MARSHFIELD BENEFICE

Good Practice Guidance Working with Children and Young People

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1. Guidance Context

This guidance must be followed by all staff and volunteers working for the church of St Mary the Virgin, Marshfield.

This guidance is provided for all staff and volunteers to enable them to have an understanding of the behaviours and standards expected in relation to work with children and young people and the provision of activities within the Church.

The guidance contained within this document is based on 'Protecting All God's Children' 2010 and 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' September 2015.

2. Code of conduct

Everyone involved in work with Children and young people within the church of St Mary the Virgin, Marshfield should:

- Ensure that they are aware of the relevant policies: e.g. safeguarding (including social media and communication, photos and videography), lone child, lone working and that those policies are followed alongside the good practice guidances.
- Commit to training that is required as part of the role and for Safer Recruiting
- Treat all children and young people with dignity and respect befitting their age
- Ensure that their own tone, language and body language is non threatening and age appropriate.
- Ensure that discipline is maintained without use of threat or physical punishment or control which is illegal for children's workers
- Ensure that any physical contact with a child is child led. All children should be able to choose what form physical contact takes including 'no contact'. All workers must be aware that children should not be picked up, sat on knees or be hugged. Children may find eye contact and a handshake, high five or hand on the shoulder acceptable. Where a child is hurt or upset they may seek a hug - this should only occur in the sight of another adult.
- Ensure that they do not enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with any young person under 18 and within their care. Care should be taken where a young person is over 18 and has recently been within an adults care due to the potential inequality in the relationship.
- Use supervision as a means of protecting children and young people
- Work with or in sight of another volunteer or staff member. A minimum of two adults should work with any group of children
- Not offer personal gifts to any child in the group worked with, any prizes or gifts should be from Marshfield church rather than personal (the exception is where the child is a family member or friend's child and the gift is given in the context of that relationship).

- Maintain a professional manner as a helper or leader. Staff and volunteers should not 'befriend' children or meet with them outside the context of their work (except where the child is a family member or friend's child and the contact is in the context of that relationship).
- Avoid taking children to the toilet. Where this is unavoidable, ensure that another staff member or volunteer is informed and in the area
- Try to ensure that a mixed group has both male and female staff/volunteers. Couples should not be the only adults working with a group.
- Ensure that children and young people know that they can raise any concerns and that they can speak to the Parish Safeguarding Officers if they wish to.
- Visitors who require access to an area in which children or young people are meeting should be accompanied by a known person at all times.

3. Arrangements for children and young people's activities

All activities provided for children and young people by the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Marshfield are the responsibility ultimately of the PCC.

The PCC requires that all activities are therefore safely and appropriately managed. Every activity must ensure the following, and it is the responsibility of the activity leader to ensure this happens:

- Have a risk assessment of the activity - reviewed annually or following an incident
- Have appropriate staff ratios: In line with Ofsted advice, the following are recommended:

Age of child	**Maximum group size With 2 adults**	**Additional adults required**
0-2 years	4	Additional children up to max of 2 – one additional adults
2-3 years	8	Additional children up to max of 4 – one additional adults
3-8 years	16	Additional children up to max of 8 – one additional adults
8+	20	Additional children up to max of 12 – one additional adults

- Keep a register of staff and children in attendance, and file historic papers in the Safeguarding filing Cabinet in the church office
- Have access to First Aid kit, accident book and appropriately qualified first aiders.
- Ensure that there is a clear fire evacuation procedure
- Ensure that leaders have access to a phone and hold emergency numbers
- Keep up to date registration and consent forms
- Be clear about which children have parental consent to make their own way home, which will be collected and by whom.
- Ensure that where young children are present there are adequate arrangements to ensure they cannot leave the areas without an adult being aware.
- Complete a log in the accident book for any accident
- Use staff that have been safely recruited and who have up to date checks and training. There will be times when an individual would like to "see" an activity and to be involved prior to making a decision to commit to being a volunteer and going through the

recruitment process. Whilst understandable, any such involvement should be for a maximum of one session only and under close supervision.

- Ensure that the space used for the group is:
  - Adequately heated or cooled
  - Big enough for the activity and number of children/ young people
  - Is safe and that any broken furniture or fittings are reported and not causing a health and safety risk
- Ensure that where children are transported by staff or volunteers that:
  - Consent has been obtained from parents
  - The driver has no unspent driving convictions
  - The driver has adequate insurance
  - There are at least two adults and two children in each car or where an emergency necessitates a child being transported by one adult that the child sits in the back and an incident form is completed.
- That where off site activities or visits occur that:
  - Specific consent is obtained from parents or carers
  - The activity is specifically risk assessed and PCC has given consent for the activity
  - The activity provider, where there is one, has public liability insurance

4. Young Helpers

Young helpers, those under 18 years of age may require particular support and supervision where they help with activities for younger children.

- Young people aged 16 and 17 should be recruited via the Safer Recruitment process and are old enough to apply for a DBS check where the role requires one. They should not however be given supervision responsibility and should always work under the supervision of another adult. They should not be counted in the ratios.
- Young people under 16 may act as helpers with activities. Consideration should be made regarding their level of maturity and their ability to behave responsibly and to follow instruction. Any young helper must have a clear role and be able to understand and follow the code of conduct. Young helpers will require parental consent to be present and assist with activities.
- Care should be taken to ensure that young helpers are not working with their own peers and that they do not hold leadership responsibility where a boyfriend or girlfriend is in the group they are working with.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or in accordance with any changes to employment legislation within that time

Policy reviewed by all PCCs in Marshfield Benefice

on date: Autumn 2026

Signed by Linda Lamb (Parish Safeguarding Officer)

Date for Review: September 2027