

Magdalen Road Church

Safe and Sound

Child Protection Policies and
Guidelines

Updated September 2019

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The following document outlines the Church's work with children and Young People. Voluntary Organisations have been required to fulfil this as statutory duty since 1993 with the original publication of "Safe from Harm" a Home Office Code of Practice.

As a Church we encounter Children and Young People in Church Activities throughout the week. We have a direct responsibility to prevent abuse of children and young people in our care.

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Child Protection Policy

1. The Child Protection/ Safeguarding Co-ordinator

- a) The church (a CIO) will designate a person (a church member) to be responsible for implementing this child protection policy and (responding to concerns).
- b) There will be at least one deputy co-ordinator to assist the coordinator in implementing this policy and in responding to concerns.
- c) The co-ordinator and deputy coordinator should attend a specific child protection module Safeguarding for Coordinators and Leads delivered by 31:8 (formally Churches Child Protection Advisory Service) training at least once and renew annually every 3 years as a minimum
- d) SSMJ as a school site require either the child protection co-ordinator, his/her deputy, another DBS individual to be present at all activities with children and young people as in the event of a disclosure or incident they may have to include it in future school reports as having occurred when renting the building to us on a Sunday morning/ holiday club.

2. Appointment of workers staff (Paid)

- a) All prospective staff working with children and young people children's and youth workers shall fill in an application form and will be interviewed by two other members of MRC staff children's workers. A DBS check will be completed and passed before any appointments are confirmed.
- b) All paid staff of Magdalen Road Church must have a DBS check completed before appointments are made.

3. Appointment of Workers (Voluntary)

- a) All prospective helpers with children's and youth work and crèche will first read and agree to abide by the guidelines contained in the church child protection policy. (See signature page at the end of this document)
- b) The church will normally contact a prospective helper's previous church to ascertain suitability to work with children and youth.
- c) All prospective helpers with children's and youth work over the age of 18 will be DBS-checked for their suitability to work with children and youth.
- d) The Child Protection Co-ordinator will accept a photocopy of a DBS check from a previous church only if it has been issued within the past 6 months with a view to completing a DBS check through MRC as soon as possible e.g. friends from other churches supporting MRC Holiday Club
- e) DBS checks will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the MRC church office and will be destroyed every 3 years, after when a new DBS check will be sought if the individual wishes to be renewed.
- f) From this point onwards any new DBS checks through Magladden Road Church (CIO) require the holder to additionally register for the update service for future DBS renewals.

4. Good practice for supervision of children and youth

- a) No child shall regularly be allowed to attend Junior Church, mid-week youth clubs or Holiday Club without a consent form signed by at least one parent or legal guardian.
- b) This is to be completed annually for regular attendees and offered to new families upon commencement of regularly attending. These are to be

returned to the church office upon the conclusion of the event/academic year.

- c) It is the responsibility of parents to see that (Primary School aged) children are collected from Junior Church or Holiday Clubs by a named adult.
- d) It is the responsibility of parents to see that children are collected from Youth Group. Transportation by Leaders will not occur unless requested for a specific event. Young Leaders can leave holiday club site with adults aware of their next destination with parents' permission and within school hours.
- e) A record of consent forms and any information concerning medical conditions is to be filed and kept on church premises and a copy kept at SSMJ site.
- f) A register is to be kept of all children and workers attending Junior Church, youth groups and Holiday Clubs. This should be returned to the church office at the conclusion of every academic year/event.
- g) As good practice guidelines the ratio of adults to children shall be as follows:

Ages 0-3 years	1 adult: 3 children
Ages 3- 11 years	1 adult: 6 children
Ages 11-16 years	1 adult: 8 children
- h) For Junior Church, at least two adults in each class, 1 with a DBS check is the minimum requirement to keep ourselves safe. When that is not possible, the classes will merge the door to each classroom will be kept open to ensure visibility and accountability between different classes.
- i) An adult worker shall never be left alone with a child. If only one child is present for a group they should join with another age group or return to church. Where a child wishes to talk to an adult in confidence, the adult must ensure that another adult is present.
- j) No person under the age of 16 is to be left in charge of a group of children.
- k) The discipline policy should also be enforced to ensure children are kept as safe as possible.

5. Safety

a) First Aid:

- All accidents are to be recorded in the accident log book.
- A first aid kit and accident log book shall be kept on the church premises and at SS Mary and John School. Helpers will be made aware of where these are kept.
- An experienced first aider will be present for any children's and young people's activities that are off site.

b) Building Safety:

- The elders and any deacon for buildings will ensure the maintenance of the church building, fixtures and fittings, fire escapes and fire fighting equipment meets adequate standards.

- All products that could be potentially harmful to children are to be kept in a secure location.

c) Accident prevention:

- No child should be allowed unsupervised access to outside areas at Magdalen Road Church.

- No child shall be allowed unsupervised access to the kitchen or playground at SS Mary and John School.

d) Hygiene:

- The elders and any deacon for buildings shall ensure that kitchens and toilet facilities are maintained in a clean and hygienic state.

- Workers shall ensure that all food is prepared in a hygienic environment.

6. Supervision of workers

a) The lead elder for Children and Young People shall ensure that at least three meetings are held each year for workers to discuss all issues relating to children's activities. These will be held at the beginning of the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms.

b) The leaders of youth groups will meet at least three times each year to discuss all issues relating to youth activities.

c) Elders will be informed of any child protection issues by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator. Safeguarding trumps all.

7. Reviewing the child protection policy

The child protection co-ordinators will conduct an annual review of the child protection policy and how it is being implemented. This is on behalf of MRC as a CIO. We are keeping up to date with national guidance and guidelines from 31:8.

This policy draws heavily upon the Safe & Secure document drawn up by CCPAS to help churches identify and practice healthy working relationships with Children. They identify key areas of good working practice and state that **every** church worker should understand what child abuse is and what the possible signs of it are, as well as knowing how to respond appropriately and safely to allegations.

This is why we have included this more informative section on definitions of abuse and signs of abuse, as well as a discipline policy in our child protection policy.

1. Definitions of Abuse

(The following definitions of child abuse are as stated in the joint government departments' document, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018.)

a) 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.

b) 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, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

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.

c) Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the 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.

d) Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

2. Signs of possible abuse

Signs Suggesting Physical Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Neglect - under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc that do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse
- Changes in routine

Signs Suggesting Emotional Abuse

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy.
- Also depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

Indicators of Possible Sexual Abuse /Sexual exploitation

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia
- Bed wetting and soiling

3. Responses to disclosures or concerns of abuse

How to respond to a disclosure

- a) If a child tells you of abuse, ensure that you allow the child to tell his or her story unaided. Do not classify behaviour or question their story.
- b) Try to ensure that you react calmly to any allegation of abuse.
- c) Tell the child you will need to let the Child Protection Co-ordinator know - don't promise confidentiality.
- d) Make notes of any allegation of abuse as soon as possible using the exact words used and the date and time.
- e) Inform the child protection co-ordinator(s) immediately of any allegations of abuse, passing on any appropriate written record.
- f) Ensure that any information told to you by a child is kept confidential and only communicated to the Child Protection Co-ordinator(s).
- g) The Oxfordshire MASH team will refer your disclosure to the School the child or young person attends

What to do if you suspect abuse

- a) If a child behaves in a manner that leads you to suspect he or she is the victim of abuse, allow the child to explain their behaviour unaided, is possible.
- b) Try to react calmly to any inappropriate behaviour or any witnessed abuse.
- c) Make notes of any inappropriate behaviour or witnessed abuse as soon as possible.
- d) If you suspect, based upon inappropriate behaviour, that a child is a victim of abuse, inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator(s) as soon as possible, passing on any written record.

After any allegations of abuse, witnessed abuse or suspected abuse the Child Protection Co-ordinator will keep a written record. If appropriate, the Local Authority Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will be contacted. Advice will also be sought from 31:8.

If you believe that a child is in immediate danger inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator(s) immediately, passing on any written record. If it is not possible to speak to them that day please contact the police directly.

As of September 2019 the Child Protection/Safeguarding Co-ordinator is Matt Hutchings (07912 883679). His photo/number and name can be found on a poster in the MRC kitchen and on the welcome table at SSMJ.

31:8 Helpline 0845 120 45 50

Discipline Policy

This policy seeks to preserve a happy, safe and helpful learning for all members. The church seeks to be a loving and grace filled community and it is vital that all children attending the church have the opportunity to experience this.

Junior Church

1. We expect good standards of behaviour at all times which are governed by the following principles:
 - all members of Junior Church must show respect for all others. This includes both adults and children.
 - There must be no hurting of any other persons. This includes hitting, throwing objects at others, wresting or verbal taunts.
 - All members of Junior Church must respect the purpose of the meeting and co-operate with its leaders. The purpose of Junior Church is to worship God and to learn about him.
2. Standards of behaviour will be enforced by the leaders of Junior Church in the following ways:
 - Bad behaviour will result in a warning. Some groups may operate a red/yellow card policy.
 - Anyone who receives three warnings in a morning will automatically be asked to leave Junior Church for the rest of that morning. If their parent or guardian is in the building they will be taken to them. If not they will be asked to sit with a responsible adult for the remainder of the morning or taken home.
 - In cases of particularly bad behaviour a member maybe removed without warning, and/or suspended for a number of weeks.

Youth groups

1. All members of youth groups must show respect for all others. This includes both fellow members and youth leaders.
 - Anti-social or offensive behaviour will not be tolerated. This includes:
 - Hurting other people, e.g. hitting, throwing objects, fouling during games.
 - Aggressive behaviour or bullying e.g. Name calling, mocking other members.
 - Unwillingness to respect the purpose of the group or trying to deliberately stop others doing so.
2. Standards of behaviour will be enforced by the Youth Leaders in the following ways:
 - Bad behaviour will result in a warning. Some groups may operate a red/yellow card policy.
 - Anyone who receives three warnings in a session will automatically be asked to leave the group for the rest of that session. If their parent or guardian is in the building they will be taken to them. If not they will be asked to sit with a responsible adult for the remainder of the time or taken home.
 - In cases of particularly bad behaviour a member maybe removed without warning, and/or suspended for a number of weeks.

Guidelines for the behaviour of adult workers

- a) All workers are required to ensure that they do not behave in any way, physically or verbally that could be offensive to any child or adult.
- b) All workers must treat all children and young people with dignity and respect. This includes respecting personal privacy.
- c) All workers are to ensure that all interactions between themselves and any child should be such as to ensure that no reasonable person observing that interaction could construe its nature as abusive.
- d) Guidelines on touch:
 - Keep everything public.
 - Touch should be related to the needs of the child and not to the needs of the adult worker
 - Touch should be age appropriate and initiated by the child, not the adult worker.
 - All activity that is or could be construed to be sexually stimulating to the child or the adult worker is to be avoided.
 - Children have the right to decide on the degree and amount of physical contact they have with others, except with regard to necessary medical treatment.
 - Each adult worker is responsible for monitoring the conduct of others. If a worker has any concerns regarding the conduct of another worker, (s)he should report this to the Child Protection Co-Coordinator(s).

All workers should recognise that their position places them in a position of trust with regard to the children attending Junior Church, mid-week clubs and Holiday clubs. Each worker is to ensure that they do not abuse this position of trust and that they uphold this position of trust at all times.

It is vital that all those working with children in Magdalen Road Church have read this policy and take personal responsibility for seeing it implemented in the church.

Please sign this form annually and return it to the child protection co-ordinator(s).

I confirm that I have read and understood this child protection policy and will do my best to see it implemented within church.

Signed.....

Date.....