



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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**On behalf of Leadership Team**  
**Sunnyhill Community Church**

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# SUNNYHILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

## Protection of Children and Young People

### Policy and Procedures

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# Protection of Children and Young People

## Policy Statement

Sunnyhill Community Church (hereinafter 'the Church') is part of The Apostolic Church in Great Britain.

The Church has a love for children and young people and includes them in our growing children's and young people's ministry.

The Elders, Deacons and Members take seriously their responsibility to care for and to protect the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to the Church's care.

As part of its mission and ministry, the Church is committed to:

- Encouraging and supporting parents/guardians/carers.
- Listening to, relating effectively to and valuing children and young people.
- Ensuring that our children's/youth workers are properly supported and trained.

The Church leadership recognises that many children and young people today are the victims of neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Accordingly, the Church has adopted the policy as recommended by the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service and set out the following main areas:

- Appointing children's / youth workers.
- Supervision of activities and practice issues.
- Responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including those made against leaders or members of the Church.

The Church leadership recognises the need to build constructive links with the statutory childcare authorities and has been in consultation with both Dorset Police and Poole Children & Families Services who have seen and approved this Policy and Procedures. Accordingly the Elders have the responsibility for dealing with disciplinary matters and will liaise with the appropriate authorities when necessary.

The content of this policy document forms the basis of a half-day seminar for all children's / youth workers in the Church and the leadership is committed to an ongoing programme for all such workers.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all the members of this Church to take care of and to protect the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to the Church's care. The following groups within the Church have specific responsibilities with regards to children and young people as detailed below:

### **Elders:**

This body has the responsibility for discipline and direction within the local Church and for the recognition and appointment of teachers/workers within the Church. In the context of the Care and Protection for Children and Young people, they have the specific role of:

- Interviewing and appointment of all paid and key voluntary workers ensuring that this policy is applied in the process.
- Appointment of suitable Child Protection Co-ordinators to implement policy.
- Handling allegations of abuse against a member of the Church.
- Handling cases of suspected abuse that have occurred outside Church to a child or young person involved in the Church.

### **Children's/Young People's Ministry Teams:**

Kids Klub, Connect Youth Club, XL, Wacky Puppets, Sunnytots, made up of:

### **Paid and/or Voluntary Workers:**

All paid and voluntary workers involved in the Children's and Young People's ministries are responsible for:

- Ensuring that adequate supervision complying with this Policy is in place for all activities where children or young people have been entrusted to our care.
- Promptly, reporting (not investigating) suspicions of abuse to our Child Co-ordinators or a member of the Leadership Team.
- Respecting a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Behaving in a manner that reduces the likelihood of someone misinterpreting their actions, no matter how well-intentioned.

### **Child Protection Co-ordinators**

The Church has nominated two individuals as Child Protection Co-ordinators to assist them in ensuring this policy is implemented and as the initial point of contact in Child Protection issues.

Their names and contact details are displayed on the Church's Child Protection Policy Statement Notice and displayed in a prominent public place.

## **Appointing of Children and Young People's Workers To Regular Ministries within Sunnyhill Community Church**

The process for appointing children's and youth workers is shown below:

1. All prospective workers will be asked to complete an application form.
2. References shall be taken up for all prospective workers.
3. All prospective workers will be interviewed by the elder responsible for children and young people's ministries or appropriate designated person. Details of the interview must be recorded & retained with the application form, which should be held for retention with the register of approved workers.
4. Successful candidates will be required to agree to a check on their criminal record or to complete a criminal record declaration form where checks are not possible.
5. The successful candidate shall be given a letter of appointment indicating the areas which he/she may work in and the roles and responsibilities of the position.
6. The successful candidate will be paired with an experienced leader for training and support for a period of 3 months probation.
7. All workers to undertake relevant Child Protection training.

The purpose of this process is to establish a person's previous experience of children's or young people's work, to ascertain their suitability for the role and to establish if there have been past convictions for Criminal Offences against children.

All files/records relating to the appointing of workers will be held in a secure place in the Church office.

## **Appointing of Children's and Young People's Workers To Special Events within Sunnyhill Community Church**

Where a person wishes to help out with a special event such as a Children's Holiday Club, but is not or does not wish to become a registered leader or helper, they may complete the Application Form for Special Events.

The elders must still approve that person's application, but **approval will be for that event only** and the person shall be appointed as a helper only and must at all times work with a registered leader.

## Supervision of Activities to Protect Children and Young People

The primary means by which the Church will ensure the protection of children and young people entrusted to its care is through supervision appropriate to the activity. This section gives general rules applicable to all activities followed by some specific rules for different age groups.

### General Rules

NB: the terms *Leader* and *Helper* referred to below relate only to the supervision & protection of children and young people. Please see the definitions on page 12 for more details.

1. Leaders in any activity must be at least 18 years old.
2. Helpers in any activity must be at least 16 years old.
3. All activities involving persons under the age of 18 must be supervised by a Leader.
4. A minimum of three people registered as leaders or helpers must be present at all times in any activity involving persons under the age of 18. Where only two are available, the Pastor or Child Protection Co-ordinators must be contacted for support in the event of an emergency.

		Acceptable Supervision		
		All male	Male & female	All female
Group Composition	Girls under 12	<b>X</b>	✓	✓
	Boys & Girls under 12	<b>X</b>	✓	✓
	Boys under 12	✓	✓	✓
	Girls over 12	<b>X</b>	✓	✓
	Boys & Girls over 12	<b>X</b>	✓	<b>X</b>
	Boys over 12	✓	✓	<b>X</b>

5. The gender of leaders present for activities must comply with the following:
6. If two members of the same family (e.g. husband/wife) are leading a group then there must be at least one other leader or helper present.
7. Written consent from parents/guardians of all children and young people under 16 is required for attending any activity. *(It is recommended however that consent forms be issued to all those under 18 still living with a parent or guardian).*<sup>3</sup>
8. A register of children and young people with emergency contact numbers and addresses must be kept. *(NB: this applies to all under 18's and must not be confused with the consent forms which apply to those under 16.)*
9. If inadequate supervision is available for an activity then it should not proceed.

## **Additional Rules Specific to Activities**

### **Children's Ministries (4 – 12 years)**

1. Parental consent must be obtained to permit children to play games in the Sports Hall.
2. Parental consent must be obtained to take children to the toilet if they are unable to go by themselves.
3. Children must be collected from events by a named person agreed with their parent or guardian and signed out of activity.
4. In addition to a minimum of two leaders/helpers irrespective of the number of children, a minimum ratio of one leader/helper to eight children must be maintained.

### **Young People's Ministries (12 – 17 years inclusive)**

1. Parental consent must be obtained for any young person under the age of 16 wanting to attend an event occurring on or off the Church premises, including residential trips. *(It is recommended however that consent forms be issued to all those under 18 still living with a parent or guardian when considering events off the church premises.)*
2. In addition to a minimum of two leaders/helpers irrespective of the number of young people, a minimum ratio of one leader/helper to ten young people must be maintained.
3. It is recommended that for larger outreach events the ratio of leaders/helpers to young people is increased.

## Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Abuse or Neglect

If a children's or young person's worker is alleged to have abused a child then the following actions must be taken:

1. The matter must be reported to the elder responsible for children's and young people's ministries, the Pastor or any other elder.
2. The alleged person must not be informed.
3. Ensure that no-one is placed in a position that could cause further compromise.
4. The elders must decide on an appropriate course of action and appoint either the elder responsible for children's and youth ministries or another elder to handle the case. The allegation and course of action must be documented.
5. The elder responsible for children's and young people's work must try to establish what has happened but not investigate the matter. This includes keeping a record of the child (name, address, date of birth) and the details of any person making the allegation (name, address, telephone number, etc).
6. In the event of allegations of sexual abuse the elder responsible for children's and young peoples ministries must contact the Children & Families Services or the Police Child Protection Investigation Unit for advice.
7. It is generally accepted as good practice to discuss any concerns you may have about a child/young person with their parents/guardians, and where necessary seek their agreement to making a referral to Children's & Families Services. However this should **not** occur where it is considered that such a discussion would put a child at risk of significant harm. In such cases it would be good practices to Consult Children's & Families Services and discuss how best to respond to the concerns. (This might be particularly relevant in cases of physical abuse).
8. An advice should be confirmed in writing and retained for future reference.

## Procedures for Responding to Suspicions of Abuse

These procedures cover both physical and sexual abuse. It is important to note that there are different courses of action to be pursued in each case, therefore, these procedures should be read carefully.

### Physical Injury or Neglect

If a child has a physical injury or symptoms of neglected the Children's or Young People's worker should take the following actions.

1. Where emergency medical attention is necessary then this should be sought immediately. The Children's or Young people's worker will inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse.
2. The children's worker should discuss the matter with the elder responsible for children's ministries and jointly arrange to speak to the parent/carer and suggest medical help/attention is sought for the child. If appropriate the parent/carer should be encouraged to seek help from the Children & Families Services.
3. If the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, even if an offer is made to go with them, then the children's worker and elder should contact the Children & Families Services or Police Child Protection Investigation Unit.
4. Any advice sought from the authorities should be confirmed in writing, as this may be needed for reference purposes at some future date.

### Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse the Children's or Young People's worker will take the following course of action.

1. In the event that a child is discovered soon after an alleged incident of rape or sexual intercourse, then an immediate referral to the Children & Families Services or Police Child Protection Investigation Unit must be made. Remember that the police may want to try and obtain forensic evidence, so that it would **not** be helpful for the child to change clothing or have a bath etc.
2. In other cases, the elder responsible for children's ministries should be informed and then the Children & Families Services or Police Child Protection Investigation Unit should be contacted for advice. The Children's or Young People's Worker should **not** speak to the parents or anyone else who could be involved.

3. Investigations into the matter are the responsibility of the Police and/or Children & Families Services. The role of the Children's or Young People's Worker is to collect and clarify all information concerning the allegation or suspicion of abuse.
4. The Elder's will support the children's or young people's worker in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession is strictly confidential.

## Definitions

### **Children and young people**

Any person under the age of 8.

### **Children's and Young People's Workers**

**Leader** – A person appointed by the Church who has overall responsibility for a Children's or Young People's activity

**Helper** - A person appointed by the Church to work in a Children's or Young People's activity under the supervision of a leader. (Usually 16-18 years old. Note: Criminal Record Bureau checks only taken out for 18+).

### **Definitions of Abuse**

*The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria throughout England and Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and the Home Office in their joint document, Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999) are as follows:*

#### **Abuse and Neglect**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

#### **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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment 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. It may involve 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.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect, of or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Organised Abuse**

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse. Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse. Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse).

## **Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy**

The Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry defines Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy as 'A Form of child abuse in which the parents, or carers, give false accounts of symptoms in their children and may fake signs of illness (to draw attention to themselves). They seek repeated medical investigations and needless treatment for their children'.

## **Important Contact Numbers**

### **Poole Borough Council:**

#### **Children & Families Services:**

**Telephone 01202 735046 (office hours)**

**01202 668123 (outside office hours)**

### **Dorset Police: Poole:**

#### **Child Protection Investigation Unit:**

**Telephone 01202 223149/223150**

### **Churches Child Protection Advisory Service:**

**Telephone 0845 120 4550**

### **NSPCC 24 hour helpline:**

**Telephone 0808 800 5000**

**STANDARD FORMS:**

1. Application Form (pages 15-18)
2. Registration & Consent Form for under 16's (page 19)
3. Event & Activity Checklist (page 20)
4. Event & Activity Reply slip for under 16's (page 21)
5. Application Form for Special Events (page 22)
6. Voluntary Disclosure Form (page 23)

**APPLICATION FORM FOR PAID OR VOLUNTARY WORK  
WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN  
SUNNYHILL COMMUNITY CHURCH**

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

**1. Personal Details**

*We may need to see birth/marriage certificates to check names.*

Full name .....

Maiden/All former Name(s) .....

Date and place of birth .... / .... / ..... .....

Address .....

Town .....

City/County .....

Postal Code .....

Daytime telephone no. ....

Evening telephone no. ....

How long have you lived at the above address? .....Years

If less than 3 years, please give previous address(es) with dates

From/To .... / .... / .....      .... / .... / .....      From/To .... / .... / .....      .... / .... / .....

Previous .....      Previous .....

Address .....      Address .....

.....      .....

Town .....      Town .....

City/County .....      City/County .....

Postal Code .....      Postal Code .....

Please tell us about your Christian experience (i.e. how long have you been a Christian, which Church/es have you attended and dates, names of minister/leader, any activities undertaken)

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Please give details of previous experience of looking after or working with children and/or young people. Please include details of any relevant qualifications or appropriate training either in a paid or voluntary capacity.

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Have you ever had an offer to work with children/young people declined?

YES  NO  (Please tick)

If yes, please give details.

.....  
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.....

Do you suffer, or have you suffered, from any illness which may directly affect your work with children or young people? YES  NO  (Please tick)

If yes, please give details.

.....  
.....  
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.....

**2. Employment History**

Please tell us about your past and current employers in the table below:

Employer's name & address	Employed from (date)	Employed to (date)	Job Title & Description of Duties	Reason for Leaving

**3. References**

Please give the names, addresses and telephone numbers and role or relationship of two people who know you well and who would be able to give a personal reference. In addition, we reserve the right to take up character references from any other individuals deemed necessary.

1	2
Name .....	.....
Address .....	.....
.....	.....
Town .....	.....
City/County .....	.....
Postcode .....	.....
Role .....	.....

**4. Declaration**

Have you ever been involved in court proceedings concerning a child for whom you have parental responsibility?

YES [ ] NO [ ] (Please tick)

If yes, please give details and dates overleaf

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Has there ever been any cause for concern regarding your conduct with children?

YES  NO  (Please tick)

If yes, please give details

.....  
.....  
.....

To your knowledge have you ever had any allegation made against you, which has been reported to, and investigated by, Social Services and/or the Police?

YES  NO  (Please tick)

If yes, we will need to discuss this with you.

As this post involves substantial, unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, all applicants who are offered an appointment will be asked to submit to a criminal records check before the position can be confirmed. You will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure through the Criminal Records Bureau/Scottish Criminal Records Office. As the position is exempted under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act this check will reveal any convictions\*. This process is subject to a strict code to ensure confidentiality, fair practice and security of any information disclosed. The CRB/SCRO Code of Practice and our own procedures are available on request for you to read. It is stressed that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to appointment, only if the nature of any matters revealed could be considered to place children or vulnerable adults at risk.

Please would you complete the attached voluntary disclosure form, place it in a sealed envelope and address it to The Pastor, with whom you are welcome to discuss any aspects of this procedure.

**I confirm that the submitted information is correct and complete.**

**Signed** .....

**Dated** .....

As a church/organisation we undertake to meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998*, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.
--

**Registration & Consent form for under 16's**

Full name of child/young person .....

Address.....

.....

Postcode .....

Telephone: Daytime ..... Evening .....

Date of birth ..../..../.....

With whom does the child/young person live? .....

Relationship to child/young person .....

Who has parental responsibility for the child/young person if different from above?

Name .....

Address.....

.....

....

Postcode ..... Telephone .....

**Medical/Dietary Information**

Whilst in our care it is important that we have details of any medical conditions – asthma, diabetes, allergies, dietary needs, etc

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.....  
.....  
.....

**Declaration**

I give permission for my child to take part in the normal activities of this group. I understand that separate permission will be sought for certain activities, including swimming, activities lasting longer than the normal meeting times of the group and outings. YES [ ] NO [ ] (Please tick)

In an emergency and/or if I cannot be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive necessary hospital or dental treatment including an anaesthetic.  
YES [ ] NO [ ] (Please tick)

Signed (parental or adult with parental responsibility)

..... Dated ...../...../.....

*Please note that the information part can be completed by a carer. Only those with parental responsibility (e.g. this does not include a foster carer) can sign the declaration.*

## Event and Activity Checklist

When arranging a day trip, special activity or a residential stay, parents should be given full information prior to the event and a consent and medical form should be completed. The information given to the parent should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Name of visit or activity
- Date(s)
- Venue/destination
- Name, address, telephone number of the leader responsible for the group
- Names of other leaders who will be present
- Contact number of the venue (or mobile number of leader)
- A brief description of the activities or programme. If young people are not supervised at all times (e.g. shopping trips) this should be made clear to parents
- If special training is being offered, details of the trainers and any appropriate qualifications (e.g. if you are taking a group canoeing, sailing, abseiling, etc)
- Departure time and price
- Return time and place
- Cost (including to whom cheques should be made payable)
- Transport arrangements
- Items to be brought (e.g. swimming kit, walking boots, packed lunch, money, etc)
- Date by which reply is to be made and person to whom it is sent (see below for example reply slip)

**THE PARENTAL CONSENT FORM SHOULD BE RETURNED PRIOR TO THE ACTIVITY AND SHOULD BE TAKEN ON THE ACTIVITY BY THE LEADER.**

**Event and Activity Reply Slip for Under 16's**  
One form per child

Description of activity: .....

Full name of child or young person: .....

Address: .....  
.....  
.....

Whilst in our care, it is important we have details of any medical conditions, e.g. asthma, diabetes, allergies, dietary needs, etc.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Telephone number for emergencies:                      Day: .....

Evening: .....

I enclose a cheque or cash to the sum of:    £ \_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_

I have read the information provided and give permission for my child to take part in the activity or event described above.

In an emergency and/or if I cannot be contacted, I am willing for my child to receive necessary hospital or dental treatment including an anaesthetic.

Signed (parent or adult with parental responsibility):

..... Dated ...../...../.....

**Application Form for Paid or Voluntary Work**

**Special Events**

**Involving Children and Young People.**

This form should be completed by those who wish to help during the event named below, and who are not currently registered leaders or helpers at Sunnyside Community Church. This application applies only to the event noted below:

Name of event .....  
Date of event .....  
Venue .....

Full name ..... D.O.B. ....  
Address .....  
..... Postcode .....  
Telephone .....

1. How long have you lived at the above address? ..... Years

If less than 3 years – please give previous addresses with dates:

.....  
.....

2. Please provide details of previous experience of looking after or working with children and/or young people:

.....  
.....

3. Have you ever had an offer to work with children/young people declined?

YES [ ] NO [ ] (Please tick) If yes – please give details

.....  
.....

4. Do you suffer or have suffered any illness which may directly affect your work with children/young people?

YES [ ] NO [ ] (Please tick) If yes – please give details

.....  
.....

5. **Criminal records declaration** (see note below\*)

Have you ever been charged with or convicted of a criminal offence, or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations?

YES [ ] NO [ ] (Please tick) If yes please give details including the nature of the offence(s) and dates

.....  
.....

**I confirm that all the above information is correct and complete.**

**Signed** ..... **Dated** ...../...../.....

**Print name** .....

**VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURE FORM**  
**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

All applicants are asked to complete this form (making a 'nil' return if appropriate), returning it in a separate sealed envelope, as below:

To: THE PASTOR  
SUNNYHILL COMMUNITY CHURCH,  
SUNNYHILL ROAD  
POOLE

Your name, address/other contact details:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Appointment as .....

**Voluntary Disclosure**

I consent to a criminal records check if appointed to the position for which I have applied. I am aware that details of pending prosecutions, previous convictions, cautions, or bind-overs against me will be disclosed along with any other relevant information which may be known to the police, Department of Health or the Department for Education and Skills.

**Disclosures**

Have you ever been charged with, cautioned or convicted in relation to any criminal offence, or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations/pending prosecution?

YES [ ] NO [ ] (Please tick)

If yes, please give details including the nature of the offence(s) and dates:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signed ..... Dated ...../...../.....

Print name .....