

PCC OF THE PARISH OF STRATFORD ST JOHN WITH CHRIST CHURCH AND ST JAMES

Child Protection Policy for work with Children and Young People at St. John's Church, Stratford E15

This Policy covers the various groups which are part of St. John's Church:

- ◆ The Ark
- ◆ St. John's Sunday Club (Sparklers, Kingdom Kids, The 'J' Team, Teen LIVE!)
- ◆ St. John's YPF Group

These groups meet regularly on a Sunday during the morning service time, and occasionally for special activities at other times. In most cases a parent/carer is on site (in the Church service) while the groups are meeting, but this is not a requirement.

St. John's Church, Stratford E15, recognises the importance of its ministry to children and young people and its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the church's care.

Mission Statement

As part of its mission St. John's Church, Stratford E15, is committed to:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people as well as promoting their welfare and protection
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the children's/youth workers within the church
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers
- Supporting those affected by abuse
- Ensuring that pastoral support is given to those who have abused
- Making links with statutory childcare authorities and other organisations if and when required

THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The PCC of the Parish of Stratford St. John with Christ Church and St James recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. It also acknowledges that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. The PCC of the Parish of Stratford St. John with Christ Church and St James has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this Policy with references to the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy for all work with children and young people at St. John's Church. If and when required, the named nominated person for St. John's Church, with support from the PCC, will work with the statutory agencies and other organisations.

Appointment, Support and Training

St. John's Church, Stratford E15, will follow the guidelines in the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy when recruiting new volunteers/employed people to work with children and young people. Each person is expected to complete a CRB application form, complete the Confidential Disclosure Form and supply names for 2 references to be taken up. All children/youth workers will attend a Diocesan Child Protection Training Course and have on-going child protection training.

Children's Activities

Any planned activities for children and young people at St. John's Church, Stratford E15, will follow the good practice and health and safety guidelines contained in the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy (Section 8) for activities on and off church premises.

The adult/child ratios will be observed for activities involving children under 8 years of age (Section 8:2). Anyone under the age of 18 years cannot be counted in the ratio as a helper and should never be left in charge of a group of children.

For groups with children and young people aged 8 – 17 there are 2 leaders for each group each week on a rota basis. From time to time groups will divide into workshops with a leader for each workshop, this is always in an open-plan format. No adult will ever be alone with a child or young person.

A Central Membership Register is kept of everyone involved in St. John's Church groups for children and young people and this includes written parental permission. The Central Membership Register is updated annually each September. A Weekly Group Register is kept of all children and young people in case the building has to be evacuated in an emergency.

St. John's Church, Stratford E15, will ensure that the premises in which children and young people meet are of a good and acceptable standard and follow the guidelines in the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy (Section 8:5).

Parental consent and information regarding health and allergies will be obtained for all trips and activities outside St. John's Church and grounds.

Transport for trips and other outside activities will be subject to risk assessment prior to each journey. Where public transport is to be used, risk assessment will cover the following: proposed route; meeting arrangements; instructions to children/young people; adult supervision required; transportation of luggage; use of escalators, stairs and platforms; boarding/alighting buses and trains; tickets and seating; arrangements in the event of a medical emergency or lost child/young person; delayed or cancelled trains/unexpected route changes. Guidelines in the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy (Section 8:9) for the use of private cars and minibuses will be followed, where required.

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Under no circumstances will a church worker at St. John's Church carry out their own investigation into allegations or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of the information will do the following:

- Write down what they have been told or seen as quickly as possible after the incident, without adding their own thoughts or feelings. Sign and date. This record must be factual and as accurate as possible. The person will use the words expressed by the individual.
- The person will inform the nominated person (Mrs Carol Richards) as soon as possible. If Carol Richards is not available the person will speak to the Incumbent (Rev David Richards) or the Curate (Rev Darren McIndoe) or a Churchwarden – provided that the allegation is not against them. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone else.

The procedure in the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy (Section 3) will be followed. The Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will be notified as soon as possible after the incident and when a referral is made to Social Services or Police.

Support for those who have been abused

Pastoral care and working with statutory agencies as appropriate should be offered to these individuals. The Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Adviser will give guidance.

Working with Offenders

The Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy advises that where a known offender is in the Church a written agreement should be in place outlining what this person is able to take part in and what is not suitable for them to take part in. However, very large numbers of children and young people attend St. John's Church and there is no service that could be designated for the offender to attend where there would definitely be no children or young people present. If there is a known offender in the Church the Incumbent will work with the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Adviser to make arrangements for the person to attend a more suitable place of worship.

A copy of the Chelmsford Diocesan Child Protection Policy can be seen in the St. John's Church Office.

This Child Protection Policy was endorsed by the PCC on 10th September 2007 and will be reviewed annually. It was last reviewed on 8th September 2008. Every adult working with children at St. John's Church will receive a copy of this policy. The Policy is also available on the St. John's Church website as www.stjohnse15.co.uk
