

Action to take if there is an allegation or disclosure of abuse

If there is an allegation or disclosure of abuse by a child, young person or by an adult who is disclosing or alleging historic child abuse:

- ▶ Listen. Keep listening.
- ▶ Do not question or investigate – this is the job of the authorities. In particular do not speak to the subject of the allegation.
- ▶ Do not promise confidentiality; tell them that the information they disclose needs to be shared.
- ▶ Assure them they are not to blame.
- ▶ Tell them what you are going to do. Reassure them that the matter will be reported to the investigating authorities. If the person needs reassurance that the alleged perpetrator will be punished, do not make any promises. There can be no guarantee as to what happens as that will be dependent upon the outcome of the investigation.
- ▶ As soon as possible after the conversation, make careful notes of what was said, record dates, times, events and when you were told.
- ▶ If there is immediate danger to a child or young person, contact the Social Services or the Police.
- ▶ Report the incident to your priest or Child Safeguarding Coordinator immediately.
- ▶ Do not contact the priest or Coordinator if the allegation concerns them or anybody related to them. Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser directly if necessary.
- ▶ Do not discuss the incident with anybody else.
- ▶ The priest or Child Safeguarding Coordinator must then report the allegation or disclosure to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser by the end of the next working day. The Adviser will tell them anything they need to do.
- ▶ In the absence of the Adviser, the appropriate Archdeacon should be contacted.

Action to take if you are concerned that someone may be committing abuse

If you are concerned, or it comes to your notice that someone may be committing abuse:

- ▶ Make notes of your concerns and discuss them with your priest or Child Safeguarding Coordinator.
- ▶ The priest or Child Safeguarding Coordinator must then report the concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser by the end of the next working day.
- ▶ Do not contact the priest or Coordinator if the allegation concerns them or anybody related to them. Contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser directly if necessary.
- ▶ Dates and times should be recorded of any observations which have been made and of the referral to the Adviser.
- ▶ The Adviser will decide whether to
  - ◆ Report the concerns to Social Services and/or the Police, who will then investigate while the Adviser liaises with the parish; or
  - ◆ Continue to observe closely – the process will be repeated in the event of any more concerns.
- ▶ There should be close communication between the priest/coordinator, the Adviser and the appropriate Archdeacon until the situation is resolved.
- ▶ In the absence of the Adviser, the appropriate Archdeacon should be contacted.

Action to take if people with convictions for offences against children or people under investigation are attending church

Where someone attending the church has been convicted of offences against children (or they have received a formal police caution) an agreement will need to be drawn up to minimize any risk to the safety of children within the church. If a person who attends the church is subject to investigation for alleged child abuse, thought will need to be given to drawing up a temporary agreement until the outcome of the investigation is known.

- ▶ The priest or, in the absence of the priest, the Child Safeguarding Coordinator, must inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser of the situation.
- ▶ The Adviser will decide whether an agreement needs to be in place and will provide a template for the agreement.
- ▶ If the person is a convicted offender, there will need to be liaison with the person's Supervising officer (police or probation) who should be consulted about the agreement and, ideally, be a signatory to it.
- ▶ The offender or person under investigation will be asked to sign the agreement, which will then be reviewed annually.

Allegations or concerns about senior clergy

- ▶ If an allegation involves an archdeacon or dean it should be reported to the Bishop of Leicester.
- ▶ If an allegation involves a bishop, it should be reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

- Do not contact anybody who is implicated in the allegation or disclosure, even if they would normally be contacted as part of the procedure.
- Do not talk to the media under any circumstances. The Diocesan Communications Director will handle any media statements.
- If a child or young person makes a disclosure by email or other electronic means the same procedure should be followed, with the person receiving the disclosure making careful and confidential use of email or other electronic means to continue to 'listen' and then passing on the disclosure via the appropriate channels.
- The procedure is the same for abuse which happened in the past, possibly many years ago.

## Code of Behaviour

### You should:

- ▶ Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- ▶ Provide a Christian example you wish others to follow.
- ▶ Provide an example of good conduct that you wish others to follow.
- ▶ Ensure that there are at least two adults present during activities with children and young people, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others.
- ▶ Respect personal privacy.
- ▶ Ensure that another adult is informed if a worker needs to take a child to the toilet.
- ▶ Be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted.
- ▶ Challenge unacceptable behaviour in a responsible way.
- ▶ Report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.
- ▶ Recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.
- ▶ Operate within the organisation's principles and guidance.
- ▶ Use social media carefully. (see your church's policy)

### You should not:

- ▶ Ever hit a child or young person.
- ▶ Play rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- ▶ Touch inappropriately.
- ▶ Show favouritism to any one child, young person or group.
- ▶ Give lifts to children on their own or on your own. If it is unavoidable ask the child to sit in the back of the vehicle and inform another adult where possible.
- ▶ Invite a child or young person to the youth leader/worker's home alone unless responding to an emergency situation, in which case the relevant people should be contacted.
- ▶ Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.
- ▶ Allow unknown adults access to children. A known person should always accompany visitors.

## Contact details

My priest.....

Safeguarding Coordinator.....

Social Services.....

Social Services out of hours.....

Police – immediate danger: 999

Police – referral or disclosure 101

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser

Rachael Spiers 0116 261 5341

[rachaelspiers@leccofe.org](mailto:rachaelspiers@leccofe.org)

CCPAS helpline 0845 120 4550

NSPCC helpline 0800 800 5000

# Diocese of Leicester

# Pocket Guide to

# Safeguarding

# Children

## July 2015

