Guidance policy for working with children and young people at Locking Castle Church

A model of safer working

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6. Terminology used in this code:

    - The word 'child' refers to any child or young person under the age of 18.
    - The term 'group leader' is used to refer to the person with overall responsibility for a group or activity, who is answerable to the Parochial Church Council.

1. Guidelines for individual workers

Leaders must be familiar with the LCC CYF Activities Contract and abide by it at all times eg not letting children into the groups without the signed consent form.

1.1. You should:

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
- Always aim to work within sight of another adult.
- Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet; Toilet breaks should be organized for young children.
- Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.

- Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting, but make sure there are other adults around. If any activity requires physical contact, ensure that the child and parents are aware of this and its nature beforehand.
- Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.
- Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed.
- Record any concerning incidents and give the information to your group Leader. Sign and date the record.
- Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the safeguarding co-ordinator.

You should not:

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. for comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child.
- Invade a child's privacy while washing or toileting; See toileting policy
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun.
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one child or group.
- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own.
- Smoke tobacco in the presence of children.
- Drink alcohol when responsible for young people.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children.
- Invite a child to your home alone.
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organized group occasions.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person.
- Allow strangers to give children lifts.

1.2. Touch

- Church-sponsored groups and activities should provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people; while avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. Child abuse is harm of a very serious nature so that it is unlikely that any type of physical contact in the course of children and youth work could be misconstrued as abuse. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the church safeguarding co-ordinator.
- All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs 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.

2. Additional guidelines for group leaders

2.1. In addition to the above the group leader should:

- Ensure any health and safety requirements are adhered to.
- Undertake risk assessments with appropriate action taken and record kept.
- Keep register and consent forms up to date.
- Have an awareness, at all times, of what is taking place and who is present.
- Create space for children to talk – either formally or informally.
- Liaise with safeguarding co-ordinator over good practice for safeguarding.
- Always inform the safeguarding co-ordinator of any specific safeguarding concerns that arise. The Safeguarding co-ordinator will liaise with the diocesan safeguarding adviser.
- Liaise with the ECC.

3. Further considerations for residential events and activities

As well as the general guidance, owing to the necessity for 24/7 care, the increased level of responsibility, and greater liability concerns, extra consideration should be given at residential camps and events.

3.1. Alcohol

- There should be no alcohol consumed by you or any member of your team while the residential event is running. Even in minimal amounts alcohol can lower your response time, invalidate your liability insurance, and most importantly diminish the level of care you can provide to the children or young people you have responsibility for.

3.2. Supervision

- With reference to the recommendations in section 6.1, consideration must also be given to unforeseen injury or sickness to leaders and supervision on secure sites and public places.

3.2.1. Injury and sickness in leaders is a real possibility, as such the minimum requirement should not be considered appropriate unless there is a clear and

effective contingency should one of your leaders fall ill or become unable to support the residential activity.
3.2.2. Any leaders staying 'off-site' at a residential cannot be considered as part of your staffing ratios
3.2.3. On a secure site (see 3.3) all children and young people must know where they can find a leader and how they contact their leaders at all times (all leaders that are a part of the ratio must be available)
3.2.4. In public places, no young person should ever be alone, and in circumstances where the leaders deem it as safe to be out-of-sight (see section 2.1 – risk assessments) young people should know where their leaders are at all times and never be more than 5 minutes away.

3.3. Externally run events

There are many events and activities that are run outside of The Church that respect and build on the central tenets of our faith, these can be excellent opportunities for young people's faith to be fed and nourished. As we value the needs and wellbeing of young people, we only recommend youth events that have:

- a clear dry-site policy
- a published safeguarding policy that is in keeping with the guidelines laid out on the Locking Castle Church website
- a clear structure for reporting safeguarding issues and concerns at the event (this should include oversight from at least one person outside of event management)
- camp sites and retreat centres should be secure sites with clear boundaries and procedures for checking the right of any person to be on site (whether this be though security and event tags at an open-air events or simply locked and secured doors at retreat centres)
- an appropriate capacity for first aid.

All such events should have details of these requirements on their websites and or event publicity. If you are in doubt please contact the event directly or get in touch with your CYF lead.

4. Responding to child protection concerns

4.1. Do not try to deal with any child protection concern on your own. Always tell your group leader and safeguarding co-ordinator. Agree between you who will take what action and when.

4.2. If you are not sure if child abuse is involved, or if you have concerns about a child and you need someone to talk things over with, then again you should contact your group leader or safeguarding co-ordinator. The Local Authority Children's Social Care Duty Officer can also be a source of advice.

4.3. Always make notes about a possible child protection incident or disclosure as accurately as possible, as soon as possible. These should cover what has happened, in what context, and anything that seemed particularly significant. Quote the child's words exactly where possible. Try if possible to note from the register the child's full name, age, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP. Remember to sign the record and add your name, role, date of incident and date of the recording. Blank incident reports held in main office, prayer room and CYF lead.

4.4. The following are all important points which will help anyone faced with this difficult situation:

- Ensure all notes are kept in a safe place;
- If a child asks to talk in confidence do not promise confidentiality – you have a duty to refer a child/young person who is at risk to the statutory agencies;
- Always explain that you may have to get other people to help;
- Stay calm;
- Listen to the child attentively;
- Maintain eye contact;
- Allow the child to talk, but do not press for information or ask leading questions;
- 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 and why;
- 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.

4.5. Imminent risk

- If you encounter a child in a situation where the child is in imminent danger, you should act immediately to secure the safety of the child. Seek the assistance of the police and then make a referral to Local Authority Children's Social Care and inform Bath & Wells diocese.
- If a child needs emergency medical attention, this should be sought immediately and directly from the emergency services. Parents, if available, should be kept fully informed.

4.6. What to do if you suspect a child is at risk or has been abused.

- Agree with your group leader who will make the referral
- Make an immediate telephone referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care and inform Bath & Wells diocese..

Make it clear from the first point of contact that you are making a child protection referral.

- Describe the event or disclosure and give information about the child and family, for example the child's name, date of birth, address, telephone number and GP if known.
- Follow up your telephone call with a completed referral form (sometimes available on the Local Authority web site) or letter. If there is no acknowledgement within 48 hours, chase it.
- Remember that the child & family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this would put the welfare of the child or another person at further risk. If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral. The Duty Social Worker will give you advice over this if necessary.
- Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team.
- Say if you do not want your details disclosed to the family.
- For out of hours referrals, call the Emergency Social Work Team or where urgent, the police and Bath & Wells diocese safeguarding team.
- Be prepared to have further discussions with the social work team or the police investigation team.
- Say if you do not want your details disclosed to the family.
- For out of hours referrals, call the Emergency Social Work Team or where urgent, the police.

5. Guidelines for good practice for church sponsored activities for children and young people

5.1. Special needs

Welcome children and young people with special needs to the group. 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. Disability legislation requires organizations to take reasonable steps to meet the needs of disabled people and this includes children.

5.2. Consent

Consent needs to be from a parent or person with parental responsibility. It can be from the child or young person if he or she has sufficient age and understanding in relation to the specific issue. So, for example, while parental consent is always required for a group residential holiday, a teenager would usually be able to consent to the photos from the holiday being displayed in church. You should record who has given consent for any specific activity.

5.3. Registration

A registration form should be completed for every child or young person who attends groups or activities. The form should be updated annually and include the following:

- Name and address,
- Date of birth,
- Emergency contact details,
- Medical information,
- Any special needs including activities that the child is unable to take part in,
- Consent for emergency medical treatment,
- Consent for photographs and videos if relevant,
- Separate consent should be obtained for one-off events and activities, for example swimming, and also for outings, weekends away, etc.
- All personal details and consent forms must be stored securely,
- Any group that includes children who are under 8 years old and that meets regularly for more than two hours in any one day may need to register with OFSTED. Please contact OFSTED for advice.

7. Recommended staffing levels

The staffing levels set out do not apply to the Family Room during services, as there are no 'staff' present, only congregation with their children/grandchildren. If the staffing levels are not in place (ie for other CYF activities), the event must not go ahead unless a risk assessment is in place agreed by Cathy and Andy.

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

0–2 yrs	1 adult for every 3 children 1:3
2–3 yrs	1 adult for every 4 children 1:4
4–8 yrs	1 adult for every 6 children 1:6
9-12yrs	1 adult for every 8 children 1:8
13–18yrs	1 adult for every 10 children 1-10

- Each group should have at least two adults, and it is recommended that there should be at least one male and one female unrelated, where possible.
- If small groups are in the same room or adjoining rooms with open access between them then it is possible to have only one adult per group, dependent on the nature of the activity.
- Young people who are being encouraged to develop their leadership skills through helping should always be overseen by an appointed worker who will be responsible for ensuring that good practice and safeguarding procedures are followed and the work they are doing is appropriate to both their age and understanding.

- Adults who assist on one or two occasions must be responsible to an appointed worker. Thereafter they should become part of the team and be properly appointed through the normal recruitment process.
- Safe environment
- Display both the NSPCC Childline telephone number 0800 111 in a prominent place where children and young people can see it and the Family Lives Parentline Plus 0808 800 222 number for parents.
- Undertake a risk assessment for each activity and in greater detail for an unusual activity or when away from the usual location.
- Insurance, First Aid kit and fire precautions should be checked, and a Health and Safety Check should be completed regularly with reference to the following minimum standards:

6.2. Venue

- Meeting places should be warm, well-lit and well ventilated. They should be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Electric sockets should be covered.
- Toilets and hand basins should be easily available with hygienic drying facilities
- Appropriate space and equipment should be available for any 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
- Unaccompanied children and young people should be encouraged not to walk to or from your premises along dark or badly lit paths.
- A First Aid kit and accident book should be 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. First aid kits and accident book in kitchen and main office.
- All staff and volunteer workers should be encouraged to have some First Aid knowledge, and the parish should encourage access to First Aid training. A list of first aiders in the parish should be compiled and kept available. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book. First aiders are Andy Pearce, Cathy Bond, Dan Dinsmore, Susan Baldwin, Jutta Stanley and Vanessa Court.

6.3. E Safety

- Ensure all electronic communications are appropriate and professional.
- If using e-technology as a group activity, ensure that an adult worker knows and understands what is happening within the group.
- Do not make any relationship with a child (other than family members) through a social networking site.
- Maintain a log of all electronic contact with individuals or groups including messaging and texting.

7. Transporting children on behalf of the church

7.1. Drivers

- All those who drive children on church-organized activities should have held a full and clean driving licence for over two years.
- Drivers who are not children's workers should be recruited for the task through the normal recruitment process.
- Any driver who has an endorsement of 6 points or more on their licence should inform the group leader and the church/parish safeguarding co-ordinator/church/circuit safeguarding representative.
- Any driver who has an unspent conviction for any serious road traffic offence should not transport children for the church.
- Drivers must always be in a fit state i.e. not over-tired; not under the influence of alcohol; not taking illegal substances; not under the influence of medicine which may induce drowsiness.

7.2. Private car

- 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 formally arranged lifts to and from a church activity.
- All cars that carry children should be comprehensively insured for both private and business use. The insured person should make sure that their insurance covers the giving of lifts relating to church-sponsored activities.
- All cars that carry children should be in a roadworthy condition.
- All children must wear suitable seat belts and use appropriate booster seats. If there are insufficient seat belts, additional children should not be carried.
- At no time should the number of children in a car exceed the usual passenger number.
- There should be a non-driving adult escort as well as the driver. 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.

7.3. Minibus or coach

- Workers and helpers should sit among the group and not together.
- If noise or behaviour appears to be getting out of control, stop the vehicle until calm is restored.
- Before using a minibus, ensure you know the up-to-date regulations for its use and have had a trial drive.

Telephone numbers: Police 101 or 999 in an emergency
Children's services 01275 888808
Bath & Wells diocese safeguarding caseworker 01749 588905