

Caring for Children and Young People



Ashwood Church Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedures



ashwood
church

Charity Number 517739

Our values

This policy has been prepared to ensure the protection, well-being and safety of children and young people involved in Ashwood activities and those working with them.

As an organisation we believe that:

- Children and young people should be respected and valued as a individual
- We should provide a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere
- We have a responsibility to protect children and young people and report suspected or disclosed abuse to the appropriate statutory authorities
- We have a responsibility to support and train those who work with children and young people, and to provide ongoing support and supervision
- We have a commitment to best practice as far as our work with children and young people is concerned

The legal context

The Children's Act (1989) clearly established in law that the welfare of a child is always paramount and takes precedence over everything else.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

- Children must be kept safe from harm
- They must be given proper care by those looking after them
- They have the right not to be punished cruelly or in a way that belittles them

Guidelines for appointing workers

Care should be exercised in the appointment of workers, both voluntary and paid. This will be done by:

- Asking the potential worker to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Check with the DBS
- Asking the potential worker to complete a form giving their name, current address and telephone number. These forms will be kept up to date by the Safeguarding Coordinator. Workers may be asked to produce their birth certificate or other proof of identity
- Talking to a potential worker and finding out about any past experiences which may affect their ability to work with young people
- Talking to others who may know the person
- Making all appointments, paid and voluntary, conditional upon the satisfactory completion of a period of probation
- Only confirming appointment after due review and consultation with the worker and any other interested party e.g. Other workers, leaders
- Taking references, particularly when the potential worker is unknown

Safeguarding Children



Note: Individuals who have a previous record of abusing children will not be allowed to work with children and young people. Nor will they be permitted to be present when youth and children's activities are taking place.



Support, training and supervision of workers

All those working with children and young people will be expected to undertake regular training and updates in safeguarding issues. Workers should be clear about their roles and responsibilities. They should have read the safeguarding policy which is available from the Safeguarding Coordinator.

All workers should be aware that their contact with children and young people puts them in a relationship of trust (i.e. In a position of power and influence) both within and outside the activity/group concerned.

Regular opportunities should be made for workers to meet together to review and plan their work, to share their experiences, to receive training and to talk about their relationships with the children and young people.

Where possible, those with overall responsibility for a group should take opportunities to observe those for whom they are responsible as they work.

A Safeguarding Coordinator will be appointed to have responsibility for the coordination and implementation of Ashwood's Safeguarding policy and procedures.

Leadership of activities

Records should be kept detailing the name and address of children and young people under 16 attending groups, as well as the name and contact number of a parent/guardian. These should be available at each session.

As far as possible, no activity, group, or event with children or young people is to take place where there is not at least one male and female worker present, unless the group of young people concerned is made up of the same sex whereupon these shall be not less than two workers present of this sex.

If counselling or one-to-one work is to take place, other workers should be informed when and where this is taking place, and take place in a public setting. Where the young person and their family is new to Ashwood, or is of different gender to the worker, another worker should always be present.

Children and young people are to be treated with respect and dignity, with importance being given to appropriate use of language, touch and attitude.

If a young person or child is to be taken home on their own, they should occupy the rear seat of the vehicle.

Consent should be sought for those under 18 wishing to participate in activities taking place off site.

Activities should be planned in ways which minimise risk to children and young people.

How to deal with abuse

As an organisation we have a duty to prevent abuse and to report any abuse suspected or discovered.

Physical abuse

Actual or likely injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury.

Possible signs include unexplained injuries or those which have received no medical attention e.g. Bruising in unusual places, finger marks, bite marks, burns, scars, allegedly unnoticed fractures.

Sexual abuse

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child.

Possible signs include allegations made by the child or young person, preoccupation with sexual matters, sexual activity through words, play or drawings, severe sleep disturbances with fears and phobias, being sexually provocative with adults.

Emotional abuse

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child.

Possible signs include regression in behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, inappropriate relationships with peers/adults, attention-seeking, running away/stealing/lying, looking uncared-for.

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect them from danger, leading to a serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Physical abuse and neglect are difficult to hide. Sexual abuse can be almost impossible to identify and prove. An overall sign/indicator of any abuse might be sudden, unexplained changes in behaviour, personality and unusual quietness or withdrawal. Many symptoms of distress can point to abuse but there may be other explanations. It is important, therefore, that the above signs are not taken as indications that abuse has taken place. They should make us stop and think, but not necessarily jump to conclusions.

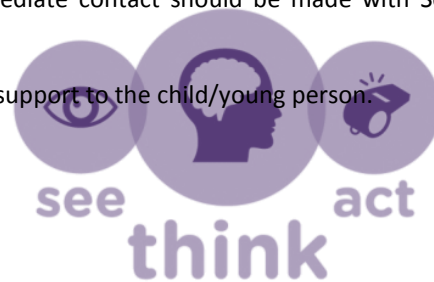
If you suspect a child is being abused

1. Do not delay – act quickly.
2. Seek an explanation of your concerns from the parent, carer of the child without raising the question of abuse.
3. Carefully make a hand-written, dated note of your observations, and pass to Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible. Do not keep a copy of the notes.
4. Talk to the group/activity leader or to the Safeguarding Coordinator. Do not discuss with anyone other than this.
5. If you remain suspicious, you have a personal responsibility to refer to Social Care Services or the Police, although we would expect that the Safeguarding Coordinator or Trustee Member would be informed of your decision.
6. Please note that it is not your role to interrogate or investigate suspected abuse and this could compromise any subsequent legal action that might be taken.

It is important to note that a disabled child or young person may be at increased risk due to their greater vulnerability or lack of or limited verbal communication.

If a child or young person wants to talk about abuse

- Find a quiet, appropriate place to talk.
- Accept what the child or young person says, keeping calm and looking at them directly.
- Let them know why you need to tell someone else, do not promise confidentiality, being clear about 'no secrets' is really important.
- Be aware that they may be being threatened.
- Listen carefully but never push for information. Do not ask leading questions or suggest abusive actions that may have happened.
- Don't speculate or accuse anybody. Do not put words into their mouth or finish their sentences.
- Don't make promises that you can't keep.
- Reassure the young person that they were right to tell you.
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens. Make sure you do this.
- Do not confront the person who is alleged to be responsible for the abuse.
- Make notes as soon as possible, writing down exactly what was said and when he/she said it. Record dates and times of these events and keep the hand-written record, even if these are subsequently typed up, for an indefinite period. These notes should be given to the Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible. Do not keep a copy.
- Report immediately to the Safeguarding Coordinator or, if they are not available, a Trustee Member. If neither are available, immediate contact should be made with Social Care Services.
- Offer ongoing support to the child/young person.



Any worker, staff or volunteer can bypass the procedures and share concerns with an outside agency – Social Care Services, Churches Child Protection Advisory Service or the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children – if they feel that the company/charity is not dealing adequately with their concern or that people concerned (e.g. Trustee Member of Employee) are implicated in some way.

We wish to encourage people to voice their concern should they have any reason to do so. Please contact the coordinator if any matter comes to light which you think needs acting upon.

Useful phone numbers

Safeguarding Coordinator

Claire Bell
88 Lindleys Lane
Kirkby in Ashfield
Nottingham
NG17 8AD

T: 01623 237749
M: 07801 949373
E: clairebell07@gmail.com

Leadership Member

Matthew Bell
88 Lindleys Lane
Kirkby in Ashfield
Nottingham
NG17 8AD

T: 01623 237749
M: 07739 454681
E: matthewjbell07@gmail.com

Chair of Trustees

Elaine Torr
T: **01623 440405**

Other useful contacts

Children Social Care Services – **0300 500 80 80**
Emergency Out of Hours Duty Team – **0300 456 4546**

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)
01322 517817

NSPCC **0808 800 5000**

ChildLine (for children/young people) **0800 1111**

Groundlevel Network
Responsible for our DBS checks and safeguarding issues
01522 542166

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