



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults in the Diocese of Wakefield

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Promoting Safer Churches

I have been with the Wakefield Diocese for almost ten months, and am frequently heard to say that 'I simply don't know where the time goes'. It is certainly true that time flies when you are having fun. It is with great pleasure that I am once again able to spend my days in doing what I like best, which is to help people deal with and manage what can often be a very difficult subject.

Child Protection and Safeguarding is, thankfully, something that most of us never have direct experience of. If we are to promote safer churches, then it is in the context of a safe diocese, and my task is both to take a lead role and also to encourage others to share this with me. Now I have also added concern for Vulnerable adults to my work.

Part of my role is to be available to you for advice and help whenever this is needed. The opportunity to share concerns with another colleague is often the key to clarity about next steps. Hopefully my 26 years of experience in this field will be helpful. I have good working relationships with other professionals both inside and outside the Church to whom I can turn should we not be able to resolve a situation.

I intend to support advice and discussion with good documentation. Information about new resources is covered in this newsletter, and these will all be available on the Diocesan

website and via a special mailing to clergy and child protection officers.

Finally, there is to be a change in the way that the whole CRB process is managed at Church House. Ann Hall, who has been a real stalwart in this field for many years, has decided to concentrate her time working with the Children and Youth Team. Ann's

expertise and knowledge will be a hard act to follow, but I am extremely grateful that Janet Allen will be taking over the role from the start of January. Janet will assist me with some of the child protection administration responsibilities and together we hope to work as a good and effective team.

Resource check list:

- Diocesan CRB Guidance
- Diocesan Guidance for Child Protection Officers
- Diocesan Referral Form
- Diocesan Code of Practice (July 2008)
- Diocesan Photographic Policy
- Matters 2 Me – a new resource
- Latest information from CRB
- Childline poster
- Confidential Declaration Form



Diocesan CRB Guidance



CRB checks are one of the tools of our trade when it comes to creating a Safer Church. Whilst everyone, understandably, complains about the frustrations of having to have more than one check, the sentiments expressed by Sir Michael Bichard about making life as difficult as possible for would be abusers are still sensible, despite him having made them when CRB checks were first introduced five years ago.

Whilst we await changes to the process, due in October 2009, it

is important that we continue to make appropriate use of CRB checks as they are our only means of checking whether those who apply to work with children are suitable to do so.

Sadly, there is no national guidance as to who should or should not be checked, and with the support of the Wakefield Diocesan Safeguarding group and some advice from the CRB themselves I have produced the enclosed guidance which was

approved at Bishops Council on September 4th.

My purpose in producing this guidance is certainly not to be prescriptive, and the guidance itself will certainly be reviewed in twelve months, but is a genuine attempt on my part to simplify what can be troubling for some people in their operation of the system.

However, do please contact either myself or Janet if you have any queries.

**Being Safe
is about
being Brave**

Diocesan Guidance for Child Protection Officers

This booklet has been produced for those newly appointed to, or for those who are thinking about becoming a Parish Child Protection Officer.

In drawing together the expectations, I have made use of

the requirements contained in 'Protecting All God's Children' (the child protection policy for the Church of England 2004). It can be purchased through the Wakefield Resource Centre at Church House or is

downloadable from the Church of England web site.

The document is intended as a reference source and does not seek to replace the training that is available through the Diocese.



Diocesan Referral Form

Sometimes it will be necessary to make a formal referral of a case to the local Social Services team. If you are unsure or worried about how to do this or what it entails then do please contact me. It is OK for you to use my mobile phone number if I am not at Church House – 07800 740001 .

It is important that any referral is followed up in writing to Social Services, using the new Diocesan

referral form. I also need a copy of this, which means that we all have a written record of the concerns, and also the actions that have been taken.

This will include a record of our discussion, any actions that I have advised you to do, and/or the outcome of the referral to Social Services.

When an initial telephone call is made to Social Services it is also

a good thing to ask them when you can expect information back from them about how they are managing the case. You may need to be persistent as Social Service receive many referrals. The outcome of yours is vital to you should further action or concerns arise.

Contact details for Social Services are to be found on the Diocesan website – www.wakefield.anglican.org/safe.

**You must refer,
you must not investigate**

The Diocese of Wakefield wants to ensure that it is a safe place to live, worship and work.

As part of this process we want all of our parishes to take reasonable steps to promote safe working practices, undertake relevant training and follow procedures that are clear and up to date.

Although the vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best

outcomes for children and people in their care, it is recognized that in this area of work tensions and misunderstandings can occur.

Sadly, the behavior of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them, even though these may be malicious or misplaced.

Equally it must be recognized that some allegations may be genuine and that there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children.

It is therefore essential that we take all possible steps to safeguard children and young people and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so. This leaflet is intended to promote good practice and can be circulated widely. A more detailed document of good practice '**Safer working practice for adults who work with children**' can be found on the website. This is a national document and I would strongly encourage the use and endorsement of the advice in this publication.



We cannot prevent the birds of sorrow landing on our shoulders...

Diocesan Policy on the use of video/camcorders and the publication of photographs of children

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1988, churches must be very careful if they use photographs, videos and webcams of clearly identifiable people.

Whilst it is vital that we stay within these guidelines, it is equally important that through fear or uncertainty we fail to

celebrate children in our churches and leave them out of all images.

There is no doubt that the availability of the internet increases the opportunity for pedophiles to access and do damage to both children and adults, confirming that, sadly, the forces of evil are much quicker

to utilize new technology than either law enforcement or welfare agencies.

Our policy also includes two useful forms with which we can ensure that there is a clear understanding of the purpose and future use of all photographic material.



Matters 2 Me – a new Resource

Matters 2 Me is a new DVD resource which allows parents and people who work with children to keep them safe from abuse.

This DVD is animated and has been produced by a leading criminologist, a child abuse activist and a high profile leading child protection expert. It is

introduced by the award winning actress Julie Walters.

The DVD is the first of its kind and contains sections on grooming, Internet Abuse including chat rooms, webcam and mobile phones, and also bullying. It gives clear and simple advice about how to keep children safe, while at the same

time informing parents and people who work with children of the risks that children might face.

The DVD is aimed at children between 6 and 16 years and is available from leading stores and retail outlets or from the website: www.matters2me.org. It costs £9.95.

...but we can prevent them from nesting in our hair.



New information from CRB

The Independent Safeguarding Authority [ISA] has clarified its terminology to try to make it easier to distinguish between the decision-making function and the Registration scheme.

The ISA will be used when speaking about the group of people who are responsible for decisions to bar or not and the maintenance of the lists of those registered to work with children or the vulnerable.

The Vetting and Barring Scheme [VBS] is the service provided to allow people to apply for registration and inclusion on those lists.

A recent judicial review considered the case of an individual who made a claim to have 'unsubstantiated allegations' removed from police records, thereby stopping that information being released as part of his disclosure certificate.

The High Court dismissed his attempt to prevent the police from including the information in the CRB check and ruled that there was nothing unlawful about the police force's actions.

This is the first time that the inclusion of allegations as approved information has been

challenged through the Courts.

Since the launch of the CRB there has been debate about the impact of disclosing criminal history and the impact of Disclosure on the ability of ex-offenders to be rehabilitated.

If we receive a Disclosure containing convictions, we must consider certain facts in order to demonstrate that we treat applicants with a criminal record fairly.

More information on all of the issues raised here can be found on www.crb.gov.uk and clicking onto Disclosure News in the Quick Links section.



One of the most important words in Safeguarding is WE'.

Protecting All God's Children – House of Bishops Publication

Although this document is due to be reviewed and updated, it still provides a useful summary of the things that parishes should have in place. Most of these are reflected in the Guidance document on what is expected of a Parish Child Protection representative. However, one very practical application not included in the document is that parishes are expected to display the Childline telephone number – **0800 1111**.

Childline have produced attractive posters which nicely fulfill this requirement and I am enclosing one within the mailing to Child Protection Officers.

Protecting All God's Children is available from the Resource Centre at Church House Wakefield or via Church House Publishing (www.chpublishing.co.uk or downloadable from www.cofe.anglican.org).

Confidential Declaration Form

One of the ways that children and young people are protected from harm is to take care over the way adults are appointed when they are likely to have contact with children.

As part of a safe recruitment, and ongoing work to protect children and young people, candidates will be asked to make a Confidential Declaration, prior to being offered a post. Those whose role within the church requires them to have a CRB check will be asked to complete this Declaration annually.

The Confidential Declaration form can be downloaded from the Wakefield Diocesan website.

Confidential Declaration Form

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