

# Pilgrims Hatch Baptist Church

## Child Protection Policy Statement

### *Policy statement on children, young people and the church*

This statement is a revision of the previous statement and was agreed at the church meeting held in November 2002.

It will be read annually at the church meeting held in the month of November where progress in carrying it out will be monitored.

- As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.
- It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people whether paid or volunteer.
- The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people, and to providing supervision.
- Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations, and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the church's agreed procedures and Good Practice guidelines.
- The church is committed to following the Home Office Code of Practice *Safe from Harm* and adopts the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in its booklet *Safe to Grow* (Revised edition, July 2002).

Children and young people are part of (or belong to) our church today.

They have much to give as well as to receive. We will listen to them.

As we nurture them in worship, learning, and in community, we will respect the wishes and feelings of children and young people.

As part of our commitment to children and young people the church has appointed **Sylvia Wilson** to be Child Protection Co-ordinator.

# **Policy Statement on Equal Opportunities**

This statement was agreed at the Church Meeting held in November 2002.

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, this church undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information received.

We welcome people to serve the church on the basis of the right mix of talent, skills, character, potential and call of God, including those with criminal records.

A Disclosure is requested for everyone involved in all aspects of the church's work with children and young people whether as a leader or helper.

A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to a person serving with children and young people. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

In order to protect the confidentiality of those with criminal records we will access Disclosures through the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding. We invite the Baptist Union's Child Protection Advisory Panel to advise us in the appointment process when necessary, and we agree to act on their advice for the protection of children and young people.

# Guidelines

*SAFE FROM HARM: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS*  
(PUB: HOME OFFICE, LONDON 1993, ISBN 0 862529 93-X)

These guidelines are summarised in the following 11 recommendations:

1. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
2. Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
3. Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.
4. Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
5. Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
6. Treat all would be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.
7. Gain at least one reference from a person who has experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children.
8. Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
9. Find out whether an applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children.
10. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.
11. Train all paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors, and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.

# Good practice guidelines for the prevention of abuse

## Good practice with children and young people

### *The church should ensure that:*

- As far as possible a worker is not alone with a child where their activity cannot be seen. On church premises this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room.
- In a counselling or one to one situation with a young person where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. If possible, another adult should be in the building, and the young person should know they are there.
- Where children come to church accompanied by an adult, they are the responsibility of that adult when not in Sunday School.
- Where children come to church unaccompanied, a letter will be sent to the parent / carer, accepting parental responsibility for them for the duration of the service (i.e. 10.30am - 12 noon). If a child leaves church during a service or Sunday School, their teacher will endeavour to contact a parent.

### *You, the worker should:*

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age, watch language, tone of voice, and where you put your body.
- Not engage in any of the following:
  - invading the privacy of children when they are toileting
  - rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
  - making sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a young person, even in 'fun';
  - inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form;
  - any scapegoating, ridiculing, or rejecting a child or young person.
- Learn to control and discipline children without using physical punishment. This may include warnings, visits to parents, and possible suspensions for persistent, unacceptable behaviour (i.e. swearing, harming other children physically or verbally, verbally or physically abusive to the Sunday School teacher). This behaviour should be reported to the Family Church Coordinator, who will be responsible for making the decision and informing the child's parent. The latter will be done initially by letter, and subsequently by a visit to the home.

- Make sure another adult is present if, for example, a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs to be thoroughly washed.
- Not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Not invite a child or young person to your home alone; invite a group, or ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents know where the child is.

Not give lifts to children or young people on their own, other than for short journeys. If they are alone, ask them to sit in the rear of the car.

## **Good practice with colleagues**

If you see another member of staff acting in ways which might be misconstrued, be prepared to speak to them or to your supervisor 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 accusation***

# What to do for child and worker if abuse is suspected or disclosed

*It is not the task of an individual or the church to investigate.*

If any abuse (emotional, sexual, physical or neglect) is suspected, or if allegations are made, do not jump to conclusions or start to investigate. You must report your concerns as soon as possible to **Sylvia Wilson** (hereafter the Co-ordinator) telephone 01277 373439 who is nominated by the church to act on its behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities.

She is required by the conditions of the church insurance policy to immediately inform the Baptist Union Insurance Company.

In the absence of the co-ordinator the matter should be brought to the Deputy Co-ordinator **Joan Dewhirst**, telephone 01277 375924 (hereafter the Deputy Co-ordinator)

Suspicions should not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

Our aim will be to work in an open and co-operative way with the statutory authorities for the good of the child/children involved.

## **If abuse is suspected, disclosed or discovered**

DO NOT DELAY

DO NOT ACT ALONE

DO NOT START TO INVESTIGATE

DO NOT CONTACT ALLEGED ABUSERS

DO NOT TALK TO PARENTS OR GUARDIANS DO NOT  
DISCUSS WITH FRIENDS

DO report to the co-ordinator. Write down what the child has said in exactly the child's own words.

It is important not to change words to make them more adult or less offensive. You may be asked for this report and in the event of a Social Services investigation this written account will be very important and will be passed to Social Services.

## How to react to a child who wants to talk about abuse

It is important that you react in a way which will be helpful and supportive to the child. It is not easy to give precise guidance but the following may be of help

- DO NOT agree to keep the information secret.
- DO NOT say or suggest you are shocked.
- DO NOT say or suggest that you do not believe the child.
- DO NOT ask questions, except to clarify what has been said.
- DO NOT make false promises.
  
- DO allow the child to talk but do not press them for information.
- DO look at the child directly.
- DO explain to the child at the outset that you may have to tell someone else if you think it necessary.
- DO remain calm and supportive.
- DO be aware that the child may have been threatened.
- DO show acceptance of what the child says.
- DO re-assure the child they were right to tell you.
- DO tell the child what you are going to do next, i.e. whom you are going to tell and why and roughly what will happen.
- DO finish on a positive note with the child.
- DO tell the Co-ordinator as soon as possible, who will inform the minister that an incident has occurred.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator, after consultation, will decide what needs to be done by way of referral to an agreed outside agency, and will inform the minister of the outcome.

If abuse is **suspected**, more detailed discussion and discreet observation may need to take place before referral.

If abuse by someone *within* the church is ***disclosed*** or **suspected**, the procedure will be as above, then:

The Minister needs to be informed, as the worker will need to be immediately withdrawn in their own interest. They will be given support and help throughout the process by the Minister. No guilt or blame will be implied.

The decision with regard to referral will be made as above.

# PILGRIMS HATCH BAPTIST CHURCH

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

### Why we exist

Pilgrims Hatch Baptist Church exists to worship God and, in accordance with His will for the whole church, to help the people of Pilgrims Hatch and the surrounding area to become committed followers of Jesus Christ.

#### **We seek to do this by:**

- ❖ Celebrating God's goodness through worshipping together
- ❖ Demonstrating God's love in our lives
- ❖ Preaching God's Word
- ❖ Spreading the Good news of salvation through Christ
- ❖ Teaching God's people
- ❖ Praying individually and corporately

### What we believe

- ❖ The bible is the inspired Word of God. It is completely reliable and is the one and only true authority for Christian faith and practice.
- ❖ There is one true God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is eternal and is the Creator and Sovereign ruler of all things.
- ❖ All people are sinful and are guilty before God and, as a consequence, face condemnation and eternal judgement if not redeemed through Christ.
- ❖ It was because of His love for us and to save us from our sin that God revealed Himself through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is fully man and fully God and is co-equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and lived a truly human life except that He did not sin. His life was perfect. At the time appointed by God He delivered Himself up to his enemies and was crucified. On the cross He suffered

punishment and death in our place as the only effective sacrifice for sin so that all who believe in Him might be forgiven and have eternal life.

- ❖ On the third day He rose bodily from the dead bearing the marks of His sacrifice and appeared to many people. He ascended to the Father and ensured the eternal salvation of all believers.
- ❖ Christ is now with His Father in heaven. He will return one day to judge the world and to establish His kingdom with a new Heaven and a new earth.
- ❖ Before ascending to the Father, Jesus Christ commanded His church to continue His work on earth by seeking to make disciples of all nations until He returns.
- ❖ Salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit in the individual through the grace of God, requiring repentance and the acceptance by faith of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.
- ❖ The Holy Spirit enables God's people to live a holy life and gives spiritual gifts to Christians so that they may be equipped to do God's work.
- ❖ It is the privilege of all believers to join in fellowship with a local church both for their own spiritual growth and for the spreading of the Gospel. It is God's will for His people that they should be so joined in fellowship.
- ❖ The bible teaches that baptism is of believers by full immersion on profession of faith in Jesus Christ, in obedience to His command.
- ❖ The celebration of communion is a believer's remembrance of Christ's death and resurrection and is taken at His instruction.

# Pilgrims Hatch Baptist Church

## Volunteer Agreement

Name of worker: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

We welcome you as: \_\_\_\_\_

You are joining a team which, together with the whole church, commits itself to the care and nurture of children and young people.

On behalf of the members of this church, we undertake to support you and your work, by prayer, by our interest and by providing resources and training.

The person who will give you primary support is: \_\_\_\_\_

She/he is there to discuss any matters of concern you may have.

The responsibilities of your role are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Line management: You would be responsible to: \_\_\_\_\_

You would be responsible for: \_\_\_\_\_

Once a year you will have the opportunity to talk about your work, and, if you wish to continue, we will discuss your development and training as appropriate.

Working with children and young people is a responsibility, but it also brings great rewards. We hope you will enjoy your work.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Minister

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Church Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration** (to be completed by the worker)

I understand the nature of the work I am to do.

I have read the church's guidelines for safeguarding children and young people. I understand that it is my duty to protect the children and young people with whom I come into contact. I agree to abide by the policies and procedures agreed by the church for the protection of children and young people.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*One copy of this form should be retained by the worker and one by the church. **If** the person is appointed to a new role, or if the job description changes a new form should be completed.*

Pilgrims Hatch Baptist Church

# Application Form for voluntary work with Children and Young People

We ask all prospective workers with children and young people (0 - 18) to complete this form. If there is insufficient room to fully answer any question, please continue on a separate sheet. The information will be kept confidentially by the church, unless requested by an appropriate statutory authority.

## ***Personal Details***

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Other names by which known in past: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_(Daytime)\_\_\_\_\_ (Evening)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Mobile)

How long have you lived at the above address? \_\_\_\_\_ Years

If less than 3 years, please give previous addressees) with dates:

From:	To:	From:	To:
Address:		Address	
Postcode:		Postcode:	

## ***Experience and skills***

Please tell us about your Christian experience (i.e. how long have you been a Christian, which church(es) have you attended (with dates), any activities undertaken):

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Please give details of previous experience of looking after or working with



