

GRACE CHURCH – SAFEGUARDING SUMMARY

It is the policy of Grace Church Cheltenham to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

We have 5 groups for children on a Sunday, plus Grace Tots and Youth work during the week: Crèche (under 2s), Scramblers (Preschool-Reception), Climbers (Yr1-Yr2), Explorers (Yr3-6), Pathfinders (Yr7-10), Youth (Yr10-13).

The Safeguarding Lead is Ann-Marie Bach, the Deputy (who administers DBS paperwork) is Lucy Whitaker, and Ethan MacLeod is Trustee Lead for Safeguarding.

GENERAL PROCEDURES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children are never to be left unaccompanied (other than children in Explorers and Pathfinders who will use toilet facilities unaccompanied, see below).

Crèche and **Scramblers** use classrooms on the Ground Floor; **Climbers**, **Explorers** and **Pathfinders** use classrooms (and the landing) on the First Floor, **Youth** usually remain in the main meeting.

First Aid kit including logbook is found hanging on the wall in the cupboard under the stairs in the atrium.

Children will be taken to their groups by their parents. An adult will be sent to alert all groups when their leaders can bring them back. Pathfinders may return unaccompanied.

Visiting parents will be asked by a Steward to fill in a **Registration Form**, to be given to the group leader when handing children over. Relevant information from the Registration Form will be added to the register by the leader, and the form will be handed to Admin for processing and storage.

A **Register** is kept of children in attendance by leaders in each of the groups – printed on fluorescent card each term.

If a child is distressed and not settling, a leader will fetch a parent, always erring on the side of caution when making a judgment.

Children in Crèche, Scramblers and Climbers will be escorted to the toilet by a DBS checked adult (female ideally). Be as distant as possible from the procedure. Tell another adult where you are going and when you will return. Take more than one child if feasible. If a child needs help, then the toilet door should be left ajar. Assistance might require removing clothing but will not include wiping bottoms. Where children are in the early stages of potty training, the parents will be notified to assist where necessary.

In Explorers and Pathfinders, a leader should know when children have gone to the toilet and monitor their return.

Nappy changes and dealing with any 'accidents' remains the responsibility of parents.

Unless they are parents of a visiting child, unknown adults should not enter groups when they are in session. Any visiting parent cannot be counted in adult:child ratios, and has no responsibility over any child other than their own.

All church members and especially group leaders to maintain vigilance with regard to visitors to the church and any unfamiliar faces in the building (DCS staff may be around).

One adult should never be alone with a single child behind a closed door. Occasionally a private conversation may need to take place, in which case the location should remain visible (e.g. a quiet corner of the auditorium) and there should always be at least one other adult in the near vicinity about which both the adult and the child know. If for some reason an adult finds themselves inadvertently alone with a single child, they should move out of the situation and let the Pastor know.

Activities and materials used will be age appropriate with consideration given to safety at all times.

Photographs may only be taken/used with the express permission of parents.

Take care when contacting children under the age of 18 especially where e-mail, texts and social media are concerned. Some messages will be part of a group message which includes adults, but where communication is solely with the child, it is considered good practice to also include an adult, perhaps a parent, in the message. Where this is not possible, it is suggested that the message is kept by the sender for future reference if required.

For their safety, children should not be allowed to play in the entrance vestibule, outside entrance patio or rear grounds unless an adult is supervising.

If you suspect or are told of alleged abuse, you should do the following:

1. Report concerns as soon as is possible to the Safeguarding Lead, their Deputy, or Trustee Lead for Safeguarding.
2. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
3. Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from CCPAS.

If the young person is at immediate risk of significant harm, contact the Police or Social Services.

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

You may contact the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice: 0303 003 1111.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Do treat everyone with respect.

Do provide an example you wish others to follow - you are a role model to the young people.

Do plan activities that involve more than one other person being present or, at least, which are within sight or hearing of others.

Do respect a young person's right to personal privacy within the appropriate professional boundaries.

Do provide access for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have.

Do encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

Do remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

Do recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.

Do not permit abusive youth peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.

Do not play physical contact games with young people.

Do not have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.

Do not jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.

Do not allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes.

Do not exaggerate or trivialise child-abuse issues.

Do not show favouritism to any individual.

Do not make suggestive remarks or gestures.

Do not rely on just your good name to protect you.

Do not believe 'it could never happen to us' .