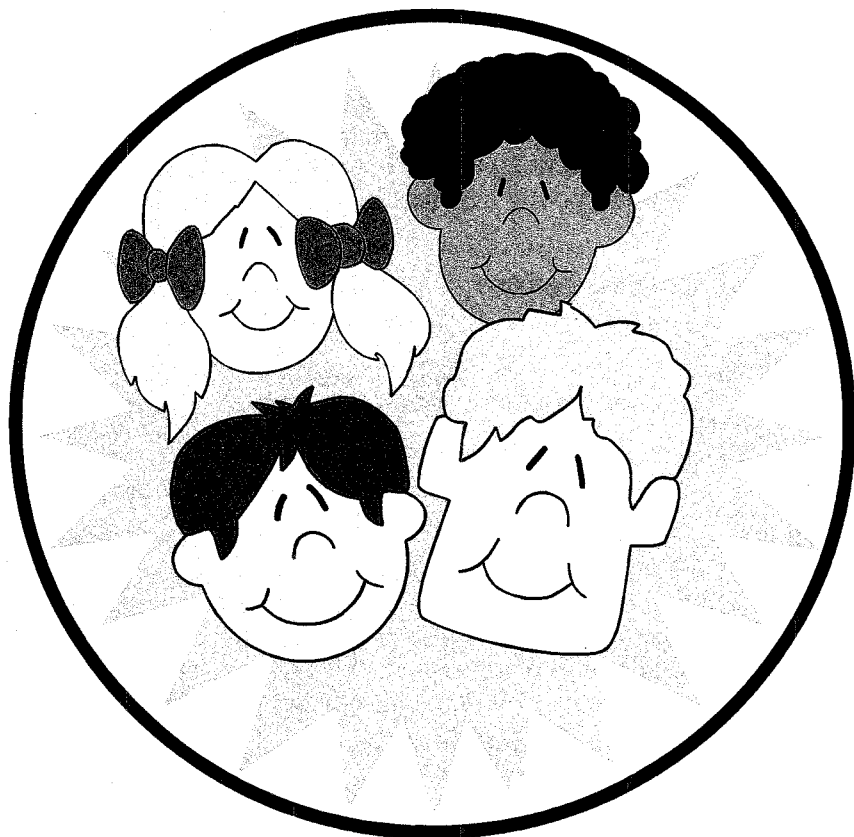


Child Protection Manual



St. Mary's Church

Mellor

WHO ABUSES CHILDREN?

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- Sometimes, the abuser may be an adult who holds a position of authority over children, such as teacher, youth leader, children's worker, or very sadly, a church worker/leader.
- They can be people of any background.
- There is no certain way of identifying a would-be abuser; they don't appear different from the rest of society.
- They are people who are themselves in desperate need and require help.
- Many adult abusers have been abused themselves as children.
- Sometimes, paedophiles and others set out to join organisations (including churches) to obtain access to children.

The church has a role for all concerned in a case of abuse; for the abuser, and those affected by the allegation of abuse but our primary concern must always be for the well-being and safety of the child.

Policy Statement on Children, Young People and the Church

This statement was agreed at the Annual Parochial Church meeting held on 25th April 2010.

It will be read at the Annual General Meeting held each year in the month of March or April 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.
- The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people and to providing supervision.
- The church is committed to following the guidelines and procedures published by the Diocese of Blackburn.
- Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the Parish's agreed procedures and Good Practice guidelines. In addition to the usual two references, a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure will be applied for in respect of every person working with our children and young people.
- As part of our commitment to children and young people, the Parochial Church Council has appointed **Barbara Lucas** to be the Parish Co-ordinator.

Children and young people are part of 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 life, we will respect the wishes and the feelings of children and young people.

RECOMMENDED GOOD PRACTICE

1. Adult/Child Ratios

Recommended numbers of leaders to children according their age:

For 0 to 2 years - 1 leader to every 3 children (1:3)

For 2 to 3 years - 1 leader to every 4 children (1:4)

For 3 to 8 years - 1 leader to every 8 children (1:8)

For over 8's - 1 leader for the first 8 children, followed by 1:12

2. More Than One Leader

Good practice recommends that there should always be more than one leader for any group irrespective of age. If the group is mixed there should be male and female leaders present.

3. Time Alone

Within church premises; in your own home or a young person's home, minimise time alone with any child or young person. If there is no alternative, ensure that either the parents or another leader is informed immediately of where you will be and why. If there is a need to communicate privately remain in the view of another leader. Try never to be behind a closed door with an individual and ensure someone knows of your meeting.

4. Administration

Keep an up to date register and record of children, their parents and contact phone numbers, attendance and other specific information (such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, allergies etc.). A daily register must be kept and be easily accessible in an emergency.

5. Insurance

Most existing parish insurance covers indoor activities for children and young people. Church Councils need a record of any other activities that may take place and it must be checked that insurance cover is adequate

6. Premises Requirements

- **Toilets** - the ideal is 1 toilet and 1 hand basin per 10 children.
- **Warm & Clean** - group areas should be warm, adequately lit and ventilated. Maintain high standards of cleanliness.
- **Special Needs** - be able and willing, to accommodate children with special needs. Be aware of access to your building and toilet facilities.
- **Entrances & Exits** - should be well lit and easily accessible.
- **Registration** - Social Services need to register premises where activities take place for more than 2 hours in any one day or if a holiday club runs for more than 6 days a year.

7. Health and Safety

- All leaders should know the location of the nearest telephone.
- Adults must be aware of a safety/fire procedure. A fire drill should be carried out regularly. Fire extinguishers should be available and regularly checked.
- Children with infectious illnesses must not attend.
- No smoking is permitted on the Church or School premises.
- Children should submit a health form before a residential or hazardous activity. Take health forms when going off site.
- Accidents should be recorded with a note of any action taken and signed by the leader involved.
- A first aid kit should always be available and its location must be well-known. A record must be kept of every incident. No medication should be administered without written parental consent. One leader should ideally be a first-aider.
- Preferably two adults should take responsibility for opening the premises in good time and locking up afterwards. Children under 11 should always be collected at the end of the meeting unless being returned to church by the leaders.

8. Transport

If at all possible do not give lifts to children and young people on their own other than for very short journeys. If they are alone ask them to sit in the back seat. Check that insurance covers the vehicle and passengers. Seat belts must be worn. If possible, contact should be made with parents before leaving the premises.

9. Finance

If money is collected, an account of this should be given to the Parochial Church Council.

10. Volunteers

Volunteers, particularly those under the age of 18, should never work unsupervised and should be given clear guidance and support.

11. Casual Visitors

Casual visitors i.e. those who have not been authorised by the Church as leaders or helpers, should not have access to children without the presence of an adult who is deemed to be responsible for the group.

12. Communication

Clergy, the Church Council and parents should be clearly informed of all activities organised by the church and taking place on church premises in which children and young people may take part.

13. Good Practice of Workers

- Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity befitting their age; watch language, tone of voice, and where you put your body.
- Do not engage in any of the following:
 - invading the privacy of children when they are showering or 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.
- Do not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.
- Do not invite a child or young person to your home alone, invite a group and ensure that someone else is in the house. Make sure the parents know where the child is.
- Adults should not share sleeping accommodation with children or young people.
- Do not spend time with a child or young person alone at home - or isolated in their room

14. Touch

Touch is an important part of human relationships: for example, it can be necessary to stop a young child from hurting herself or himself; it can also be a natural way of responding to someone in distress. However everyone working with children should be sensitive to what is appropriate and inappropriate physical contact, both in general terms, and in relation to a specific individual. Leaders need to be conscious of situations in which their actions, however well intentioned, could be misconstrued by others or be harmful.

15. 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 protect both workers and children

ACTION FOR DEALING WITH REPORTS OF ABUSE

(a) What do I do if a child indicates that they are being abused?

1. You listen to the child. You allow the child to express their feelings and views, without interruption, accepting what is said. Do not ask leading questions, this could prejudice any further investigation.
2. You say things that show you are listening and look at the child directly.
3. You reassure the child as far as possible, alleviating feelings of guilt and isolation while passing no judgement.
4. You say that you know someone who can help, and tell them roughly what will happen. Don't promise confidentiality. Explain that you must pass on the information.
5. **Make hand-written notes as soon as possible after the interview (preferably within the hour), notes of exactly what the child said and when and what was happening immediately beforehand. Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. (Keep hand-written notes even if they are later typed up.)**
6. Contact the Vicar, or in his/her absence one of the Churchwardens.

(b) There are some things you must not do

1. **Do not** show shock, disbelief or horror.
2. **Do not** agree to keep a secret. The child's protection and welfare require that you pass on information to an appropriate person. You should put the child's interests before those of anyone else, and before any other considerations.
3. **Do not** make any promise or suggestion that you can stop the abuse.
4. **Do not** ask probing, leading or suggestive questions. You must leave these matters to qualified professionals.
5. **Do not** investigate any allegations. This means you do not discuss what the child has said with the person they have alleged has abused them.
6. **If you fail to observe these Guidelines you may contaminate any evidence that the child may subsequently give. This may leave the child unprotected against further abuse and may make any successful prosecution more difficult.**
7. **You must** follow the procedure for referral and refer the allegation of suspected abuse to the proper authorities.
8. **You must not** speak to the press or make any comment or statement yourself.

REFERRAL PROCEDURES FOR ANYONE WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN IN ST. MARY'S PARISH CHURCH

1. Any child who is or has been exposed to danger of abuse must be protected immediately. You have a duty to refer your concern.
2. You must discuss your concerns with your Incumbent without delay providing she/he is not the cause of concern. If she/he thinks the child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted at once.

In case of strong suspicions or a clear allegation, the Incumbent must contact the appropriate agency, that is; the Children and Young People's Services or the Police, immediately.
3. The decision as to who should inform the child's parents should be made in consultation with the Children and Young People's Services or Police in most circumstances.
4. The Bishop's representative must be informed. She/he is also available for consultation if the incumbent is unsure of what action to take.
5. If the Incumbent is the subject of the allegation, the Bishop's representative must be consulted for advice.
6. Serious incidents should be reported to the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group to ensure cover should a claim ensue.

The possible consequences of making a referral can be difficult but the consequences of not passing on concerns about a child's welfare could be even more dangerous.

SOME USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS:

Rev'd Paul Rolfe:	81 4567
Barbara Lucas (Under 18's Co-ordinator):	58 0658
Hilda Hilton (Churchwarden):	81 3681
Graham Tipper (Churchwarden):	81 3565
Bishop's Representative for Child Protection, Nancy Talbot:	01772 713007
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline:	0808 800 5000
Police (Child Protection Unit)(<i>if child is in immediate danger</i>):	01254 353082
Lancashire Social Services - Emergency Duty Team:	0845 602 1043
Childline:	0800 1111
PCCA (Helpline for clergy):	01322 660 011

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The process of professional involvement in cases of child sexual abuse will usually follow this course:

1. A strategy discussion involving Social Services, Police Child Protection team, other significant professionals and the person suspecting abuse or to whom the child has talked.
2. A decision will be taken as to whether an investigation is warranted, and if so, instituted.
3. The investigation may include:
 - an informal talk with the child;
 - a formal police (and/or social services) video-recorded interview following disclosure;
 - a medical examination;
 - a preliminary family assessment.
4. If there is sufficient concern, a child protection conference will be held to decide the best course of action to protect the child and help the family. There may be criminal prosecution of the abuser.

HOW MIGHT A CHILD SUFFER ABUSE?

There are several categories of abuse officially defined in government documents. Of these the following are the most common:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Physical abuse | where children's bodies are hurt or injured |
| Emotional abuse | where children don't receive love and affection, may be frightened by threats and taunts, or are given responsibilities beyond their years. |
| Sexual abuse | where adults will use children and young people to satisfy sexual desires; (other children can also be abusers) |
| Neglect | where adults persistently and severely fail to care for children and protect them from danger, leading to serious impairment of the child's health or development. |

A variety of personal circumstances can cause adults to abuse children physically or to neglect them. These kinds of abuse may be easier to detect. Signs of emotional and sexual abuse are very difficult to spot. With sexual abuse in particular, secrecy imposed by the offending adult is part of the abuse pattern, so the child may not readily disclose what is happening.

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The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Mellor, Blackburn, BB2 7JL