



Cornerstone Church Safeguarding Policy

Contents

Introduction

Recruitment

Code of Conduct

Advice on touch

Advice on transporting children

Registers and consents

Recommended staffing levels

Special needs

Health and safety

Advice on hearing a disclosure

Procedure for designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

List of related documents

Cornerstone Church Safeguarding Policy

The World Health Organization distinguishes four types of child maltreatment: physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional and psychological abuse; neglect.

This policy is intended to assist leaders and helpers in the implementation of safeguarding all young people we come into contact with as a church.

We, the people of Cornerstone are committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of all the children and vulnerable adults in our care. Many children are involved in the life of the church family, in worship and in various activities, under the guidance of a dedicated group of leaders and helpers. These adults give their time freely and generously so that our children and vulnerable adults can grow in the faith of Jesus Christ. Both children and adults need a warm, safe, secure and nurturing environment in which to work.

Recruitment

All leaders and helpers should:

- submit an application form with references
- complete a Confidential Declaration Form
- have a valid Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service, with barring information if eligible (non-Cornerstone disclosures under two years old will be accepted)
- accept that the role is a position of trust

All Cornerstone disclosures to be renewed every three years.

Code of Conduct

The Cornerstone leadership make the following expectations of conduct for those in a position of trust:

- all church workers must conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the reasonable expectations of someone who represents the Church both while on duty and also when off duty
- they must possess a personal copy of this policy and comply with it
- they must be willing to receive safeguarding training when it is offered within the church (this will ideally be an annual update)
- they will be seen as role models by the children or vulnerable adults with whom they are in contact at all times, including when they are off duty
- they must not in their private life engage in activities which could bring the church or their role in it into disrepute
- they must take care to observe appropriate boundaries between their work and their personal life. For example, they must ensure that all communications they may have with or about children or vulnerable adults are appropriate in their tone
- they must seek advice immediately if they come across a child or vulnerable adult who may have been harmed (including self-harm) or a colleague whose conduct appears inappropriate **SEE SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES**
- they must not expose themselves or others to material which is sexually explicit, profane, obscene, harassing, fraudulent, racially offensive, politically inflammatory, defamatory, or in violation of any British, European or international law
- they must inform the relevant church authorities promptly should any convictions, court orders or allegations of misconduct arise

- it is absolutely unacceptable for those in a position of trust to have sexual or inappropriate personal relationships with those for whom they are responsible. Anyone found to be in breach of this will be removed from all forms of leadership and children's work in Cornerstone and have their details passed to the police.

Leaders and helpers must:

- treat all children and young people with respect and dignity
- watch your own language, tone of voice and body language
- ensure all communications with and about children are appropriate in their tone.
- work within sight of another adult or in a 'publicly-accessible' area (e.g. open-doored activity room)
- ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet -toilet breaks should be organised for young children
- ensure that each group includes both a male and a female helper *wherever possible*
- ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone. Display Childline posters and the church's safeguarding procedures in clear and accessible view
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around
- administer any necessary First Aid with others around
- respond to accidents and make a note in the Accident Book
- plan trips and holidays carefully, including sleeping arrangements
- record any concerning incidents and give the information to your Group Leader - sign and date the record, and also print your name in capital letters - see guidance on recording safeguarding issues
- not be alone with a single young person at any time
- not use physical punishment to discipline children
- not invade a child's privacy whilst washing or toileting
- not play rough or sexually provocative games
- not be sexually suggestive about or to a child or young person even in fun
- not touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively
- not scapegoat, ridicule or reject any child, young person or group
- not show favouritism to any one child, young person or group
- not allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking especially that is overtly physical or sexual in nature – this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL); Penny Smith, or Youth leader; Fay Garrett or Vicki Ager, depending on your level of concern
- not give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own if possible - in cases where this is unavoidable, advice should be sought from the young person's parents and the church's Children's or Youth Work Leader in advance
- not invite a child to your home alone
- not permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying
- not allow unknown adults access to children - visitors should always be accompanied by a known person
- not allow strangers to give children lifts
- not behave in work or in your private life in a way which would bring your role or the church into disrepute.

Advice on Touch

It is Cornerstone's aim for church groups to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse.

There must be no physical punishment of any kind nor should any sanction ridicule or humiliate a child. Avoid

unnecessary informal touching. Avoid taking young children to the toilet, but when unavoidable make sure another adult is informed or organise a toilet break for the whole group.

Young children may sometimes need comforting; make sure they are responded to warmly but with other adults around. First Aid should be administered with others around. Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming himself or others. Use the least possible force, (preferably with others present if deemed safe) and inform the parents and church youth leaders as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to Cornerstone's DSL. Colleagues must be prepared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately. Such concerns should be reported directly to the DSL.

Advice on Transporting Children By Private Car

Transport and travel arrangements are the responsibility of parents if they make informal arrangements among themselves. They are the responsibility of the church if church workers organize or provide them. Children and young people should not be transported in a private car without the prior consent of their parents or carers. This also applies to giving lifts to and from a church activity.

All those who drive children on church-organised activities should normally be over 25 and should have held a full driving license for over two years. All cars that carry children must be comprehensively insured. The insured person must make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts during church activities. They must inform their insurance company that lifts may be given. There are separate requirements governing minibuses.

All cars that carry children should be clean and in a roadworthy condition. All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are no seat belts children should not be carried. Take care in assisting children to board or leave vehicles, taking account of the guidance on touch. At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number. There must be a seat belt for every passenger.

Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their license should inform Cornerstone's DSL. Any driver who has an "unspent" conviction for a drink driving offence or for Dangerous Driving or Racing on the Highway should not transport children.

There should preferably be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. This may be particularly needed if a child is known to have a disability or special need. This adult should sit in the back, behind the driver, with the child in the seat beside him or her. If in an emergency a driver has to transport one child on his or her own, the child must sit in the back of the car. To ensure that these guidelines are adhered to it would be appropriate to obtain a signed undertaking, covering the above issues, from those people who are prepared to transport children in their cars. Drivers who are not children's workers should either have a DBS record themselves or have a DBS-checked church worker with them in the vehicle.

Registers and Consents

A Registration Form should be completed for every child or young person who attends groups. A Register should be kept of all children and young people's groups that meet regularly. For one-off events a list of the children should be kept. All Registers and lists should be retained. Written parental consent should be obtained for all activities that involve leaving the church premises. ***See Children and Youth Groups Registration Form***

Recommended Staffing Levels

The minimum recommended staffing levels for children's groups are given below: More help may be required if children are being taken out or undertaking physical activities.

0 – 2 years 1 person for every 3 children 1 : 3

2 – 3 years 1 person for every 4 children 1 : 4

4 – 8 years 1 person for every 8 children 1 : 8

Over 8 years 1 person for the first 8 children then 1 more for every extra 12 children 1:12

Each group should have at least 2 adults and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female.

If groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with doors open then one person per group is allowed.

Young people aged 16 and 17 may help with groups but should be supervised by an adult helper who will be responsible for ensuring good practice and that child protection procedures are followed. Young people under 16 may help with other things but should not have responsibility for children.

Additional adults may help on one or two occasions but must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.

Special Needs

We welcome children and young people with special needs to groups. Try to make the premises, toilets and access suitable for people with disabilities. Ask the parent about how best to meet the child's special needs, and do not see this as the responsibility only of the child's parent. If premises are being designed or refurbished, take the opportunity to anticipate the possible special needs of future children and adults; advice is available. ***See the guidance Welcome, Inclusion, Respect.***

Health and Safety

Insurance, First Aid Kit and fire precautions are checked at least once a year.

Written risk assessments should be made before taking children on activities outside the premises. See ***Activity Risk Assessment form.***

These are the recommended standards for premises:

Meeting places should be warm, well lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter. Toilets and hand basins should be easily available. Hygienic drying facilities should be provided. Roller towels should be avoided. Ensure you have enough space available for the intended activity. If food is regularly prepared for children on the premises, the facilities will need to be checked by the Environmental Health Officer and a Food Handling and Hygiene Certificate acquired. Children's packed lunches should be kept refrigerated. Drinks should always be available.

Groups must have access to a phone in order to call for help if necessary.

Adults should be aware of the fire procedures. Fire extinguishers should be regularly checked and smoke detectors fitted throughout the premises. A fire drill should be carried out regularly. No smoking should be permitted in the areas where there are children.

Alcohol or intoxicating drugs must not be used by those who have children and young people in their care or at a time when their use could affect their care.

Unaccompanied children and young people should not walk to or from your premises along dark or badly lit paths.

A First Aid kit and Accident Book is available on the premises. The contents of the First Aid Kit should be stored in a waterproof container and be clearly marked. Each group should designate one worker to check the contents at prescribed intervals. All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge and Cornerstone will periodically encourage access to First Aid training. A list of first aiders in the church should be compiled and kept available. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book.

Advice on Hearing a Child Abuse Disclosure

If a child asks to talk in confidence **do not** promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer a child or young person (under 16) who is at risk. Explain that you may have to get other people to help if they are being harmed.

Ensure you have as much privacy as possible but try to have another adult present when the child is speaking to you.

Stay calm.

Listen to the child attentively- maintain eye contact

Allow the child to talk but do not press for information except to clarify what has happened. Do not use leading questions (questions which imply a certain answer) Tell the child that they are not to blame for anything that has happened. Reassure the child that they were right to tell. Let the child know that other people will have to be told so that the abuse can stop. Try to explain what will happen next in a way the child can understand. Reassure the child that he or she will continue to receive support during the difficult time to come. Make a written record, quoting the child's actual words. Sign and date this. ***See Recording Safeguarding Concerns form.***

Discuss with your DSL immediately but do not delay if they are unavailable. Your next port of call in the absence of the DSL is one of the church's youth leaders who will make a referral to the local authority children's social care service and inform the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser of your referral.

Seek support for yourself from an appropriate person within the church.

Procedure for Designated Safeguarding Lead

The following procedure is for the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), or in the event of their unavailability, a youth leader **if someone suspects a child has been abused and urgent action is required.**

Make a telephone referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care service (formerly Social Services).

Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child & family e.g. the child's name, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP (if known)

Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form, letter or email.

Remember that the child & family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this will put the child's welfare at risk.

With serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The Duty Social Worker will give advice over this if necessary.

Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team. Notify a church leader immediately.

In all cases, make sure the concerned adult notes as accurately as they can the details of the allegation, all that happens, and anything that was said, which struck them as particularly significant. Ensure you note from the church's registration records the child's name, age, address, telephone number and GP. Remember that, under the Data Protection Act, you will need to make any notes available to the child & family if they request them.

The notes must be kept in a safe, secure place indefinitely. Notify the Group Leader and appropriate church leader, always bearing in mind the need for confidentiality. Seek support for yourself from an appropriate person within the church

Related documents

Safeguarding procedures

Welcome, Inclusion, Respect document

Activity risk assessment form

Recording safeguarding concerns

Accident and Incident form

List of First-aiders

Children and Youth Groups Registration Form

Confidential Declaration form