

## **SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

St Michael and All Angels Church, Sandhurst (“the Church”/ “St Michael’s”) has a growing children’s and young people’s ministry. It takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to its care for children’s activities or those giving service to the church, e.g choir or bellringers

**This document reflects the policy of the Diocese of Oxford entitled, *Protecting Children in the Diocese of Oxford* which is available in the parish office.**

*Parish Safeguarding Officer* is appointed by the PCC under guidelines from the Diocese of Oxford regarding such appointments. The role of the Parish Safeguarding Officer is to provide advice to the PCC, the Rector, and other adults involved in the work with children and young people at St Michael’s.

*Appointed Officers* refers to anyone tasked by the PCC or Rectors Council to appoint people to work in any activity in which children or young people are involved.

*The Appointing Body* is the PCC. Any decision regarding the appointment of volunteers will be brought to the PCC for approval.

### **Appointing children’s/Youth Workers:**

#### **Appointment procedure:**

This procedure applies to all adults applying for appointments to work in all groups which involve children, run by St Michael’s, regardless of whether the appointment is paid or unpaid. This includes, but is not exclusive to, Kidz Church, Reach, choir, bellringers, weekday youth groups.

- An initial conversation/interview about the work and discussion of workers roles takes place with the Appointing Officer or their representative.
- All prospective workers are asked to complete the *St Michael’s Application form to Work with Children and Young People*. References given on this form may be taken up by the Parish Safeguarding Officer or designated representative.
- All prospective workers are asked to read through the *St Michael’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.
- All workers will be asked to undergo a *DBS Enhanced Disclosure*, the results of which will be made known to the Parish Safeguarding Officer.
- Once the DBS Enhanced Disclosure is returned the appointment can be confirmed or declined.

#### **Reasons why applicants may not be appointed:**

- There has been a record/history of violent or abusive behaviour.
- The Rector feels that the applicants help or skills would be better employed elsewhere in the church for the benefit of all concerned.

### **Safety and Supervision of children:**

The ratio of adults to children are recommended as follows;

Children in age range:	0-2	2-3	3-8	Over 8 years
Adults to children:	1:3	1:4	1:8	1 adult for the first 8 children and then one extra adult for each extra 12 children

- Each group should have at least two adults and it is recommended that a gender balance is maintained where practical.
- If groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with doors open then one person per group is allowed.
- Never take a child away from your group or activity by yourself without informing another worker stating where and why you are going.
- If a child asks to see you individually you should remain where you can be seen and within earshot of another adult.
  
- It should be accepted that anyone seeing another worker acting in a way which could be misinterpreted, should be able to speak to the individual, the group leader, the Rector or Parish Safeguarding Officer about the concern.
- If you are concerned that a child in any group is suffering abuse – refer to the separate guidelines – you must report this to your group leader, the Rector, or Parish Safeguarding Officer, even if you are not 100% certain.
- Names of all group leaders are published on the St Michael’s website [www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk](http://www.stmichaels-sandhurst.org.uk) in ‘who’s who’ under About Us.
  
- Child group workers will have regular meetings at which procedures are reviewed to ensure a common approach.
- If changes to the guidelines become necessary these will be reported at the meetings to ensure everyone is informed.
- Minutes of the meetings will be kept.

### **Kidz Church and Youth Groups Registration and Collection:**

- A registration form for each child should be filled out by the parent when the child becomes a member of the group.
- All children will be registered at the start of the session.
- Children under the age of 11 will not normally be expected to move between the church and the Pastoral Centre unaccompanied.
- All children should be collected or allowed to leave in accordance with their parent/guardians consent as indicated on the child’s registration record.

*Children’s groups using upper rooms in the pastoral centre should meet downstairs. Once both leaders are present the group may move upstairs. In the event that one or both adults do not arrive*

*to lead a group, the children can be given the option of joining young church or the main service in church. At which point they become the responsibility of the church warden on duty.*

**Junior choir registration and collection:**

- A registration form for each child should be filled out by the parent when the child becomes a member of the choir.
- This form is to be copied. The original should be kept securely in the choir vestry, the copy in the Parish office. The secure storage of these forms is the responsibility of the choir safeguarding representative.
- All children will be registered for attendance at both practices and services.
- There will be two adults with DBS enhanced disclosures present during Junior choir practices.
- If a child needs to use the facilities in the Pastoral Centre during choir practice, they will be escorted by an adult with a DBS enhanced disclosure.
- Junior choir members should be collected from the choir vestry following practice and services, not make their own way to the car park. It is the responsibility of the choir safeguarding representative to ensure parents are made aware of this.

**Junior choir movement during 9.30 Parish Communion service:**

- Members of Junior Choir are registered and remain the responsibility of the main choir for the beginning of the service.
- At the agreed point in the service the Junior Choir members move down the centre aisle to meet with the duty churchwarden or their appointed representative. An appointed representative can only be another adult with a current DBS Enhanced Disclosure.
- The church warden is then responsible for the children and should walk them down the main path to the Pastoral Centre placing them in the responsibility of the Kidz Church or Reach Leaders according to the age of the children.
- If no leaders are present the children should be taken back to church by the church warden where they would rejoin the choir for the duration of the service.
  
- Towards the end of the service a representative from the choir, who holds a current DBS Enhanced Disclosure, will collect the Junior Choir members from the Pastoral Centre and return with them to Church. Making sure in the process that the youth leaders are aware the children are being removed from their responsibility.
- The group re-enters the church through the choir vestry entrance and the re-joins the service.
- The Junior Choir members are then returned to the responsibility of their parents/carers at the end of the service from the choir vestry.

**Fire Regulations:**

The fire procedure for groups involving children and young people within the Pastoral Centre will be prominently displayed.

A fire practice for evacuation of the Pastoral Centre will be held once a term during the Parish Communion service.

**Children’s Personal Care:**

If a child needs to go to the toilet they will be accompanied by an adult in the following way:

Children aged 4 and below	Will be taken by a leader with a current DBS Enhanced Disclosure
Children aged 5 and above	May go unaccompanied to the toilet at the discretion of an adult leader.

**Guidance on touch:**

Physical contact between adults and children can be quite healthy and where appropriate, may be encouraged in public places, but discouraged in circumstances where an adult and child are on their own.

All physical contact should be an appropriate response to a child’s needs and not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.

**Administration of First aid:**

Where possible, first aid should be administered by a qualified first aider. All first aid given should be recorded and reported in accordance with St Michael’s first aid policy.

**Respect for Children and Young People:**

All children and young people should be treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions and all questionable activity (eg. Rough/sexually suggestive games or comments) should be avoided.

**Visits to Leaders homes:**

If you invite a child to your home, ensure this is with the knowledge of the team leadership and that a parent is aware and in agreement.

**Activities Away From St Michaels: - ALL GROUPS**

For all trips away from the church a consent form signed by the parent or guardian must be obtained and emergency contact information for each child attending must be carried by the leader responsible for that child for the duration of the activity.

The guidelines of the Diocese of Oxford for transport and taking young people out must be followed.

**Safe Communication:**

St Michael’s church recognises the use of modern technologies as a part of everyday life for most young people, as well as many adults and understands that it is difficult to insist on how these technologies are used.

The church recommends that leaders are mindful of the accessible nature of media such as Facebook and Twitter and suggests that it is inappropriate for leaders to accept children as ‘friends’ to their personal page on these types of web sites. When using sites such as these for church

communication, a group or event page should be used. This should be set up by a member of the leadership team with the consent and knowledge of the Youth Leader.

When using other forms of communication such as email and text leaders should keep messages factual and use appropriate, inoffensive language.

If a leader feels uncomfortable about any of the content of communication of this type with children or young people, they should copy in a parent of the child or another leader if they feel parental involvement is inappropriate. Copies of the communication should be kept as a hard copy where possible, and confidentially if necessary.

Children should be made aware that their communication by these methods may be forwarded to another adult.

Many mobile phones have digital cameras. Workers should ensure that they only take photographs of children and young people once consent has been obtained from the parent or guardian. Photos should be downloaded and deleted from the phone as soon as possible and kept securely.

### **Children's Advocate:**

A named independent person that children are encouraged to talk to if they have worries. It is not obligatory to have someone in this role but it can be useful if the safeguarding officer is not someone personally known to the children. This person should also be available for contact by people who are concerned about a child or young person or about the behaviour of an adult.

In St Michael's Parish there will be two Children's Advocates. One to cover each of the two age groups we work with.

### **Bell Ringing:**

Bell ringing teams already appoint a suitable person to train young people and this person and the tower captain should apply for DBS checks. No other DBS checks are required. As bell ringing will require some physical contact the young person and their parents must be made aware of this and its nature.

### **Home Communion / Home Visiting:**

Church workers must accept that this role is a position of trust. They will be seen to be role models by the vulnerable adults with whom they are in contact with. Church workers should seek advice from the safeguarding officer immediately if they come across a vulnerable adult who may have been harmed (including self-harm.) Also, they should seek advice if they come across a colleague whose conduct appears to be inappropriate.

### **Data Protection**

On occasions safeguarding may come into conflict with data protection. As safeguarding is of paramount importance the need to safeguard will always override data protection matters.

**Further Guidance:**

The document *Protecting Children in the Diocese of Oxford* is available in the Pastoral Centre office or as a PDF document on the Oxford Diocese website, for anyone who needs further guidance or clarification on any of the topics raised in this document.

**Those with named roles:**

**Parish Safeguarding Officer for St Michael's:** Paul Carpenter. – 01252 871904 / 07905 452551

Children's Advocate: Reach: Liz Percival – 01344 779658  
Kidz Church: Karen Allen - 07715047258

Choir Children's Officer: George Castle  
Lindsay Franklin  
Catherine Wilkins

Youth and Children's work coordinator: Karen Allen – 07715047258

Youth Worker: Mike Gower

Rector: John Castle – via parish office – 01252 873030

This safeguarding and child protection policy approved and adopted by the Parochial Church Council for St Michael and All Angels Sandhurst on:

7<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at the PCC meeting held that day.

Scheduled review of this policy to occur on or before March 2019

Signed: Rev. John Castle Date: 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Chairman for PCC

***Related Documents:***

*Fire Procedure*

*First aid procedure*

*Abuse disclosure guidance*