

Child Protection Policy

Parish Child Protection Policy for the Church of St Anne

0. Document Control Information

0.1. Document Details

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Prepared By:	Monica Hollows – Under 18s Co-ordinator
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<p>NB Printed copies are uncontrolled unless otherwise indicated. The latest version is available from http://www.stannesparishchurch.org and hard copies are available for reference in Church, the Parish Office and the Parish Rooms.</p>	

0.2. Version History

Version Number	Date Approved	Reasons for Change
1.0	18/07/2005	First Issue approved by PCC
2.0	31/8/2010	Revised Diocese guidelines
2.1	20/9/2010	Revised distribution list and LCC Children's Services contact details.
2.2	29/11/2010	Approval by PCC, amend reference from Kidsown to Children's Church
2.3	9/11/2010	Annual Review by PCC Updated Distribution List Reference Protecting all God's Children 4 th Edition Change Priest-in-Charge to Vicar (+ associated forms) 4.5.1 - allow other approved formats 5.2.9 – refer to Diocese policy 5.3.3 – move review date to Sept 2012

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0.3. Changes Forecast

Annual review – September 2012

Potential changes in legislation in relation to the Vetting & Barring Scheme & Criminal Records Bureau checks, following government review of current processes in February 2011.

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0.4. Distribution List

Name	Role
Fr David Lyon	Vicar {Controlled Copy 1}
Monica Hollows	Under 18s Co-ordinator {Controlled Copy 2}
Church Copy	Kept on cupboards at back of Church {Controlled Copy 3}
Parish Office Copy	Kept in the Parish Office {Controlled Copy 4}
Parish Rooms Copy	Kept in the Parish Rooms {Controlled Copy 5}
Eric Roberts	Church Warden
Joan Johnson	Church Warden
Colin Miller	Children's Church Group Leader
Monica Hollows	See & Know Group Leader
Carlla Harris	Messy Church Group Leader
Mary Gittins	Nursery Praise Group Leader
Linda Phoenix/Mary Roberts	Parent & Toddler Group Leader
Vacant	Sacristan/Verger
Gerald Wilson	Head Server
Stuart Newton	Captain of Bellringers
Alistair McKenzie	Director of Music
Gerry Stokes	Leader of Handbell Ringers
Val Allport/Rosemary Pickles	Parish Office

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1. References

1.1. External References

1. Safe From Harm 1993
[http://www.lcpu.org/docs/2010/Safe from Harm.pdf](http://www.lcpu.org/docs/2010/Safe%20from%20Harm.pdf)
2. Protecting All God's Children 4th Edition
<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/37378/protectingallgodschildren.pdf>
3. Child Protection Policy for Work with Children and Young People in the Diocese of Blackburn - February 2009
<http://www.bdeducation.org.uk/resources/files/2009childprot.pdf>
4. Guidelines for Maintaining a Safe Environment for Young People in the Belfry
<http://www.cccbr.org.uk/towerstewardship/pubs/gdlnChildProtection.php>

1.2. Internal References

5. [Under 18s Co-ordinator Role Description v1.1](#)
6. [Role Description Template v1.1](#)
7. [Confidential Declaration Form v1.1](#)
8. [Group Compliance Form v1.1](#)
9. [Induction Checklist Form v1.1](#)
10. [Accident Record Sheet v1.0](#)
11. [Users of Parish Rooms Form v1.1](#)
12. [Annual Audit Checklist Form v1.0](#)
13. [Risk Assessment Checklist Form v1.0](#)
14. [Website Child Protection Statement v1.1](#)
15. [Photography Policy v1.0](#)
16. [Guidance on Working with Under 18s v1.1](#)
17. [Register of Roles allowing access to U18s v1.2](#)
18. [Template for Register of Individuals with Access to Under 18s v1.0](#)
19. [U18s Group Programme Plan Form v1.0](#)
20. [Template for Registration Form v1.1](#)
21. [U18s Group Annual Report Form v1.0](#)

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2. Introduction

2.1. Background

- 2.1.1. Christians are called to recognise the unique status of children. There is a special need to respect them as individuals and protect them in their vulnerability. Within the kingdom of God children matter in their own right and are to be taken seriously.
- 2.1.2. The Church is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, truthfulness and trustworthiness. As Christians we recognise that all of us should be walking in the way of Christ. All who work in a paid or voluntary capacity for the Church are given power to influence the lives of children and young people and need to exercise the greatest care in their use of that power and must avoid taking advantage of trust.
- 2.1.3. The purpose of the Policy is to promote a code of practice for all work with children and young people which acknowledges the responsibilities we have as Christians for the children and young people in our care and to make sure that such work is undertaken to the highest standards possible. This will enable the parish not only to conform to the requirements of the law, but also enable children, young people and their Leaders to live, work and worship within a safe and caring Christian setting.
- 2.1.4. The Parish of St. Anne therefore commits itself to providing a safe and creative environment for all its work with children and young people. We will publish our commitment to this with a [Child Protection Statement](#) on our website.
- 2.1.5. The Policy has been developed by following the Blackburn Diocesan Guidelines February 2009³ which have incorporated the requirements of the Children Act 1989, the Home Office recommendations “Safe From Harm” 1993¹ and the House of Bishop’s Policy Document ‘Protecting All God’s Children’, 4th Edition².

2.2. Definitions

- 2.2.1. In accordance with the definition provided in The Children’s Act 1989, a “**child**” is considered or defined as a person under the age of 18. However, within this document a child may also be referred to as a **Young Person**.
- 2.2.2. The term “**staff**” will be used to describe all individuals who are employed by the Church, either via a contract of paid employment or those on working on a voluntary/unpaid basis.
- 2.2.3. The term “**parent**” is used throughout this document as a generic term to represent parents, carers, guardians, and any other person who may be acting *in loco parentis*.
- 2.2.4. The term “**Church Groups**” is used to mean the groups which are run by the church and where the PCC has direct responsibility for appointments and

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monitoring. In the context of this policy, only Church Groups where children and young people participate are within the scope of this policy.

- 2.2.5. The term “**Mixed Age Groups**” is used to refer to Church Groups that are not specifically set up for children and young people, but may have children and young people in them, for example Bellringers and Servers.
- 2.2.6. The term “**U18s Groups**” is used to refer to Church Groups that are specifically set up for children and young people for example Children’s Church and See & Know.
- 2.2.7. The term “**Group Leader**” is used to indicate someone with the overall responsibility within a group, the senior Leader. This also refers to the role undertaken by a Children and Families Worker where appropriate.
- 2.2.8. The term “**Leader**” is used to indicate anyone involved in leadership of a group at whatever level. For clarity, this term does **not** include adult members of Mixed Age groups who are not involved in the leadership of the group. Under 18s cannot be Leaders, but may be “helpers” under the supervision of a Leader.

2.3. Exclusions

- 2.3.1. The PCC recognises that the Scout and Guide movements have their own Child Protection Policies and Procedures, therefore our Uniformed Organisations are outside the scope of this policy.

3. Creating a Clear Framework

3.1. Under 18s Co-ordinator

- 3.1.1. The PCC will appoint an Under 18s Co-ordinator for children’s work who will ensure the implementation of this policy and give regular reports to the PCC.
- 3.1.2. The Under 18s Co-ordinator has a [role description](#) defining his/her responsibilities.
- 3.1.3. The PCC requires that all Leaders will give the Under 18s Co-ordinator their fullest support and co-operation.
- 3.1.4. The Under 18s Co-ordinator’s contact details will be published in the parish’s monthly magazine.

3.2. Child Protection Group

- 3.2.1. The PCC will establish a group to oversee the implementation of this policy. It will include as a minimum the Vicar, the Under 18s Co-ordinator, a Churchwarden and at least one representative from those who work with children and young people in the parish.

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- 3.2.2. This group will be registered, approved and monitored by the PCC. It will meet as and when necessary, but at least twice a year in order to review the results of the annual audit (see section 3.6) and conduct the annual review of the Child Protection Policy on behalf of the PCC.
- 3.2.3. This group will be responsible for reviewing any proposed changes to the Child Protection Policy and recommending the acceptance and implementation of the changes to the PCC. Approval of a new version of the Child Protection Policy will be documented within the PCC minutes.

3.3. Register of Roles offering access to under 18s

- 3.3.1. A [register](#) will kept of all roles which involve working with or coming into regular and direct contact with children and young people as part of their activities. .
- 3.3.2. The Child Protection Group will review this [register](#) at least annually to ensure all roles are recorded and a copy will be provided to the PCC for approval.

3.4. Attendance Records

- 3.4.1. It is essential that records are kept for all Church Groups involving under 18s. The records should include a list of all children and young people who attend and the names of those adults who were present and acting in Leader role. It should also include the names of any other young people who came along as helpers.
- 3.4.2. Children visiting (e.g. with grandparents/friends etc) should be registered with name, responsible adult if appropriate, and marked at the side as 'Visitor'. Any unaccompanied children should be registered and marked at the side as 'Unaccompanied'. It could be considered dangerous and un-Christian to send them away
- 3.4.3. Group Leaders of each Church group are responsible for maintaining Attendance Records for their Group. A simple register will suffice. Group Leaders are free to hold their Attendance Records in any suitable format so long as they contain the above information.
- 3.4.4. Records need to be kept for future reference. In line with Diocese policy this will be for at least 20 years. The archives will be held by Academic Year and kept in the Parish Office. Group Leaders are responsible for passing their attendance records to the Parish Office at the end of each Academic year so that they can be archived.

3.5. Regular Reviews

- 3.5.1. The Leaders of each U18s group will meet at least once a term to discuss and review their work and to plan the following term's activities. It is the responsibility of the Group Leader to organise this meeting. The Group Leader must supply a [programme of planned activities](#) to the PCC at the start of each term.
- 3.5.2. Annually the Group Leader of each U18s Group will review the activities of the group and review the [role descriptions](#) of all Leaders. Group Leaders will also

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prepare an [annual report](#) to be presented to the PCC to enable the PCC to review the work of the Group. This review will happen at the summer meeting of the PCC.

- 3.5.3. This requirement does not apply to Mixed-age Groups (they may have a separate need/requirement to report to the PCC, but that is not covered by this policy)

3.6. Annual Audit

- 3.6.1. The Child Protection Group will conduct an annual audit of Child Protection practices within the Church during the Autumn Term. They will use the [Annual Audit Checklist](#) and [Risk Assessment Checklist](#) to complete their audit. The results of the audit will be submitted to the PCC. The Under 18s Co-ordinator will also submit a report on Child Protection to be included in the Annual report submitted to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.
- 3.6.2. If any issues are discovered as a result of the audit, the Under 18s Co-ordinator will work with the relevant Leaders and other Church members as required in order to put a plan in place to resolve them. A copy of this plan will be submitted to the PCC and the Under 18s Co-ordinator will inform to the PCC once the plan has been successfully completed.
- 3.6.3. All forms and plans related to the audit will be filed with the other U18s secure records once the audit and any follow-up actions are completed.

3.7. Independent advice and disclosure

- 3.7.1. In order to fulfil the parish's commitment to providing opportunity for independent advice and support for children and young people, the PCC has agreed to display the Child Line number on its notice boards in Church and in the Parish Rooms.

4. Creating a Safe Setting

4.1. Staffing

- 4.1.1. We recommend that all Leaders follow the [Guidance on Working with Under 18s](#)
- 4.1.2. Whenever possible, Leaders will not work on their own. With all church groups a minimum of two Leaders will work together. We will aim to ensure, that whenever possible both a male and female Leader are always present, particularly for Church groups involving young people over the age of 10.
- 4.1.3. At no time will anyone under 18 years of age act as a Leader, but, when appropriate, a person under 18 years of age may act as an assistant or helper under the supervision of a recognised Leader.

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- 4.1.4. Where it is either necessary or appropriate for a Leader to work alone with a group or in a one-to-one situation (e.g. counselling or confidentiality), the arrangements should be reported to other Leaders and, where appropriate, be agreed with the parents.
- 4.1.5. At times when the numbers of Leaders is unexpectedly low (e.g. Leaders fail to turn up due to illness) the remaining Leader(s) should, if necessary, change or reduce the activities planned in order to maintain control of the session. If possible a parent could be asked to stay to help in such an emergency or be asked to contact another recognised Leader. Rather than cancel a session for a church group, other people on the parish register of those working with under 18s can be recruited to assist the remaining Leader(s) with that session.
- 4.1.6. The following ratios will be followed, when possible, with all church groups:
- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| 0 to 2 years | 1 adult to 3 children. |
| 2 to 3 years | 1 adult to 4 children. |
| 3 to 8 years | 1 adult to 8 children |
| 8+ | 1 adult to 10 children. |
- 4.1.7. For activities such as off-site trips, vigorous sports or where the group contains children or young people with special needs, the ratios will be reviewed & additional Leaders will be recruited where appropriate.

4.2. Parental Consent/Registration

- 4.2.1. Parents will be asked to complete a [Registration Form](#) for each group that their child is involved with. This confirms that the parent consents to their child taking part in the activities of the group and also provides required information such as emergency contact details and any known medical issues. It also confirms that the parent has consented for photographs to be taken in line with our [Photography Policy](#). A template [Registration Form](#) is available, which Group Leaders can tailor to suit their individual circumstances, so long as it still contains the essential information.
- 4.2.2. The Group Leader is responsible for ensuring that they have an up to date [Registration Form](#) for every child or young person attending their group and that the Registration Forms are held securely. It is recommended that the Group Leader check with parents that their contact details are up to date at least annually. Registration Forms should be archived when the child leaves the group alongside the Attendance Records at the end of each Academic year, as detailed in section 3.4.4.

4.3. Group Compliance with Policy

- 4.3.1. The Group Leaders of all Church Groups who work with or have regular & direct contact with children and young people will need to ensure that they are compliant with this policy.

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- 4.3.2. This is achieved by the Group Leaders completing the [Group Compliance Form](#) and submitting it to the Under 18s Co-ordinator for review. (The Group Leaders may find it useful to refer to the [Risk Assessment Checklist](#) to assist in the identification of any potential risks their particular group may face.)
- 4.3.3. If there are any parts of this policy that the Group are unable to comply with, the Under 18s Co-ordinator will work with the Group Leaders to see if a pragmatic solution can be reached.
- 4.3.4. If the group is unable to meet the requirements of this policy in full, the Under 18s Co-ordinator will notify the PCC of this issue & what risks it may pose.
- 4.3.5. The Group Leader will review their compliance with the policy annually and confirm this in writing to the Under 18s Co-ordinator (an email will suffice). Group Leaders must submit a revised [Group Compliance Form](#) to the Under 18s Co-ordinator whenever changes occur.
- 4.3.6. Completed [Group Compliance Forms](#) will be filed in the U18s secure storage in the Parish Office.

4.4. Insurance

- 4.4.1. The insurance policy is covered by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group. It will cover all “normal” church activities on church premises provided the PCC has approved each activity and the appropriate leadership. The PCC’s approval must be minuted. Where changes in arrangements/personnel are necessary it will be in order for the Standing Committee to approve these changes, but this must be reported and minuted at the next PCC meeting.

4.5. Programme of U18s Group Activities

- 4.5.1. All U18s Groups must supply a [programme of planned activities](#) to the PCC at the start of each term. This may be submitted using FORM_U18s_Group_Programme_Plan or any suitable format that has been approved by the PCC. The PCC must note approval of the planned activities in the minutes of the meeting for insurance purposes.
- 4.5.2. This requirement does not apply to Mixed-age Groups (they may have a separate need/requirement to report to the PCC, but that is not covered by this policy)

4.6. Off Site or other “Extraordinary” Activities/Events

- 4.6.1. If any off site or other “extraordinary” event/activity are planned by **any** Church group (e.g. outings, trips, parties) details must be submitted to the PCC for approval in advance of the event/activity. The PCC will record its approval in the minutes of its meeting for insurance purposes. It will be in order for the Standing Committee on behalf of the PCC to give approval for an “extraordinary” event/activity where appropriate and its decision should be minuted.
- 4.6.2. For any activities or visits off site (away from the church building or premises) we will follow the Diocese guidelines for Off Site Visits detailed in the “Child

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Protection Policy for Work with Children and Young People in the Diocese of Blackburn”³. All off site events/activities should be preceded by a risk assessment following the Diocese guidelines. The risk assessment should be included with the request for the PCC to approve the activity/event. The PCC will take any necessary advice and guidance from Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education before any decision is made.

- 4.6.3. For all off site activities an Emergency Contact Person (who must not be participating in the activity) must be appointed. The Emergency Contact Person must be available for the whole duration of the visit/activity and be in possession of all details relating to the event and all participants’ names, addresses and emergency contacts.
- 4.6.4. Separate Parental Consent forms must be used for each activity in the following circumstances: -
- When the group is meeting away from its normal meeting place, and away from Church premises.
 - Where a group may be involved in a potentially hazardous activity.
 - Where the 'topic' of the meeting could be deemed to be controversial or outside the normal remit of the group's programme. (e.g. attending a demonstration or a visiting speaker on sex education.)
- 4.6.5. The Group Leader should create a Parental Consent form for each such activity, containing sufficient information for parents to make an informed decision about whether they wish their child to attend the activity. Children can only attend the activity if their parent gives consent. Example Parental Consent forms can be found in the “Child Protection Policy for Work with Children and Young People in the Diocese of Blackburn”³ Parental Consent Forms should be archived at the end of each Academic year alongside the Attendance Records, as detailed in section 3.4.4.

4.7. Non-Church users of the Parish Rooms

- 4.7.1. The PCC as owner of the Parish Rooms, is anxious to ensure that all children and young people using the premises are safe, but is not responsible for the child protection policies of non-Church groups or individuals who hire the Parish Rooms.
- 4.7.2. All individuals or non-Church groups using the Parish Rooms have to complete a [Users of Parish Rooms](#) form, to confirm that they accept responsibility for the safety of any children at the events/activities they organise.
- 4.7.3. Completed forms will be stored securely in the Parish Office and archived when no longer required.

4.8. Fire safety

- 4.8.1. It is important that the fire regulations are understood and enforced by all Leaders.

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- 4.8.2. As part of their induction all Leaders will be informed of the fire regulations and the procedures should there be a fire, and shown the positions of the fire extinguishers and the fire exits.
- 4.8.3. It is the responsibility of the Leaders to check that the fire exits are not obstructed and that they are left unlocked during group sessions.
- 4.8.4. The Group Leader's plan of activities should ensure that at least one fire drill takes place annually.
- 4.8.5. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that the fire equipment is checked regularly and that the fire safety policy & emergency procedures are displayed.

4.9. Health & Safety

- 4.9.1. Whilst we must remain vigilant for child abuse within the Church, it is a matter of fact that more harm comes to children from low regard for health and safety matters than from abusers.
- 4.9.2. All Leaders should familiarise themselves with the Parish Health and Safety Policies and take responsibility for general matters of safety for their group activities.
- 4.9.3. Any accidents/injuries however minor must be recorded in one of the Accident Books, which are situated with the First Aid kits. (The Parish Health and Safety Officer will oversee the periodic monitoring of these books). Group Leaders are advised to keep a copy of the [Accident Record Sheet](#) to hand to use on off-site visits or if the Accident Book is not available for any reason. All entries must be signed and dated. A parent should also sign the [Accident Record Sheet](#) as proof that they have been informed about the injury.
- 4.9.4. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that adequate Health and Safety policies are in place.

4.10. First Aid

- 4.10.1. There are First Aid kits for use by all groups in the Parish Rooms and in Church. All Leaders will be shown the location of the First Aid kits as part of their induction.
- 4.10.2. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that the First Aid kits are checked and restocked as necessary at regular intervals.
- 4.10.3. If possible, there will be a trained First Aider on hand during group activities. In the event of an accident within a group during a church service, assistance from other members of the congregation with the particular expertise can be sought.

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- 4.10.4. For events and activities away from church premises, an adequately stocked First Aid Kit must be taken. Parents will be notified via the Consent Form if there is not a qualified First Aider (someone who has a current “Approved Persons First Aid Certificate”) amongst the Leaders for a particular event.
- 4.10.5. If it is necessary to administer or assist with the administration of prescription drugs or medication to any child or young person, permission and instructions in writing will be required from the parent. Particular care will be taken about the storage and administration of any drugs or medication to children and young people, but the parent will need to agree to ‘no liability’ on the part of the Leaders.
- 4.10.6. In no circumstances will any drugs or medication be administered otherwise.
- 4.10.7. In emergency situations the Leader will call emergency services immediately & contact the parents. If there is any doubt over the severity of the situation the Leader will always adopt a “safety first” approach and treat it as an emergency.

4.11. Food Hygiene

- 4.11.1. Any Leaders involved in food preparation for children or young people need to be fully aware of all aspects of food hygiene, and what is required in terms of food safety.
- 4.11.2. It is the responsibility of the PCC to ensure that adequate Food Hygiene policies are in place.

4.12. Bellingring

- 4.12.1. The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers have their own Guidelines for [Maintaining a Safe Environment for Young People in the Belfry](#).⁴ These guidelines have the approval of the PCC and act as a supplement to this policy.

5. Appointment and Management of Staff

5.1. Standards Followed

- 5.1.1. All voluntary and paid workers who work with or have regular & direct contact with children and young people will be appointed in accordance with the practices indicated in the Government document “Safe from Harm”¹, the House of Bishop’s document “Protecting all God’s Children”² and the Blackburn Diocese document “Child Protection Policy for Work with Children and Young People in the Diocese of Blackburn”³

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- 5.1.2. The PCC will ensure that all those who work with children will be properly appointed, trained and supervised. We will ensure all new staff have a thorough induction. [Induction Checklist forms](#) will be completed and will be filed with the Register of Individuals once completed.
- 5.1.3. No one will be allowed unsupervised access to under 18s within the parish until
- they have completed a [Confidential Declaration](#)
 - they have presented a valid Enhanced CRB Disclosure certificate
 - references have been received when required.

5.2. Appointing new staff

- 5.2.1. Appropriate [Role Descriptions](#) will be drawn up in advance
- 5.2.2. Formal interviews will be held where appropriate
- 5.2.3. If the person is to be an employee, then at least two references must be obtained.
- 5.2.4. If the person is to be a volunteer, then references should be obtained, except where the person has been known to the Vicar for more than three years **or** has been a regular worshipper at the St Annes Church for more than two years.
- 5.2.5. All new personnel will be required to complete a [Confidential Declaration](#) and an Enhanced CRB disclosure form before they are appointed.
- 5.2.6. All new personnel will be expected to complete a probationary period of at least 6 months before their appointment is reviewed and confirmed.
- 5.2.7. The process documented in the Diocese Child Protection Policy ³ will be followed to obtain an Enhanced CRB disclosure. The Diocese of Blackburn is the “Registered Body” for CRB purposes. Only trained and authorised persons can undertake the checking of identity documents, in our case this is the Vicar. (During an interregnum the Church Wardens will be trained and authorised by the Diocese.) We also follow the Diocese guidelines on CRB “portability” and the recruitment of ex-offenders.
- 5.2.8. The CRB will communicate directly with the person concerned. They should present their Enhanced Disclosure Certificate to the Under 18s Co-ordinator, who will make a note of the reference number on their Disclosure Certificate on the [Register](#) of Individuals having access to children & young people and inform the Vicar and Group Leader as appropriate. If the Disclosure Certificate is not “clear” we will seek further advice from the Bishop of Blackburn’s Child Protection Officer.
- 5.2.9. All paper records relating to the appointment will be securely locked in a filing cabinet in the Parish Office, which can only be accessed by the Vicar and the Under 18’s Co-ordinator. We follow Diocese policy ³ on the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention & Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information.

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5.3. Existing staff

- 5.3.1. Will have their [Role Description](#) reviewed annually and updated where appropriate.
- 5.3.2. Will renew their [Confidential Declaration](#) every three years in line with the recommendations in the House of Bishops “Protecting All God's Children”² document.
- 5.3.3. The House of Bishops “Protecting All God's Children”² document now requires CRB disclosures are renewed every three years. In light of the review of and potential changes to the Vetting and Barring scheme, a decision has been taken to put the renewal of existing CRBs “on hold”. This decision will be reviewed when this policy is next reviewed in September 2012..

5.4. Register of those working with children and young people

- 5.4.1. A [register](#) will be kept of all Leaders that work with or have regular & direct contact with children and young people.
- 5.4.2. This [register](#) is a living document and will be updated as necessary. It will contain names and addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of Leaders, details of completion of Confidential Declarations and CRB checks, together with details of which group(s) they are involved with.
- 5.4.3. The PCC will be informed of any new Leaders added to the [register](#).
- 5.4.4. All Leaders are responsible for informing the Under 18s Co-ordinator of any change of name, address, telephone number or email address, so that the [register](#) can be kept up to date.
- 5.4.5. Paper copies of this [register](#) will be securely locked in a filing cabinet in the Parish Office, which can only be accessed by the Vicar and the Under 18's Co-ordinator.
- 5.4.6. An electronic copy of the file will be held in a BT “Digital Vault”, with only the Vicar and the Under 18's Co-ordinator able to access the file. The file will be password protected as an additional security measure.

5.5. Training

- 5.5.1. Appropriate training on Child Protection procedures will be given to all new staff involved in working with or having regular & direct contact with children and young people in the parish. The Under 18s Co-ordinator and/or the Group Leader will deliver this training.
- 5.5.2. Further training will be arranged as appropriate and necessary.

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6. Dealing with Suspicions and Allegations of Child Abuse

6.1. What Leaders should know

- 6.1.1. It is important that all those working with under 18s know
- What is meant by abuse
 - That diagnosis is a specialist task
 - What are the warning signs
 - How they would cope/react to a verbal disclosure
 - How to proceed when they believe there is abuse
 - Who to advise the discloser to turn to for help and support
 - How to cope when the abuser is known to them.
- 6.1.2. The Vicar and the PCC of this parish are committed to a policy that abuse is taken seriously, that we co-operate fully with the statutory agencies and that we do not conduct our own internal investigations.
- 6.1.3. All Leaders should familiarise themselves with the guidance on abuse in the Diocese Child Protection Policy.³ and House of Bishops Child Protection Policy²

Remember that diagnosis is a specialist task, so you would normally be dealing with your personal suspicions or with a disclosure from a child or young person.

**Please take either situation very seriously and act according to the advice below.
Your actions could save further pain and suffering.**

6.2. Advice for Leaders if a child discloses abuse

- 6.2.1. Be prepared, rehearse what you might say.
- 6.2.2. Believe the child or young person. Even if you think the disclosure is malicious you need to act. A clear verbal disclosure is a supreme act of trust, particularly for young children.
- 6.2.3. Do not promise absolute confidentiality or anything else that you cannot guarantee.
- 6.2.4. You may need to discuss the matter with the Under 18s Co-ordinator and/or Vicar or report without their knowledge/consent.
- 6.2.5. Do **not** investigate allegations, inform or confront alleged abusers or make hasty judgements.
- 6.2.6. Be prepared for strong feelings of guilt, fear and anger within yourself and others that become involved.
- 6.2.7. Don't let surprise at the identity of the alleged abuser prevent you from acting. People with high standing in the community, people with caring roles and even personal friends of many years can all be abusers.

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- 6.2.8. If you really cannot cope with the situation on your own, involve another person, typically either the Under 18s Co-ordinator or the Clergy. Do not let this new person dissuade you from taking the matter further.

6.3. What Leaders should do

- 6.3.1. Allow the discloser to talk. Create the space and time for this and demand that other people allow this. If possible, make some notes as is practical and sensitive.
- 6.3.2. With “suspicions”, think through the signs and, if necessary, check with the [NSPCC Help line](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) (0808 800 5000 – 24h) on an anonymous basis. Make the decision whether or not to report.
- 6.3.3. Report suspected or disclosed abuse by either contacting
- the [NSPCC Help line](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) (0808 800 5000 - 24h) or email help@nspcc.org.uk
 - Lancashire County Council Children’s Services
 - During office hours - 0845 0530009,
 - email csc.acscustomerservices@lancashire.gov.uk
 - Out of hours - [Emergency Duty Team](#) - 0845 6021043 or
 - assist the abused child or young person to make a report.
- If you are concerned that the child or young person is in immediate danger (e.g. returning home at the end of a session), contact the Police on 999.
- 6.3.4. Ensure that the child or young person knows that they can return for help or contact other agencies such as [Child Line](https://www.childline.gov.uk) (0800 1111) whose telephone number is also displayed on the Church and Parish Rooms notice boards.
- 6.3.5. Advise the Vicar or, if the allegation is against the Vicar, the Church Wardens. If the Vicar cannot be contacted within a reasonable timeframe, or during an interregnum contact the Church Wardens.
- 6.3.6. Either the Vicar or Church Wardens must then report the circumstances to the Bishop of Blackburn’s Child Protection Officer. If the alleged abuser is a licensed clergy person or lay worker, then the Diocesan Bishop must be informed by a Church Warden or other responsible person.
- 6.3.7. Where the alleged abuse has taken place in a parish context, the Vicar (or Church Wardens where appropriate) will notify EIG immediately in writing, in case of a subsequent claim.
- 6.3.8. In all cases strict confidentiality will be observed.
- 6.3.9. Once step 6.3.5 has been taken, the Vicar (or the Church Wardens where appropriate) will assume responsibility in the parish with assistance from the Diocesan Team responsible for Child Protection.

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6.4. Ministering to People who might pose a risk to Children

- 6.4.1. The Church has a duty to minister to all, but this duty must not compromise the safety of children. We follow the guidelines given in the House of Bishops Child Protection Policy² when ministering to people who might pose a risk to children.