

## **Policy and Guidelines for People Working with Children and Young People**

### Church Details

Grace Church Nottingham  
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### Mission Statement

At Grace Church we love and value children of all ages; we want to include them in every part of church life and believe they have a valuable and unique contribution to make. The Church leadership (hereafter 'CL') therefore recognise its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the church's care.

### Grace Church is committed to:

- Nurturing, safeguarding and protecting all at Grace Church, especially children and young people.
- Safe recruitment, support and training for those who work with children and young people.
- Ensuring that all who work with children and those in whom they put their trust know how to handle a situation where a child or a young person may be at risk through abuse or neglect.
- Issuing guidelines to be followed for preventing and reporting allegations of physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect.
- Providing supervision so that no one works alone.

The CL recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also acknowledges that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect (*definitions in appendix 1*). The CL has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter 'the policy').

The CL also recognises the need to build constructive links and gain advice from professional child protection agencies. Therefore, these guidelines have been prepared in consultation with Social Services and the CCPAS (Churches Child Protection and Advisory Service), who hold a copy of this policy.

### Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Children's workers and leaders in the church may be the first to have concerns or recognise problems with a child. Therefore, a selection of possible physical, emotional and behavioural indicators of abuse are listed below.

Physical:

- Any injuries inconsistent with the explanation given
- Injuries inconsistent with the child's developmental age
  
- Injuries which occur in body places which are not normally exposed to accidental injury (see *appendix 2*)
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Difficulty in walking, sitting, playing
- Signs of malnutrition
- Poor personal hygiene
- Unclean or inappropriate dress
- Evidence of poor health care such as untreated infections

Behavioural:

- Age inappropriate sexual play, drawings or language
- Aggressive play and/or words
- Drug abuse
- Self harming injuries
- Frequent injuries due to a lack of supervision
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away, stealing, lying
- Problems with forming friendship or indiscriminate friendliness or affection
- Self stimulatory behaviour such as rocking
- Wetting or soiling

Emotional:

- Changes in mood or behaviour, particularly if the child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety
- Obsessions or phobias
- Inappropriate or unusual relationships with peers and/or adults

The CL recognises that this list is by no means exhaustive. It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicating that abuse has taken place, but workers need to be mindful of these indicators should concerns arise.

ANY concerns, however small, should be reported with or without the above indicators.

A child may also approach a worker or leader with an allegation of abuse but display none of the above indicators. This should also be reported without delay.

Action if Abuse is Suspected, Disclosed or Discovered

DO NOT:

- Delay
- Act alone
- Start to investigate
- Contact alleged abusers
- Talk to parents or guardians
- Discuss with friends

DO

- Report the matter ASAP using the set procedure highlighted in this policy.

### How to react to a child who wants to talk about abuse

It is important that you react in a way which will be helpful and supportive to the child. It is not easy to give precise guidance but the following may be of help.

#### DO NOT

- Agree to keep the information secret
- Say or suggest that you are shocked
- Say or suggest that you do not believe the child
- Ask questions
- Make false promises, such as saying that nothing will happen or that you will keep information a secret

#### DO

- Explain to the child at the outset that you may have to tell someone else if you think it necessary
- Remain calm and supportive
- Show acceptance of what the child says
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you
- Make accurate notes using the child's words within 1 hour of disclosure or ASAP. Also record the presence and location of any marks you may have observed and their appearance.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next – report onto Julia Hawkins

### Leadership in Child Protection

The CL recognise the importance of providing specifically nominated people (hereafter 'the nominated') to support and guide those who work with children and young people in child protection matters. These people are as follows:

Julia Morrison – Children's Work Overseer  
Phil Collinge – Child Protection Overseer  
Rob Mason – Child Protection Assistant  
Angela Dawson – Child Protection Coordinator

### Procedure for reporting concerns (all contact details in appendix 3)

1. Concerns, signs, symptoms, or child speaks
2. Inform Julia Morrison as soon as possible
3. Julia Morrison will refer concerns onto Phil Collinge, or in his absence, Rob Mason
4. Phil Collinge or Rob Mason will collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass on this information to the Social Services department. This will be done within 24 hours.
5. It is then Social Services task to investigate the matter under section 47 of the Children Act, 1989.

*See appendix 4 for flow chart for reporting concerns*

If suspicions or allegations in any way implicate an individual from the above nominated people then the referral should be made directly to another individual listed, explaining your concerns. If the entire above are implicated then the report should be made in the first instance to Nick Sharp (leader of Grace Church). If none of the people mentioned are appropriate then report your concerns directly to Social Services within 24 hours. The CCPAS are also available to offer advice.

It is the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from the CCPAS. Any referral to social services can be made anonymously. However, we hope that the members of the church will use the outlined procedure and not discuss concerns with anyone other than those nominated above.

If, however, you feel that your concerns have not been responded to appropriately by the above nominated people then it is open to you to contact Social Services with a referral directly and the CCPAS for advice.

Similarly, if you are unable to contact the above nominated people then you should not delay referral to Social Services.

Any other people connected to the child will be informed about concerns or a referral on a need-to-know basis about any allegation or problem. This will be decided by the nominated people above under consultation with social services and/or CCPAS. It is NOT the individuals responsibility to decide whether to inform parents/carers or the child's group leader.

#### Allegations of Physical Injury, Sexual Abuse, Neglect and Emotional Abuse

If a child has a physical injury or symptom of abuse, Phil Collinge or Rob Mason will:

- Contact Social Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about the child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Contact the Police Child Protection Team if worried for child's immediate safety or if advised to by Social Services.
- Will NOT tell parents/carers unless advised to do so having contacted Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of further injury (*see appendix 3 for help line numbers*)
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Social Services directly for advice.

#### Appointment, Support and Supervision of Leaders and Workers

The CL will ensure all workers are appointed, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in government guidelines "Safe from Harm" (HMSO, 1993), the Criminal Records Bureau and CCPAS guidance.

Children's workers must:

- Be a member of Grace Church.
- Complete an application form which will require them to provide references and declare any criminal convictions.
- Undertake a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check.
- Sign to say they have read and agree to the guidance in this policy.

Guidelines for all children's and young people's workers – to protect yourself

- Do not be alone with a child or young person: be sure you can be seen.
- When counselling, where privacy and confidentiality are important, ensure another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. If possible another adult should be in the vicinity and the young person should know they are there.
- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age: watch language, tone of voice and where you put your body.
- When praying be careful about physical contact.
- Make sure you know and follow first-aid and fire procedures: only authorised, qualified first-aiders can treat children and young people.
- Do not:
  - Invade privacy when showering or toileting
  - Initiate rough physical or sexually provocative games
  - Make suggestive comments about or to a young person
  - Touch in an intrusive or inappropriate way
  - Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person

Please talk to Angela Dawson if you need any help or advice relating to child protection (other than when reporting concerns – follow outlined procedure).

## **Appendix 1 – Definitions of Abuse**

There are four main categories of abuse. These have been defined by the CCPAS below.

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (oral sex). They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### Neglect

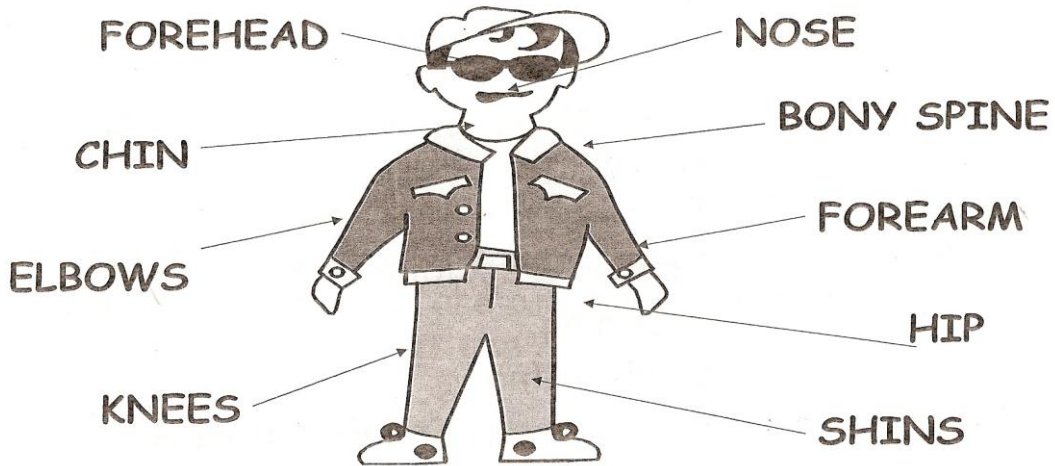
Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

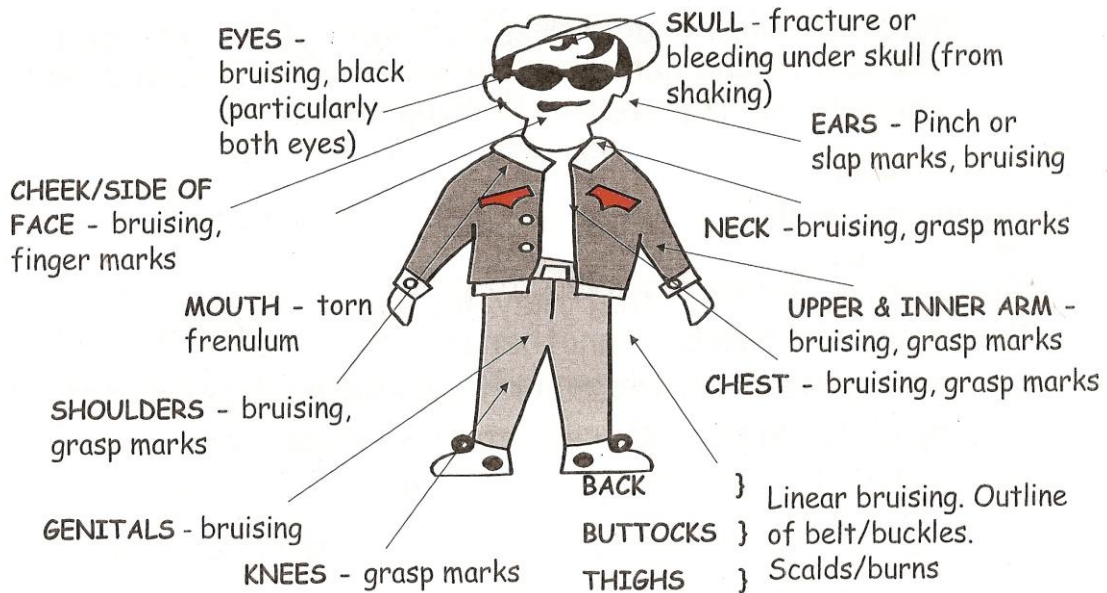
Appendix 2 – Body maps

## Common Sites For Accidental Injury



## Common sites for physical injury

NON ACCIDENTAL INJURY



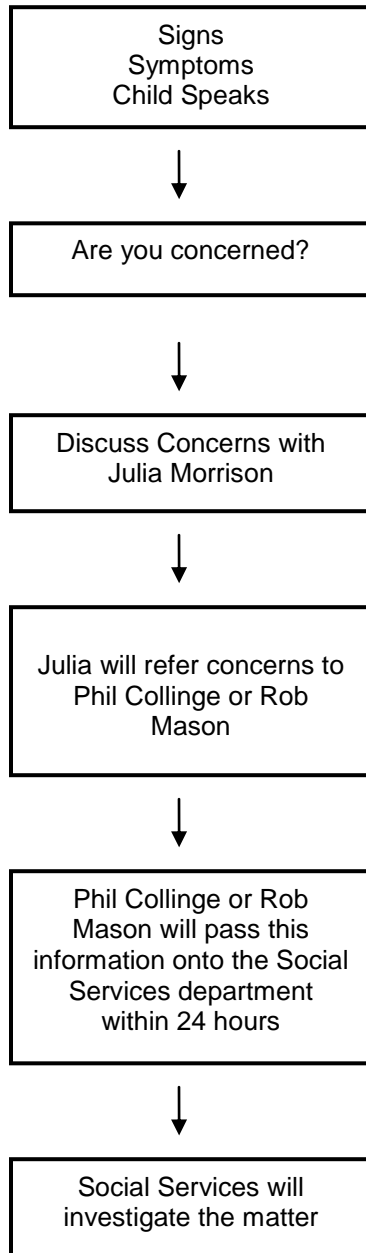
### **Appendix 3 - Contact Details**

Julia Morrison	julia.morrison@gracechurchnottingham.org
Phil Collinge	phil.collinge@teabagtalent.com
Rob Mason	rob.mason@gracechurchnottingham.org
Angela Dawson	andrew.dawsonma@virgin.net
CCPAS	PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Tel: 08451204550 (24 hour helpline) Email: info@ccpas.co.uk Web: www.ccpas.co.uk
Social Services	Tel: 0115 9155555 Out of Hours: 0115 9159299 (Nottingham Emergency Duty Team)
Police Control Centre	0115 9670999 ( <i>mention that your call relates to child protection</i> )

#### Help lines

Parent Line Plus	Tel: 0808 80032222 Web: <a href="http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk">http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk</a>
Child Line	Tel: 0800 1111 Web: <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">http://www.childline.org.uk</a>
NSPCC	Tel: 0808 8005000 Web: <a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">http://www.nspcc.org.uk</a>
Sure Start	Tel: 0870 0002288 Web: <a href="http://www.surestart.gov.uk">http://www.surestart.gov.uk</a>

## Appendix 4 – Reporting Concerns



This document was agreed by the leadership team of Grace Church Nottingham and is to be implemented from May 2007.

CCPAS hold this policy from 30<sup>th</sup> April 2007. Reference: 07/667 Grace Church Nottingham.