

# Safeguarding Children 2018

## *Luton Christian Fellowship*

An Elim Pentecostal Church

The Church we see...

- *loves, worships and honours God; it reaches out to a lost world.*
- *is an exciting, relevant and dynamic Church; it is known for its integrity, its excellence and its infectious sense of fun.*
- *is naturally supernatural, but totally non-religious; it is an outward-looking and hilariously generous Church.*
- *is a Church that is alive & therefore constantly growing, both numerically and in spiritual maturity.*
- *equips, empowers and releases all its people to excel in their God-given gifts and live supernatural lives.*
- *is a community where people of every race, age and background can be known, loved and cared for - a place every person can truly call "home".*

... will one day be this Church

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**Robin Campbell, 2015**

**(Personnel Revised April 2018)**

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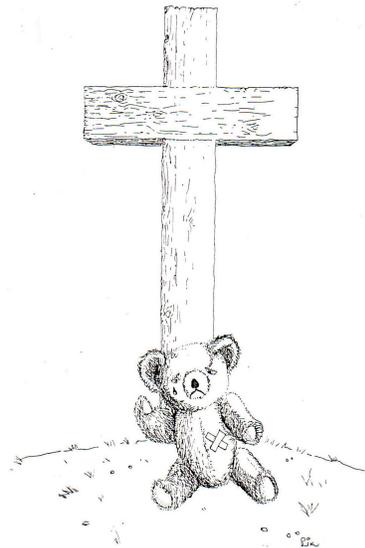
Luton Referral, Intake and Assessment Team – 01582 547653

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) - 0870 2385465

Childline - 0800 1111

NSPCC – 0808 800 5000

CCPAS – 0845 120 45 50



*Image courtesy of Pete McPherson*

## **Introduction**

This is the third Safeguarding document that has been produced at Luton Christian Fellowship (“LCF”). The initial Child Protection Policy was written in 2002 and has been expanded over time. This document will continue to provide an umbrella of guidelines and principles by which the children within the church community will be protected from harm.

This policy should be used in conjunction with the information available on the following websites:

Luton Safeguarding Children Board – [www.lutonlscb.org.uk](http://www.lutonlscb.org.uk)

Churches Child Protection Advisory Service – [www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)

NSPCC - [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## **Why have a Child Protection Policy?**

Our children deserve the best care and teaching that the church can provide. The church is a sanctuary for all, especially children and the vulnerable. As with their school, children should be able to view their church and associated activities as a ‘safe place’ away from any pressure and harm. These activities should be planned and executed within a nurturing and safe environment. It is also acknowledged that the church will provide support and encouragement to people both young and old who have suffered abuse and trauma in their childhood. Alongside this there is an acknowledgment that churches, due to their nature, are also targets for those people who have and continue to have a desire to harm and exploit children.

A recent statistic indicates that approximately 75% of sex offenders have attended church; this figure does not define how many of those offenders attended a church for redemption or to further their offending career. It therefore has to be acknowledged that the children within the church community are potentially at risk through the acceptance and integration of new people into the life of the church. It is through this ‘acceptance’ that a predatory paedophile could attempt to gain access to children through the social

activities of the church and through such avenues as Life Groups. This is because children view adult friends of their parents as ‘safe people’. It is through this association with their parents that children see such adults as having a level of authority in their lives, therefore leaving them potentially vulnerable. Leaders, parents and all adults in such groups have to be aware of this potential risk; if we drop our guard we leave many opportunities for offenders to get easy access to children in such a way.

A Child Protection Policy in itself offers no protection to children. It is how serious the content of the policy is taken that will make it effective.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Elders and leaders at LCF will ensure that **ALL** people in a leadership role (not just those working with children and young people) within the church will have a valid and up to date DBS certificate (Disclosure and Barring Service) these checks will be repeated every 3 years. The reason for this approach is that children see adults as figures of authority, especially people who occupy the lectern regularly, worship leaders and Life Group leaders, et al, as well as children and youth workers. Any person with a desire to abuse a child can and will use this position of ‘authority’ as a smoke screen to gain the trust of a child, adults and the church in general. It can be a shield against any allegation made as “a person with such a position in the church would never harm a child!” Luton’s recent past is littered by clergy and respected church leaders who have abused children within the church. However an up to date DBS check is no guarantee of innocence hence the need for knowledge, insight and awareness of all adults within the church, as we are all accountable for the children in our lives.

The Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) state that there should be clear written procedures in place regarding the protection of children within the church which are available for scrutiny by service users and which are supported by the training and supervision of staff. It is essential that all allegations of abuse are examined objectively by staff members that are independent of the service, organisation or institution concerned.

Although a great deal of emphasis within this document will be about protecting children from sexual abuse, we must not forget that there are many forms of abuse suffered by children such as neglect, physical and emotional abuse. Bullying also has to be included in behaviour that inflicts harm on children and young people. Further information about these other forms of abuse will also be outlined within this document.

## **Part one: The Child Protection Policy and Context**

*Within this policy the term 'we' refers to the leadership of Luton Christian Fellowship ("LCF"), including all people with authority within the church.*

### **The Child Protection Policy Statement**

- We are committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of all the children within our church community and to the encouragement and equipping of parents and carers to provide a safe and positive environment for the children in their care.
- We will ensure that there is a culture within the church whereby children and young people are listened to and where adults are encouraged to effectively relate to and value children and young people, whilst ensuring their protection within church activities.
- We accept the biblical principle that to “refuse to correct is a refusal to love; love your children by disciplining them.” *Prov. 13:24, The Message Bible*. The current legal position is that to smack a child is not illegal. To smack a child with such force that leaves a mark leaves the perpetrator open to Police investigation. To chastise a child with an implement such as a wooden spoon, belt or slipper is physical abuse. We support parents and guardians in disciplining their children in a calm, loving manner within the confines of the legal position. However any discipline by a parent or guardian that exceeds what is lawful will be dealt with as an episode of child abuse, as per the guidelines set out in this policy. The response will be a referral to the social services department local to where the child lives.
- We will carefully select all workers and volunteers who engage with the children associated with LCF. This will involve all such people successfully passing a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check alongside other tools to assess their suitability to work with children. These checks will also be carried out on all people with positions of leadership within the church.

- We will provide accurate and evidence based Child Protection training to all workers and volunteers who are engaged with the children associated with LCF. We will also ensure that targeted training is made available to all members of the church community to enable them to have a greater knowledge of Child Protection issues.
- As a church we will respond without delay and appropriately to every disclosure that is made outlining the possible abuse of any child within our responsibility.
- We will fully cooperate with all agencies involved in the protection of children. This is in regards to any such investigation that is taking place involving a child or adult involved with our church.
- We will not tolerate any form of ‘bullying’ at any activity or event organised by LCF. Bullying is defined as “hurting, intimidating or persecuting a weaker person.” (*Collins English Dictionary*)
- We will endeavour to provide and direct pastoral help and support to any child, young person or adult who has suffered abuse.
- We will attempt to care for and keep under close observation any member of the church community known to have been involved in the abuse of children; this includes the viewing, storage or creation of indecent images of children. No such individual will be allowed to work with children or hold any position of authority within LCF.
- Careful consideration will be given when placing people into Life Groups where there are families.

## Aims

As part of the overall church mission, the Elders and leaders at LCF are committed to:

- Valuing, listening and relating effectively to children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within church activities.
- Responding to allegations of abuse, including those made against leaders or people attending the church.
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers to actively protect the children in their care from all forms of abuse.
- Making the safest appointments possible of all leaders and people in positions of authority within the church.
- Ensuring that children's/youth workers are given support and training in order to live out the principles of this policy.
- Ensuring that there is good quality 'post abuse' support within the church and a well-maintained knowledge base of resources available to the victims of abuse.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory childcare authorities.
- A carefully managed programme of supervision for known offenders that will be planned with reference to material produced by CCPAS.

## **Part two: What do we need to know?**

### **What is abuse?**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting ‘significant harm’, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse can be described under one of the four categories identified below. A child may well suffer from a combination of these.

Physical    Sexual    Emotional    Neglect

Abuse can be suffered by any child under the age of 18, from any background, race or religious persuasion. Abuse is also broader than purely sexual with aspects of emotional abuse being present in all the other categories and is fundamentally an exploitation of trust and power. This can be the consequence of over-zealous religious belief or practices that can result in a child suffering physical and emotional harm. Men, women or other children can perpetrate abuse.

### **Definitions of abuse**

The definitions of child abuse accepted throughout England and Wales by the Department of Education document, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)*, are as follows:

A child may suffer more than one category of abuse.

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, ill health in a child. This situation is commonly described using terms such as ‘Factitious’ or ‘Fabricated Illness’. It was previously referred to as ‘Munchausen’s Syndrome by Proxy’.

**What is ‘Fabricated Illness’? (Munchausen’s Syndrome by Proxy)** - ‘Fabricated illness’ is when a child suffers harm caused by the action of a parent or other carer who deliberately fabricates symptoms or induces medical symptoms in a child, which would not otherwise be present.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. (Children who experience Domestic Abuse may suffer Emotional Abuse as a consequence.)

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact ‘activities’, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### Recognition of signs and symptoms

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place but the possibility should be considered. A child may indicate that something is wrong in various ways: visual, behavioural or verbal, or a combination of these. A child's behaviour is often the first sign that that something is wrong in their lives.

### **PHYSICAL SIGNS OF ABUSE**

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them, e.g. bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc.
- Bruising in unusual places. Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received sufficient medical attention
- Under-nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.

### **INDICATORS OF POSSIBLE SEXUAL ABUSE**

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing

- The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Bed-wetting, soiling or smearing of faeces.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders, such as anorexia or bulimia

### **EMOTIONAL SIGNS OF ABUSE**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging; also depression, aggression and/or extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away, stealing or lying.

### What is ‘Significant Harm’?

The Children Act 1989 introduced Significant Harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. Significant Harm is any Physical, Sexual, or Emotional Abuse, Neglect, accident or injury that is sufficiently serious to adversely affect progress and enjoyment of life.

‘Harm’ is defined as the ill treatment or impairment of health and development. This definition was clarified in Sect. 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (implemented on 31 January 2005) so that it may include, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another (Domestic Abuse (violence)). There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes a single violent episode may constitute significant harm but more often it is an accumulation of significant events, both acute and longstanding which interrupt, damage or change the child’s development.

It is this concept that acts as the threshold for social care professionals to ascertain whether a child is suffering significant harm or at risk of significant harm and therefore triggers a Child Protection Investigation (*Sect. 47, Children Act 1989*).

### What is 'Self-harm'? (Taken from nspcc.com 2015)

'Self-harm' can take many physical forms, including cutting, burning, bruising, scratching, hair-pulling, poisoning and overdosing.

There are many reasons why children and young people try to hurt themselves. And once they start, it can become a compulsion. That's why it is so important to spot it as soon as possible and do everything you can to help.

Rather than being a cry for attention or an attempt at suicide, self-harm is usually a way for young people to release overwhelming emotions. It may also be copying behaviour that they have seen in the media or online.

Self-harm is a real cause for concern because it is becoming more and more common. Child Line saw a 41 per cent increase in calls about self-harm in 2012/13 compared with the previous year.

*Why do children harm themselves?* The exact reasons why children and young people decide to hurt themselves are not always easy to work out. In fact, they might not even know exactly why they do it.

There are links between depression and self-harm, and quite often a child or young person who is self-harming is being bullied, under too much pressure to do well at school, being emotionally abused, grieving or having relationship problems with families or friends.

The feelings that these bring up can include:

- loneliness
- sadness

- anger
- numbness
- lack of control over their lives.

Often, the physical pain of self-harm might feel easier to deal with than the emotional pain that's behind it. It can also make a young person feel they are in control of at least one part of their lives. Sometimes it can also be a way for them to punish themselves for something they have done or have been accused of doing.

*How to spot the warning signs:* Young people will go to great lengths to cover self-harm, scars and injuries. If you do spot them, they might be explained away as accidents.

The signs to look for divide into the physical and emotional.

### **Physical signs of self-harm**

These are commonly on the head, wrists, arms, thighs and chest and include:

- cuts
- bruises
- burns
- bald patches from pulling out hair.

Young people who self-harm are also very likely to keep themselves covered up in long-sleeved clothes even when it is really hot.

### **Emotional signs of self-harm**

The emotional signs are harder to spot and do not necessarily mean that a young person is self-harming. But if you see any of these as well as any of the physical signs then there may be cause for concern.

- depression, tearfulness and low motivation
- unusual eating habits, sudden weight loss or gain

- low self-esteem and self-blame
- drinking or taking drugs

What is ‘Child Sexual Exploitation’? (Taken from UK National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (NWG))

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.

What is ‘Grooming’? (Taken from nspcc.com 2015)

‘Grooming’ is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world by a stranger or by someone they know - for example, a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people do not understand that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse.

*How does ‘Grooming’ happen?* Grooming happens both online and in person. Groomers will hide their true intentions and may spend a long time gaining a child's trust. They

may also try to gain the trust of the whole family so they can be alone with the child. They do this by:

- pretending to be someone they are not, for example saying they are the same age online
- offering advice or understanding
- buying gifts
- giving the child attention
- using their professional position or reputation
- taking them on trips, outings or holidays
- Using secrets and intimidation to control children.

Once they have established trust, groomers will exploit the relationship by isolating the child from friends and/or family and making the child feel dependent on them. They will use any means of power or control to make a child believe they have no choice but to do what they want.

Groomers may introduce ‘secrets’ as a way to control or frighten the child. Sometimes they will blackmail the child, or make them feel ashamed or guilty, to stop them telling anyone about the abuse.

**Online grooming** - Groomers can use social media sites, instant messaging apps including teen dating apps, or online gaming platforms to connect with a young person or child. They can spend time learning about a young person’s interests from their online profiles and then use this knowledge to help them build up a relationship.

It is easy for groomers to hide their identity online - they may pretend to be a child and then chat and become ‘friends’ with children they are targeting. They look for:

- usernames or comments that are flirtatious or have a sexual meaning
- public comments that suggest a child has low self-esteem or is vulnerable.

Groomers do not always target a particular child. Sometimes they will send messages to hundreds of young people and wait to see who responds.

**Groomers no longer need to meet children in real life to abuse them. Increasingly, groomers are sexually exploiting their victims by persuading them to take part in online sexual activity.**

## **Part three: Procedures... What to do if you suspect that abuse has taken place**

These guidelines are written in association with the policy of the Luton Safeguarding Children's Board.

Where significant abuse has been identified the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform strategic personnel within the denomination and CCPAS:

Sarah Bale - Elim National Safeguarding Coordinator 07814 783855

sarah.bale@elimhq.net

### **Roles and responsibilities:**

The only people authorised to investigate allegations of abuse are:

- Registered Social Workers working within a social services child care department.
- Registered Social Workers working within the NSPCC.
- Police.

Therefore any allegations of abuse need to be handled sensitively and with the utmost care to ensure that no evidence is contaminated. To ensure this takes place, clear agreed guidelines and specific responsibilities of church leaders at LCF can be found within this document. However it is the responsibility of every member of the church to be on their guard regarding the care of the children involved in the life of the church. Training is available on a regular basis to inform not just those people involved with children and young people in the church but all people that are interested and willing to be trained in this area.

## How to deal with a disclosure of abuse:

- The first thing to remember when a child discloses any form of abuse to you is that they have chosen YOU. What they have told you has more than likely been on their mind for a considerable time. They have identified you as someone they can trust to be told the most important issue in their lives. Therefore feel honoured that you have been trusted with this information.
- You may be shocked that a child you know well and care for deeply has been suffering and you had not been aware of their plight. You need to do your best not to show the child how you are feeling. Keep your emotions in check until you have fully dealt with the situation and you are at a safe place to receive a de-briefing from the CP co-ordinator.
- One of the principle responses that you need to remember whenever a child comes to you with a ‘secret’ is that the child needs to know that you will have to report any issues where you believe they are at risk of significant harm, i.e. being abused. You have to do this as early in the conversation as possible in order to maintain the child’s trust in you.
- When the child is talking to you be aware of your responses. Be careful not to ask questions especially “Why?” Remember you are not investigating the abuse leave that to the Police. Always try and be aware that you are potentially receiving vital and precious evidence that could be used in a court arena; therefore, do not contaminate the evidence.
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told), writing down exactly what the child said, write what you said in reply to the child, when he/she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand-written notes.

- Report your discussion as soon as possible to the CP Co-ordinator – Vic Joyner. If she is implicated in the disclosure, report to the Pastor – Rob Boyle. If both are implicated, report to CCPAS or to Social Services if preferred. (Phone numbers are to be found at the end of this document).
- You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated in the above point, unless those individuals have been implicated in the disclosure.
- Once a child has finished their disclosure, the worker/co-ordinator will consider, in conjunction with the Police or Social Services, whether or not it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it will be necessary for immediate action to be taken by Social Services and/or police to put into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.
- Any discussion with the child’s family/carers following a disclosure should, where possible, be guided by the CP Co-ordinator or in consultation with Social Services/Police. This is again to safeguard evidence and to protect the child from possible further harm.
- Cases of Neglect become evident over a period of time. When a child presents with issues of Neglect these concerns should be recorded and the CP Co-ordinator informed. He will monitor the situation in consultation with the church leadership prior to any referral being made to request professional help for the family.

### How to deal with a disclosure of historical abuse:

Where a case of historical abuse comes to light the same issues need to be considered. The perpetrator of the original abuse may well still be committing offences so the discloser needs to be aware that you may well not be able to keep all the information confidential. As with a child disclosure, evidence is key and the discloser should be encouraged to make a statement to the Police. However it has to be acknowledged that

adult survivors of child abuse are fully entitled to their wishes and feelings being heard and respected. As a church we are fully committed to supporting adult survivors of abuse whether they wish to make a formal complaint to the Police or not. They will be supported to engage with recognised support groups and to seek professional help, if required.

### Response to an allegation made against a member of the church community of child abuse:

Where either the perpetrator or the victim is a member of the church community, the leadership will establish links with the Police and Social Services staff involved with the investigation to be available to attend any meetings to support both the victim and the perpetrator (as appropriate). The leadership will liaise closely with CCPAS regarding the management of the situation including any media interest that may ensue. Throughout such a situation the principle that the ‘welfare of the child is paramount’ will be the priority as will be the wishes and feelings of the child. During the situation the leadership will ensure that the alleged perpetrator is given support and help, where appropriate.

### Response to persons within the church community who are known to have abused children:

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused children, a meeting will be arranged at the earliest opportunity for the individual to meet with a member of the church leadership team and the CP Coordinator to discuss the situation. They will be expected to sign and adhere to a contract and will be supported through any treatment programmes that are available to the individual. They will also be subject to whatever checks the leadership of the church deem appropriate to ensure the on-going safety of the children within the church. Where there is a failure to adhere to such arrangements, a response will be triggered whereby the church community will be informed of the risk posed by the individual.

## How to deal with abuse by children on children:

Whatever our personal beliefs, sexual activity between children (under 18) happens whether it is at the developmental stages of experimentation or recognised sexual intercourse. In this document we are referring to what would be considered Sexual Abuse between children of a similar age. This can be found in such behaviour as:

- using sexually explicit words and phrases to target a particular individual
- inappropriate touching that is not wanted or desired
- using sexual violence or threats
- Significant sexual activity with other children where there is a significant ‘power’ imbalance.

If such abusive activity comes to light it is imperative that the response by adults is measured and not driven by their own personal feelings. Facts need to be ascertained as to who was involved and how the incident developed. Once this has been clarified then decisions regarding who is informed and by whom need to be made. The key to such decisions must be based on the perceived capability of both individuals to make decisions for themselves to ascertain whether abuse has taken place or whether the incident is one of experimentation or sexual activity between two consenting young people (over 14).

A basic rule can be applied in that any sexual activity involving a child of 13 or under must be considered as abuse and should involve an immediate consultation with the Child Protection Co-ordinator as to what action should be taken. The action taken where sexual activity involves a child over the age of 14 should involve the Child Protection Co-ordinator only if abuse is suspected by one of those involved. It will be expected that any such sexual activity will result in a decision being made as to the children/young people’s involvement in future activities run by the church and may result with such decisions being made as to prevent any further incidents being able to take place, e.g. a parent being requested to accompany the child/young person on future overnight events or certain areas being made out of bounds for the children/young people involved.

## **Part four: Prevention**

### **Safer recruiting:**

In appointing both employees and volunteer workers, the leadership will be responsible for the following:

- All prospective workers will be asked to complete an application form
- All prospective workers will require an up to date DBS Certificate (and notification of three referees for employees)
- They will be asked to attend an interview where the Church's policy, appointment and probationary details will be discussed.
- Consideration has been made as to the criteria by which people and young adults are excluded from being involved with children at LCF. If there are reservations about an individual's behaviour, lifestyle, attitudes and spiritual commitment, then we need to consider the risks to which we might be exposing children.
- We shall never allow a worker to be 'tried-out' if we have reasons to seriously doubt their suitability for the job. No one has the *right* to work with children.
- We shall give sensitive and honest feedback to any worker that has been declined a position.
- Workers will be given a contract on appointment or confirmation of existing contract.
- The Child Protection Coordinator will review the appointment of workers on a regular basis.

### **Records and Data Protection:**

- Any up to date records that are kept of each child will be reviewed regularly (to include whoever is pastorally in charge of that child).

- All records will be kept in a safe and secure place and will not be released to any other party (as per the Data Protection Act 1998) unless written consent is given (see individual record form).
- Permission will be obtained before an image is recorded of any individual child/young person whether by photograph or video/camcorder and that image will be used for the stated purposes only.

Note:

- Public places, crowd scenes that do not home in on an individual and images taken by parents for personal use are exempt.
- LCF complies with the eight Data Protection Principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### Training:

- Training for all children and youth workers will be part of their conditions for service.
- Training will be accredited by the Luton Safeguarding Children's Board and will be certified. There will be at least two sessions a year set aside for training (as required).
- All workers will be expected to refresh their training every three years.
- The church community will be given the opportunity to receive basic training in the concepts of safeguarding and protecting children.

### Supervision of children:

LCF is not a 'registered' activity, so we do not legally have to reach and maintain the same standards as one. We shall however make every effort to ensure that sufficient supervision is in place using the guidelines of registered organisations.

Generally we aspire to those as laid out in 'Guidance to Churches' (CCPAS Chapter 6). These guidelines are for all our activities whether on site or visits to other places. (If the

children are within our care, the guidance applies.) Any activity carried out under the banner of LCF has to have been agreed and approved by the appropriate management. Full knowledge by LCF leadership must be in place.

### Touch:

We acknowledge that physical contact is unavoidable when you work with small children. Touch becomes dangerous when there is a lack of respect for a child, when it is violent or related to the worker's own needs rather than those of a child. Touch is not only normal but also an essential part of the life in the developing child.

Our basic policy is:

- Keep everything in public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind a closed door.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs not the worker's.
- Touch should be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker. Therefore unless a child requests an adult 'lays hands' on them during a prayer this should not happen. Any such 'laying on of hands' should be done in a public place with another adult worker present.
- Avoid any physical activity which is, or could be construed as, sexually stimulating.
- Each child is entitled to determine the degree of physical contact with others, except in exceptional circumstances, i.e., when they need medical attention.
- All team members will be responsible for monitoring one another in the area of physical contact. Each will be free to challenge a colleague constructively, if necessary. All concerns about possible abuse should always be reported.

### Bullying:

Any acts of bullying that come to light will be dealt with expediently. If necessary, parents of both the victim and perpetrators will be informed if the situation is not resolved through the intervention of the workers in charge of the group.

## Transport and visits:

The leadership of each department will ensure that:

- All drivers have adequate car insurance and that the number of passengers does not exceed what the vehicle is covered for.
- That any vehicle we use that is adapted to carry between 8 and 16 passengers has a 'small bus permit', the necessary insurance and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive that vehicle.
- All children attending an outside activity must be properly registered. Consent and information for the child's safety to be included. Full names, address, phone number, date of birth, name and phone number of doctor, address and phone number of contact in an emergency must be supplied. Also, any medical requirements, special diets, consent for emergency treatment, etc. All this information should be contained within the Global Consent Form, completed by a parent or guardian, signed and dated.
- No child will be permitted to leave the group until their parent or designated carer arrives to collect them. If a child leaves the group a quick search should take place. If this is not successful the parents/carers will be notified immediately. If it is not possible to contact them a note of what the child was wearing should be made and the Police contacted. All efforts should be made to find the child until the child is found or the Police become directly involved.

## General guidelines for all weekly groups:

- No worker will deliberately place themselves in a position whereby they are in a 1:1 situation with a child/young person (of either gender). All efforts should be made to ensure that any session takes place with two workers present. In the extreme case that this is not possible, the following precautions must be taken to protect the child/young person and the worker from any allegations of inappropriate behaviour:

- a) Workers must not be alone in the building with a child/young person. Another adult must always be in the building within calling distance and aware of the situation.
  - b) Workers need to fully assess the room that they are in making sure that they are aware of their positioning and do not block any exit route for the child/young person and also ensure that any doors are not closed.
- No child under the age of 16 will be left in charge of any children of any age.
  - Pick up times will be arranged and parents/carers informed.
  - The children will be brought to the venue by their parents or designated carer.
  - Each child's name will be entered into the register for that day. If the child leaves the venue at any point during the session, this will be noted on the register.
  - No adults or parents are allowed to stay in the venue unless agreed by the worker in charge.
  - Children are collected and signed out by their parent or carer at the end of the session.
  - No child will be permitted to leave the group until their parent or designated carer arrives to collect them. If a child is found to have left the group, a quick search should take place. If this is not successful the parents/carers will be notified immediately. If it is not possible to contact them a note of what the child was wearing should be made and the Police contacted. All efforts should be made to find the child until the Police become directly involved.
  - Any accidents will be dealt with immediately; they will be recorded in the accident sheets located in the back of the register. The sheets will be signed by the worker in charge and the child's parent or designated carer upon collection of the child.
  - The worker in charge or qualified first aider will deal with any accident requiring medical attention. Plasters will not be used unless consent has been obtained from the child's parents. Parents will be contacted if necessary.
  - Any illness of a child will be dealt with appropriately. Parents/carers will be notified at the earliest opportunity and requested to take their child home.

- Any fights or arguments between children will be logged in the Unusual Event Record Book. Any action that was taken will also be logged. All workers who witnessed the event will sign the log.
- Any unusual events should be documented on the sheets located at the back of the register. The incident should be discussed with the parent or designated carer on collection of the child.
- Any discipline required will be done so immediately the incident has occurred. There will be NO physical discipline to the child, except to remove a child from a potentially dangerous situation. If the incident is deemed serious, the details will be logged on the Unusual Incident Sheet and the parents notified.

## **Part Five: Background information (points of reference)**

### **Safe from Harm:**

LCF is committed to preventing any kind of abuse. The guidance given by the Home Office titled '*Safe from Harm*' is our model to aspire to. This guidance is intended to apply to those caring for young people in both paid and unpaid work, including volunteers, regardless of whether they are in the public, private, voluntary or volunteering sectors.

Basically, those in a position of trust are there to protect, guide and care for our young people. It is therefore a paramount need to safeguard and promote the welfare of our young people and protect them from sexual activity by those looking after them within a relationship of trust.

Any adult worker/leader who finds themselves moving into a relationship with a young person (up to 18 years of age) is moving into an 'inappropriate relationship'. That situation cannot be allowed to continue whilst the worker/leader is in a position of trust. Help from the appropriate leadership is of paramount importance. Care is always needed when such a relationship potentially exists.

### **CCPAS:**

The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) is the only independent Christian charity providing professional advice, support, training and resources in all areas of safeguarding children and for those affected by abuse.

The services are used not only by churches and groups across the denominational spectrum, but increasingly by other faiths as well as non-faith based organisations keen to utilise the resources and expertise they offer. They also give advice to Children's Services Departments, Police and other agencies across the UK.

**Robin Campbell  
(Personnel Revised August 2018)**