



# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

Covering all areas of children and youth work

October 2017

Emmanuel Church Oxford is committed to the nurturing and safeguarding of children and young people. It is the responsibility of every church member involved in children's and youth work to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children in their care and to report any suspected abuse according to the procedure in this document. Emmanuel Church Oxford is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those church members who volunteer with children's or youth work.

For the purposes of this document, a child/youth is any person under eighteen years of age.

## **SUPERVISION**

Children must be supervised at all times whenever or wherever the church meets by their parent/s or carer/s. Safeguarding responsibility for the child or young person passes from the parent/carer to the children's/youth worker from their arrival at the meeting room until they are collected by their parent or carer. Children's or youth workers will remain with the children or youths until they are collected by their parent or carer. On Sunday mornings workers should not allow children to go back to the main meeting venue without their parent/carer.

As children/young people arrive at their meeting room they will be marked in the appropriate register.

In each age group there will always be at least two workers. All workers should recognize that safeguarding is a priority and as a consequence they may be asked to assist with children's or youth work when it is not their 'turn' if insufficient workers are available to achieve this.

Should children's or youth work include activities that require the children or youth to leave the usual meeting venue, permission from the parents/carers will be obtained beforehand.

Parents/Carers who regularly attend Emmanuel Church Oxford and leave their children in the care of children's workers will be asked to fill out a registration form that includes details of any medical conditions, special educational needs or allergies that may be relevant. These details will be shared with the relevant

children's workers and updated regularly. Guests who leave their children in the children's work will be asked to provide any relevant information upon registering their children at the appropriate venue.

## **ABUSE**

All those who volunteer to work with children or youth in Emmanuel Church Oxford receive training in recognizing possible signs of abuse, (including bullying) and how to report suspected abuse.

All those who volunteer to work with children or youth in Emmanuel Church Oxford will be required to complete an individual disclosure with the Disclosure and Barring Service facilitated by CCPAS (The Churches Child Protection Advisory Service).

The recruiting officers registered within Emmanuel Church Oxford are: **Joel Grates, David May, Jessica Vaughan and Benjamin Hamilton.**

## **ADVOCACY**

The safeguarding advocates at Emmanuel Church Oxford are: **Wendy Partridge** and **Graham Hope.**

The deputy advocate is: **Ruth Bedford.**

## **RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers will be recruited on the understanding that they wish to be involved in leading or assisting with activities or events for children and youth at Emmanuel Church Oxford. Any person expressing an interest in volunteering with children's work must be at least 14 years old. Any person expressing an interest in volunteering with youth work must be at least 18 years old. As stated above, all volunteers will be required to complete an individual disclosure with the Disclosure and Barring Service. Volunteers will be recruited at the ministry team leaders discretion (with reference to the church leadership team) and volunteers will be asked to step down if their conduct fails to comply with this policy document and it's appendices.

# PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT EMMANUEL CHURCH OXFORD

## JELLY BEANS

Jelly Beans is a supervised crèche for babies and children, up to 2 years of age, during the church service on Sunday mornings. The activities in crèche are play-based with an optional singing and storytime during the session.

There is a minimum of three volunteers scheduled to serve on the crèche team each Sunday. The crèche team volunteers wear t-shirts clearly identifying them as those responsible for the children in the crèche and they wear them at the outset of the church service.

Parents/Carers are able to leave their children in the care of the Jelly Beans team for the duration of the sermon.

Parents/Carers may choose to remain with their children in the crèche. In this case they have no safeguarding responsibility for any children but their own.

Babies and children are registered upon their arrival at the crèche venue regardless of whether their parent/carer intends to leave them in crèche or remain with them.

Jelly Beans team volunteers will stay in the crèche venue and have responsibility for the children until all of them have been collected by their parents/carers at the close of the church meeting.

Jelly Beans team volunteers will not change soiled nappies. Should a baby or toddler need changing in crèche a Jelly Beans team volunteer will return to the main meeting venue and ask the relevant parent/carer to attend to the child. Changing facilities are available in the crèche venue.

Toilets are available in the crèche venue. Should a child need to use the toilet during a crèche session they will be escorted to the toilets by a crèche team volunteer. Another child will be asked to accompany them to ensure that no crèche team volunteer is alone with an individual child. Jelly Beans team volunteers will not do anything for a child that the child is able to do for themselves.

If a child becomes distressed in crèche and cannot be comforted or distracted a Jelly Beans team volunteer will return to the main meeting venue and ask the relevant parent/carer to return to Jelly Beans to care for the child.

Parents/carers may choose to leave drinks or snacks for their children. If so these will be clearly labelled as belonging to the child and cannot be shared with other children. Labels are available in Jelly Beans.

The storytime and singing is an optional activity and although Jelly Beans team volunteers may try some gentle persuasion, no child will be coerced or manipulated into taking part when they are unwilling to do so.

The crèche team leader is: **Kate Griffiths**.

## **BUBBLES**

Bubbles is an activity group for pre-school children from the age of 2 that runs during the church service on Sunday mornings.

Parents/carers can leave their children in the care of the Bubbles team for the duration of the sermon. There is a minimum of two Bubbles team volunteers scheduled to serve each Sunday.

Bubbles team volunteers wear T-shirts that clearly identify them as responsible for the children in Bubbles and they wear them from the beginning of the church meeting.

Children in Bubbles will be registered upon their arrival at the Bubbles venue and will be supervised at all times.

Bubbles team volunteers will not leave the venue until all of the children have been collected by their parent/carer at the close of the church meeting.

Toilets are available in the Bubbles venue. Should a child need the toilet during a Bubbles session a Bubbles team volunteer will escort them. Another child will be asked to accompany them to ensure that no Bubbles team volunteer is alone with an individual child.

Bubbles team volunteers will not do anything for a child that they are able to do for themselves.

The Bubbles session will include free play activities, storytime, discussion, structured play and craft activities and singing time. Children will be expected to join in with all the activities. Bubbles team volunteers may try gentle persuasion if a child is unwilling to participate but no child will be coerced or manipulated into taking part.

The Bubbles team leader is: **Sarah Norris**

## **KIDZONE**

Kidzone is an activity group for primary school aged children from reception to year 6 that runs during the church meeting on Sunday mornings.

Parents/Carers are able to leave their children in the care of the Kidzone team for the duration of the sermon.

There is a minimum of two Kidzone team volunteers scheduled to serve each Sunday.

Kidzone team volunteers wear T-shirts that clearly identify them as responsible for the children in Kidzone and they wear them from the beginning of the church meeting.

Children in Kidzone will be registered upon their arrival at the Kidzone venue and will be supervised at all times.

Kidzone team volunteers will not leave the venue until all of the children have been collected by their parent/carer at the close of the church meeting.

Toilets are available in the Kidzone venue. Should a child need the toilet during a Kidzone session a Kidzone team volunteer will escort them to the external toilet door and wait to escort them back again.

The Kidzone session will include structured play, role-play activities, stories, discussion, craft, worksheets and singing. Children will be expected to join in with all the activities. Kidzone team volunteers may try gentle persuasion if a child is unwilling to participate but no child will be coerced or manipulated into taking part.

The Kidzone East team leader is: **Ben Hamilton**

The Kidzone Central North leader is: **Laura Medler**

## **YOUTH**

Emmanuel runs an activity group for children in school years 7 to 13 that runs during the church meeting on Sunday mornings every other week.

Parents/Carers are able to leave their children in the care of the youth team for the duration of the sermon.

There is a minimum of two youth team volunteers scheduled to serve each Sunday. Children will be accompanied to and from the venue by the youth leaders.

Each session will involve games, discussions, Bible studies, team building activities, dramas and prayer. Young people will be invited to join in all of the activities but no one will be coerced or manipulated into taking part against their wishes.

In case of taking children out from a venue, see risk assessment.

The youth team leader is: **Ben Hamilton**

# PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED ABUSE

All children's work volunteers have training in the recognition of possible signs of abuse and the reporting procedure.

Any suspected abuse of children or any disclosure of abuse must be immediately reported to a Safeguarding Advocate and nobody else. It is particularly important that the suspicions or disclosure are not discussed with anyone else. The advocate will decide on the appropriate course of action.

Any reported case will be considered for referral to Social Services. This is the Advocates' responsibility.

In exceptional circumstances, when the advocate cannot be contacted and a child is at risk of death or significant physical harm a children's work volunteer does have the responsibility to contact Social Services directly. It must be stressed that this should only be undertaken if an advocate cannot be contacted. Should this situation arise the advocate needs to be contacted at the earliest opportunity and the details of the referral should be made known to them.

Any crèche team volunteer who has reported an incident to the advocate does not have the right to know any further details that may emerge, however they do have the right to know that steps have been taken to ensure the child's safety and will be informed so by the advocate.

## HANDLING DISCLOSURE (IF A CHILD WANTS TO TALK ABOUT ABUSE.)

- Accept what the child says; do not show signs of disbelief or surprise.
- Be honest; DO NOT promise complete confidentiality.
- Observe the child's appearance and behaviour.
- Do not blame the child.
- Be aware that they may be frightened and/or have been threatened.
- Avoid asking 'closed' or 'leading' questions.
- Frequently reflect back to confirm what the child has said.
- Be supportive.
- Let the child know that you will have to speak to the advocate about what they have told you.

As soon as possible after talking with the child, write an account in as much detail as possible using the same words that the child used without interpretation or elaboration. Keep these notes confidential. Report the matter to the advocate as soon as possible and submit the notes to them. Do not keep a copy of the notes you make.

# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

## **PHYSICAL ABUSE** (WHERE A CHILD'S BODY IS HURT OR INJURED).

- Unexplained injuries or burns (particularly if they are recurrent)
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries (or various excuses given for the same injury).
- Admission of punishment that seems excessive.
- Bald patches.
- Withdrawal from physical contact.
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather, reluctance to change or go swimming.
- Fear of returning home.
- Fear of medical help or injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Self-destruction tendencies.
- Aggression towards others.
- Running away.
- Delay in seeking help.
- Changing story.
- Previous history.
- Site of injury in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games etc. number of injuries, or injuries of different ages.

## **EMOTIONAL ABUSE** (WHERE CHILDREN DO NOT RECEIVE LOVE OR AFFECTION, ARE FRIGHTENED BY TAUNTS OR THREATS OR ARE GIVEN TOO MUCH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR AGE).

- Physical, mental and emotional development impaired.
- Over-reaction to mistakes.
- Admission of punishment that appears excessive.
- Continual self-deprecation.
- Sudden speech disorder.
- Fear of new situations.
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations.
- Neurotic behaviour, e.g.: rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking.
- Self-mutilation/overdose etc.
- Drug abuse.
- Running away.
- Stealing, scavenging, lying.
- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Attention seeking behaviour.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE.** (WHERE ADULTS OR OTHER CHILDREN USE A CHILD TO SATISFY SEXUAL DESIRES.)

- Behavioural problems.
- Partial disclosure.

- Sexualised play/behaviour.
- Sexually precocious behaviour.
- Pre-occupation with genitals.
- Excessive masturbation.
- Mood changes.
- Bed wetting/soiling.
- Soiling.
- Finding some positions uncomfortable or painful to sit in.
- Repeated urinary tract infections/tummy pains.
- Eating disorders.
- Attention seeking behaviour.
- Vivid dreams or nightmares, particularly of a sexual nature.
- Detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Sexually provocative or seductive behaviour with adults.

**NEGLECT** (WHERE ADULTS FAIL TO CARE FOR CHILDREN AND DO NOT PROTECT THEM FROM DANGER, SERIOUSLY IMPAIRING THEIR HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT).

- Constant hunger.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Constant tiredness.
- Poor state of clothing.
- Emaciation.
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school.
- Untreated medical problems.
- Destructive tendencies.
- Low self-esteem.
- Neurotic behaviour.
- Poor social relationships.
- Running away.
- Compulsive stealing or scavenging.
- Failure to thrive.



# GUIDELINES FOR SELF-PROTECTION

All children's work volunteers should be aware of the responsibility placed upon them in caring for, teaching and playing with the children and young people in Emmanuel Church Oxford. All volunteers should exercise common sense when interacting with children, but in particular they should,

- Treat all children with respect and the dignity befitting their age.
- Be mindful of their use of language, their tone of voice and their body language.
- Avoid rough, overly physical or sexually inappropriate games.
- In the event of any injury to a child, accidental or otherwise, always inform the child's parent/carer.
- Avoid ridiculing, scapegoating or sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child.
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact of any kind.
- No physical punishment of any kind should be administered by any children's work volunteer.
- Avoid extended hugs and never encourage kisses from children.
- Do not let a child involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical. If a child touches you in an inappropriate place ensure that you inform the advocate. It could be a totally innocent touch so do not make the child feel like it was wrong but do not ignore it as it could place you in a vulnerable position.
- If a child soils their nappy or their clothes ask their parents/carers to come and change them.
- Do not go to the toilet alone with one child. Guard the privacy of children on toilet trips and never do something for a child that they can do for themselves.
- Do not place yourself in a situation where you are spending a prolonged amount of time alone with one child. If you are alone in a room with children ensure that the door is open.
- Do not invite a child to go to your home unless they are part of a group and you have the permission of the parent/carer.
- Avoid giving children lifts in your car alone. If it is unavoidable, ensure the child sits in the back and wears a seat belt and make a direct journey to your destination.
- Do not share sleeping accommodation with children when away overnight. In a residential setting never, under any circumstances, take children into your bedroom.
- When taking children on an outing or trip, think about how you may appear to the public when dealing with the children and plan the trip accordingly. (This may mean that disruptive children cannot go on outings).

Lastly, if any children's work volunteer observes another volunteer behaving in a way that contradicts this policy document or in a way that could be misconstrued they should immediately address that volunteer with their concerns and report those concerns to the advocate as soon as possible. Never keep suspicions of abuse by a fellow volunteer to yourself.