indicate that a child or young person is being bullied are as follows:

- Withdrawal; lack of desire to join activities with certain individuals; drop in school marks; torn clothing; loss of friends; avoidance of church groups and other activities; bruises; need for extra money or supplies.

In order to prevent bullying the following procedures will be adopted:

- The children and young people themselves will be involved in agreeing a code of behaviour which makes it clear that bullying is unacceptable
- Children and young people should know how they can report any incidents of bullying
- All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously
- Details will be checked carefully before action is taken
- The bullying behaviour will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible
- The parents of the bully and of the bullied will be informed
- An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour
- All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded on the Safeguarding Incident Form, together with actions that are taken.

## **2 Working with Offenders**

When someone attending the Church is known to have abused children, the senior minister and safeguarding team will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in their commitment to the protection of children, will set boundaries for that person which they shall be expected to keep.

When it is known that a person who has been convicted of sexually abusing children or young people is attending VBC, it is important that their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a contract is put in place. There are also times when it will be appropriate to take such measures with a person who has faced a series of allegations about the sexual abuse of children and young people but has never been convicted (such allegations may be revealed on an Enhanced DBS Disclosure under relevant non-conviction information).

If an offender is on the Sex Offenders' Register they will be monitored under guidelines known as the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). In the latest guidance there is provision to require a written contract to be in place if the offender wishes to attend a place of worship.

In determining the details of the contract:

- There will be a discussion about who should be informed of the nature of the offence and the details of the contract
  - ◊ The rights of the offender to re-build their lives without everyone knowing the details of their past offence should be balanced against the need to protect children.
  - ◊ The Safeguarding Trustee, the Designated Person for Safeguarding and the Minister should always be informed
- The Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee should determine whether the person is subject to supervision or is on the Sex Offenders' Register
  - ◊ if so, the Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee should make contact with the offender's specialist probation officer (SPO) who will inform the church of any relevant information or restrictions that the church should be aware of
- The Designated Person or the Safeguarding Trustee should inform and take advice from the Regional Minister in the local Baptist Association.

An open discussion must be held with the person concerned in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of the church. A written contract should be drawn up which identifies appropriate behaviour. The person should be required to sign the contract. The contract:

- Will identify the meetings the person may attend
- Will specify that they will always sit apart from children and young people
- May ask that they are always accompanied by a befriender on church premises
- Will require the person not to attend small group meetings where children or young people are present
- Will require that the person declines hospitality where there are children or young people
- Will state that the person will never be alone with children or young people while attending church functions
- Will require the person to stay away from areas of the building where children or young people meet.

The contract should be monitored and enforced. Those who offend against children and young people can often be manipulative. If the contract is broken certain sanctions should be considered.

### **Policy and Procedures**

A copy of the policy statement will be displayed permanently on the noticeboard in the Welcome Centre together with details of the Safeguarding Team and Reporting Procedures.

A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church, the parents or carers of any child from the church, or any other person associated with the church. The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed regularly. It is also available on the VBC website.

The Policy Statement will be read annually at a church meeting.

## TICK ALL ACTIVITIES ATTENDED BY CHILD

Crèche		Sunday Bees		Sunday School Yr R-Yr 6		Youth Yr 7+	
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## CONTACT DETAILS

Name of Child		Date of Birth	
Address		Home Phone	
		Mobile Phone (Parent/Carer)	
School		School Year	
E-mail (Parent/Carer)		Other emergency contact number	

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

Please provide details of any:

- Medical Condition or Disability
- Allergies
- Dietary Needs
- Special Needs

## CONSENT

Do you consent to photos/videos being taken of your child for local display or publicity?	Yes	No
Do you consent to un-named photos/videos being used on the church website?	Yes	No
In an emergency, if I cannot be contacted, I give permission for my child to receive first-aid or necessary hospital treatment, including anaesthetic.	Yes	No
Youth only: I give permission for recognised youth leaders to use church-approved electronic means of communication with my child (eg mobile phones, e-mail, facebook etc)	Yes	No
Parent/Carer to sign and print name:		
Date:		

*For completion where a child is involved in an accident or incident within the church setting.*

*This record should be completed by the adult who first observed the accident/injury and reported to the leader of the group. The leader will decide on the next course of action (including delivering first aid/ requesting medical attention, contacting parents/carers and considering reviewing existing factors/policies to prevent another accident/injury)*

Name of Group:
Full Name of Child:
Age of Child:
Date and Time Accident/Injury Occurred
Description of Accident/Injury:
Action taken, including any treatment given:
Name of Person dealing with Accident/Injury:
Name(s) of witness(es):
Name of Person making this report: (PLEASE PRINT)
Signature of Person making this report:
Date:
<b>I acknowledge that I have been notified of the accident/injury</b>
Signature of Parent/Carer:
Date:
<b>ANY HEAD INJURIES MUST BE REPORTED TO PARENTS/CARERS EVEN IF THE CHILD SEEMS FINE</b>
Name and Signature of Leader:
Date:
Any further actions that need to be taken to address risk (if relevant):

**Please complete Body Chart in Appendix 4.**

**NB - Children are not to be undressed or photographs taken of any marks or injuries.**

Location and Event	
Date and Time	
Leaders Present	
Any other activities or people in the building or at the event?	
Individual Concerned	

**DETAILS OF INCIDENT/CONCERN**

- What happened? (nature of concern/disclosure made)
  
- Who was allegedly involved and in what way? (includes witnesses)

**RESPONSE TO INCIDENT/CONCERN**

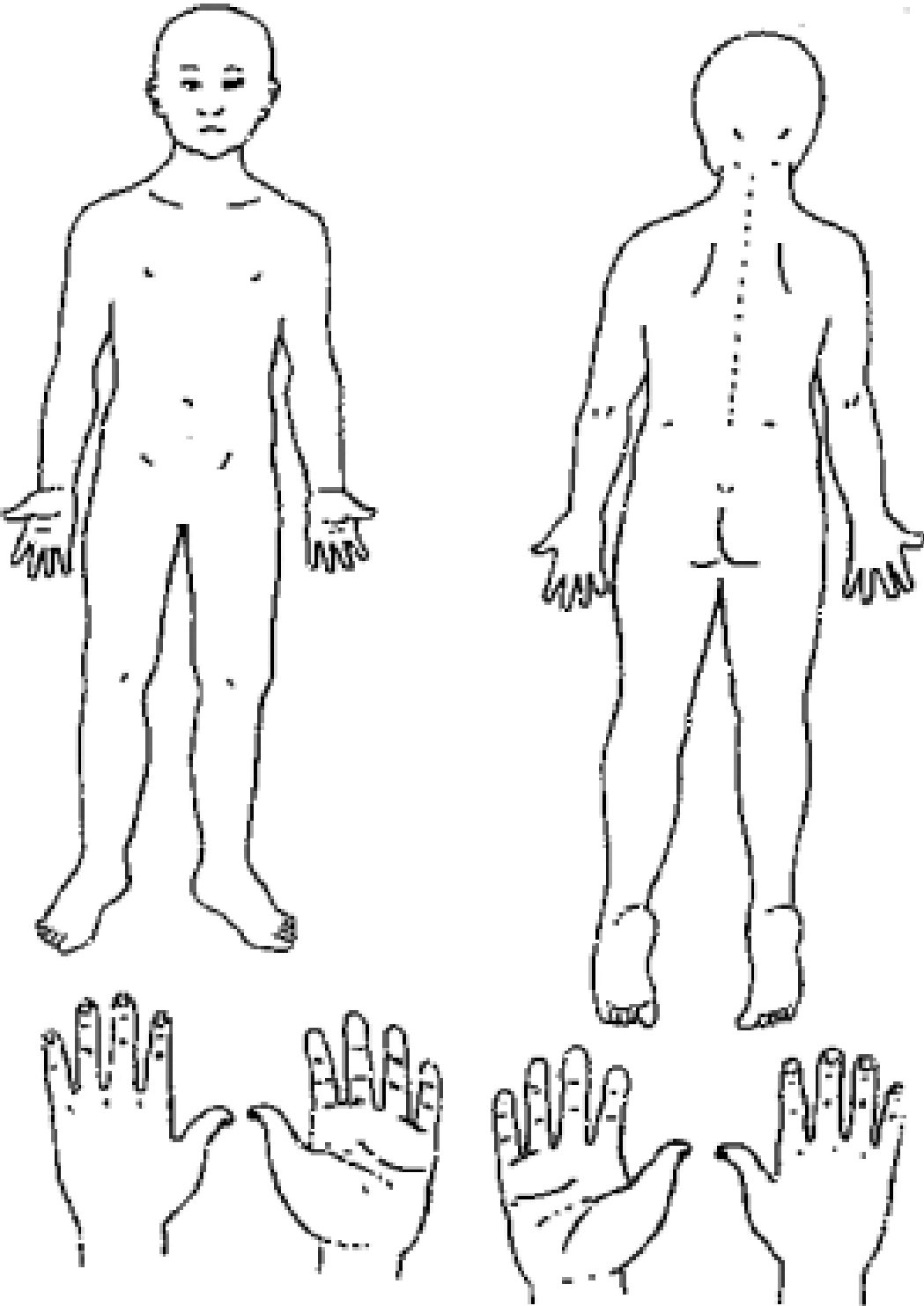
- Parents/carers informed? YES/NO. If so, when and by whom?
- Statutory authorities informed? YES/NO. If so, please provide details:
  
- Any future action needed?

Signature of person reporting incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Safeguarding Lead/Safeguarding Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix 4 - Body Chart



# Appendix 5 - Report Stages

## Stage 1

A worker has a concern about the welfare of a child/young person or the behaviour of an adult

The person who has the concern has a duty to

### **RECORD AND REPORT**

A written record must be made of the concern using a standard incident report form and the concern should be reported to the Designated Person within 24 hours.

If a child is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Care Team without delay.



## Stage 2

The Designated Person receives the report of concern

The Designated Person has a duty to

### **REVIEW AND REFER**

The report will be reviewed by the Designated Person with any other relevant information and a decision will be taken (often in liaison with others) as to what action should follow. Any formal referral to Social Care Team should normally be made within 24 hours of receiving the report.

If a child is in imminent danger of harm a referral should be made to the police or Social Care Team without delay.



## Stage 3

After the decision has been made as to what action should be taken

The Designated Person, the Safeguarding Trustee and the Minister may have a duty to

### **SUPPORT AND REPORT**

Support should be offered to all parties affected by any safeguarding concerns and where formal referrals are made reports may need to be made to the local Association, the Independent Safeguarding Authority or the Charity Commission.