



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

'Building a vibrant, Christ-centred community with a vision for extending His Kingdom'

**Ruislip Baptist Church, Manor Way, Ruislip, HA4 8HR
Tel: 01895 631239**

website: www.ruislipbaptistchurch.org

e-mail: office@ruislipbaptistchurch.co.uk

Last reviewed: May 2021

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

As a church we have a collective duty to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people below the age of 18 who are entrusted to us.

This booklet sets out guidelines for good working practices, and addresses the most common concerns and questions for those working with our children and young people.

Ruislip Baptist Church's *Safeguarding Policy* and *Safeguarding Procedures* are available in hard copy (via the Church Office) or can be read or downloaded from the RBC website.

KEY PEOPLE

Leaders and volunteer workers are not expected to take responsibility for making decisions or to act alone. The following people can be contacted to discuss any concerns with. They will provide advice or refer to outside agencies (social services, police, CCPAS (The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) when appropriate.

Derek Page –Senior Minister

Barry Dore – Assistant Minister

Vacant - Youth Worker (11-18 years)

Vacant - Children's Worker (0 – 11years)

Jane Golden – Designated Person with Safeguarding expertise

David Rose, Karen Ingram and Gaynor Desai – Children and Young People's Advocates

Helen Yarrow – Special Needs Co-ordinator and DBS administrator

If you have a question, please ask one of these people.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Guidelines for appointing Children's and Young People's Leaders and Helpers

If someone is interested in working in one of the children's or youth groups, or if the leader of one of our groups wishes to approach a new volunteer, they should speak to the Children's Worker or Youth Worker or the leader of the group who should then speak to the Senior or Assistant Minister before inviting them to join their team.

If a potential volunteer wishes to visit the group prior to becoming involved (perhaps to see how the group runs, or to see if they wish to volunteer in that group) they may visit for two sessions but should not be left in charge of children or young people and should always be accompanied by a registered leader of that group.

If it is agreed by all parties that they are suitable to join the group, the volunteer will be asked to complete an application form and supply two references, one of which should be from someone not connected with Ruislip Baptist Church. (The completed references should be shown to the Designated Person or the Safeguarding Administrator before being filed in a locked cabinet). The completed references and application form should be returned within six weeks of the first visit. They will also be required to complete an RBC Enhanced DBS form or give their DBS update service details before beginning their involvement with the group.

The final decision with regard to their appointment will be made by a member of the Ministry Team. In accordance with our church constitution any leader of a group must be a church member.

They will then be asked to sign a volunteer role description and agreement which explains the role and expectations of the volunteer.

Guidelines for supervision of children and youth activities

Recommended ratios of adults to children are as follows:

<u>Child's Age</u>	<u>Ratio of Adults : Children</u>
0 - 2	1 : 3
2 - 3	1 : 4

4 - 8	1 : 6
9 - 12	1 : 8
13 - 18	1 : 10

Consider the gender balance of workers in relation to the group of children and young people. Children and young people attending a group should not be left alone at any time.

As far as possible a worker should avoid being alone with a child or children when their activity cannot be seen. This may mean leaving doors open. Where confidentiality is important (e.g. counselling) ensure that others know that the interview is taking place and that someone else is in the building.

At no time should one adult be alone on church premises with a child or a group of children below 18 years, unless they are with their own children. Children and young people of less than 18 years should not be given access to church premises unless responsible adults are present.

Young persons of less than 18 years should not be left in charge of children of any age. Teenagers 16+ may be involved in groups which are led and run by peers. In these circumstances two adults must be present in the church building.

Ensure that the only people allowed into a children's activity (e.g. crèche, toddler group, pre-school) are the workers assigned to that group and a parent/carer who needs to be present for their child. There should not be free access for other adults or children unless there is a specific reason.

Keep a register of those children/young people attending a group together with helpers and leaders.

General consent forms should be completed by parents/carers of all children confirming their understanding of the general activities (Sundays and weekdays) and providing essential health information. Specific consent forms will be provided for more adventurous activities and residential trips.

Guidelines for the way we work

Children should be treated with dignity and respect in an age-appropriate manner, which includes the leader/helper being prepared to listen to the child.

The level of personal care, e.g. toileting must be age-appropriate accepting that some children may have special needs. Privacy in such situations must never be needlessly invaded.

If a baby or toddler needs a nappy change or change of clothing the parent/carer should be asked to do this. If the parent/carer is not available, e.g. during preschool, and only if it was felt the child was in discomfort, the group leader or a person nominated by them may change the nappy/clothing. This should be done in one of our designated baby-changing rooms and the door should always be left open.

Avoid any physical contact that is, or may be thought, to be sexually provocative.

Never use physical force to control or discipline. It may be necessary to restrain a child for their own protection or that of others in which case only the minimum force necessary should be employed.

Any worker or parent transporting children on behalf of the church (excluding private arrangements made by those with parental responsibility) must satisfy the criteria for drivers and their vehicles as detailed in our full Safeguarding Procedures.

Any arrangement made to transport children during a regular meeting should be made with the knowledge of the appropriate leader and have parental approval. Workers should avoid giving a child a lift on their own.

Accident forms and incident forms are available to all group leaders and can be found in the kitchens in the first aid box. They should be used for the documentation of accidents, incidents or concerns about the behaviour of children or adult workers as soon as possible after the event. In all situations, the circumstances of the incident should be recorded as well as an account of what was said (where relevant) and the names of witnesses.

Completed forms should be handed in to the Church Office. This process should be followed whether the situation requires immediate action with involvement of one of the Ministry Team or the Designated Person and an external agency or is simply a concern that needs to be recorded.

Guidelines for using Social Media and Electronic communication

It is not necessary for anyone working with primary school children (0-11) to have a child's mobile phone number or email. If it is necessary to speak with

a child's parent or carer calls should be made from the church office or via the Children's or Youth workers work mobile phone.

All those working with young people (aged 11 – 18) should refer to the Social Media Guidance Code and Social Media procedures, which are regularly reviewed in order to keep up with the speed of change in this area.

Guidelines for taking of photographs/video

Only the leader of the activity or a named person may take photographs and only with parental permission.

When photographing/videoing it is preferable to take group pictures, do not take photographs of individuals and they should not be identified by surname or other personal details.

It must be made clear why a child/young person's image is being used, what it is being used for and where it might be displayed.

As part of Ruislip Baptist Church's commitment to safeguarding children and young people it has been agreed that a parent/childminder/family member attending an activity at Ruislip Baptist Church may only take photographs of the child in their care. No group photographs or photographs that might include other children should be taken.

No image taken at events run by Ruislip Baptist Church, including those taken in a public place, should be uploaded onto any social media website without prior agreement from the Church leadership.

Guidelines for working with others

If you see another worker acting in a way that might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or the group leader about your concerns. Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

These measures will also protect workers from false accusations.

Guidelines for leaders and supervisors

Leaders should meet regularly to plan and pray.

They should watch for any child or young adult receiving exceptional treatment, being highly favoured or treated unduly harshly.

If the leader has any doubts about the worker's relationship with a child or

young person, they should explore this further by talking with them, and if appropriate they should inform a member of the Ministry Team.

It is good practice to speak with the parents of children/young people with special needs and find out from them how best to assist them.

Remember that not all children develop at the same rate, and it is possible that their reading/comprehension might not be at the level expected of their age.

If additional support (such as 1:1) is needed then let the Children's Worker, Youth Worker or Special Needs Co-ordinator know.

If you feel a child or young person has special needs and the parent or carer hasn't informed you of this, or does not appear to be aware, or you have any concerns, speak with one of the leaders. This will be dealt with sensitively and in confidence.

Guidelines if harm is disclosed or discovered or suspected

Fuller guidance and our procedures for this can be found in our *Safeguarding Procedures*, however this is a summary for guidance only:

All who work with children and young people should know how to respond if a child or young person talks to them about an abusive or harmful relationship. If you have concerns regarding abuse then you should not delay, you should not act alone and you should not start to investigate.

On occasions an incident or an injury will give cause for concern but often it is a series of incidents or an accumulation of concerns which indicate that a child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering harm.

A child's observed behaviour, their physical appearance, developmental progress and emotional demeanour might indicate that they are being abused or neglected.

Sudden changes might be observed in a child's behaviour.

There might be a history of concerns noted over a number of occasions.

There may be indicators that parents/carers are experiencing difficulties which are having adverse and potentially damaging effects on their child e.g. domestic abuse, substance misuse or mental health issues.

Observations of an adult's interaction with a child or young person might give cause for concern.

Children and young people might share with a trusted adult a concern they have about their safety or disclose that they are being harmed.

If a child expresses a concern to you:

- React calmly so as not to further distress the child or young person. Listen carefully to what they have to say.
- Don't rush or attempt to interrupt them.
- Don't ask closed questions, instead use open questions such as: 'Is there anything else you want to say?'
- Don't ask leading question and don't be judgemental.
- Let the child or young person know what is going to happen next. They need to be aware that other people will need to be told. Do not promise confidentiality.
- As soon as possible afterwards make notes of exactly what was said, (using the child words and a brief description of their demeanour) recording the date and time and who was present.
- Report your conversation to a member of the Ministry Team or our Designated Person as a matter of priority, as a decision will need to be made as to what action needs to be taken to ensure that the child/young person is safe.
- Do not allow a child/young person to go home before checking this with a member of the Ministry team or our Designated Person; sending them home could put them at further risk.
- A decision will also need to be made about when and what information is communicated to the parent/carer.

Ruislip Baptist Church's commitment to child protection and safeguarding children and young people lies in the fact that we are committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is Good News for everyone. We want to say to our local community that we are committed to the well-being and care of all children and young people. Also that children and young people will be given welcome and respect because long before they were special to us, they were special to God.