

St Michael's, Tilehurst

Child Protection

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1. Introduction

The policies and procedures contained in this document were received, and adopted by, St Michael's Parochial Church Council, Tilehurst, at its meeting on 18 March 2003.

These policies and procedures should be read alongside the Diocese of Oxford's 'Better Safe than Sorry' documents, copies of which are held by the Rector, Churchwardens, Approved Parish Representative (for Disclosures) and Youth Co-ordinator. In addition, copies of the 'Better Safe than Sorry' documents will be held in the general office for reference purposes.

2. St Michael's responsibilities for monitoring compliance with procedures

St Michael's PCC recognises that it has a duty of care towards its children and young people. In acknowledging that responsibility, the PCC has:

- Familiarised itself with the House of Bishops' Policy on Child Protection
- Familiarised itself with the Diocese of Oxford's 'Better Safe than Sorry' booklets
- Adopted a Parish Policy on Child Protection (see Appendix A)
- Implemented and monitored appointment procedures in the parish
- Appointed a PCC member to monitor compliance with these procedures and to report to the PCC at least annually
- Made (and will continue to make) adequate training provision for those involved in work with children and young people and those who should be familiar with issues connected with children/young people's work and child protection

In addition, the PCC will:

- Review the Policy at the first meeting of the new PCC following the Annual Parish Meeting each year.

3. Training for those involved in work with children at St Michael's

Children and young people are best protected when those working with them do not feel isolated. St Michael's PCC will ensure that volunteer workers and staff have the opportunity to meet twice a year with the Rector and Youth Co-ordinator in an atmosphere where people can discuss any concerns and receive support and be helped to review their work. Children and young people are defined as those aged seventeen and under.

St Michael's PCC requires each Group Leader(s) to offer on-going supervision and support to their volunteer helpers. This will also help to identify any learning needs which the volunteer has which might be addressed through the provision of training opportunities.

St Michael's PCC will ensure that opportunities are provided to those working with children and young people to develop their skills and abilities. Budgetary provision will be made at the beginning of each financial year to enable this to happen. The PCC Treasurer will notify the individual group's leader of the amount of this budgetary provision. In addition, first aid training will be offered to all leaders of Children and Young People's Groups.

As part of the report provided to the Annual Parish Meeting by Children/Young People's Groups, the information should include the training take up during the year and the levels of supervision and support provided.

4. Health and Safety

In each location in which young people or children's activities take place, there should be information detailing key information such as the address of the premises, location of nearest telephone, 'phone number and address of the nearest hospital (and how to get there) and the meeting point location in the event of a fire or emergency. This 'location specific plan' should be displayed alongside the fire notice in each room where activities take place.

Leaders should ensure that the contents of the 'location specific' plan should be discussed, along with the relevant Fire Notice, during volunteer and staff induction sessions.

Leaders and their assistants should be aware of the fire procedure. Fire extinguishers should be checked annually and a fire drill carried out. Leaders should maintain records of all fire drills carried out. Emergency exits should be clearly marked and never locked. Fire notices should be displayed in every meeting area and corridor.

A first aid kit should be available on all church premises used by children or young people. An accident book should be kept with the first aid kit and all accidents recorded in it.

Children with infectious illnesses should not attend any group held in church premises, and it is the responsibility of group leaders to ensure that all parents/guardians are made aware of this ruling.

Children should not be allowed to leave church premises unsupervised unless prior written permission has been given by their parents or guardians.

Parents must sign a 'consent' form before young people or children are taken off site for activities.

When taking children or young people off site, a detailed programme and list of contacts should be left with a responsible person who is not attending the event.

5. Insurance

St Michael's PCC will ensure that it has adequate insurance cover, including public liability insurance, to cover all activities both off and on site.

The PCC will ensure that it has public liability cover for at least £5 million in respect of any one claim.

St Michael's PCC will ensure that all church members who use their cars for transporting young people have checked with their insurers that their insurance policy covers this. Cars should not carry more passengers than the number they are designed for.

The PCC should be made aware (as the insured party) of all activities involving young people and, accordingly, must:

- a) agree to the specific activity taking place
- b) have accepted responsibility for that activity
- c) record in its meeting minutes its acceptance of the responsibility

With regard to the possible insurance implications of child abuse, the PCC should notify the insurer of any allegation **or possible** allegation concerned with child abuse at the earliest possible moment.

6. Responsibilities on outside groups using St Michael's premises

Organisations working with children who hire or use St Michael's church property should be advised of their responsibility for the welfare and safety of the children in their care. The PCC requires that such groups have their own Child Protection policy and procedures. The PCC must be provided with a copy.

All hiring agreements with outside bodies working with children and young people are to include the following statement (which is in addition to any child protection policies operated by the organisation concerned).

'This organisation confirms it is familiar with the Home Office Code of Practice 'Safe from Harm', and the Oxford Diocesan Guidelines, 'Better Safe than Sorry'. It understands these policies and procedures and undertakes to follow their recommendations in relation to work with children and young people.'

In addition, groups using Church premises must ensure that they adhere to the Health and Safety requirements set out in this document (Section 4).

7. Private tuition given to children and young people on St Michael's premises

Directors of choirs, organists, bell-ringers and others who are likely to give individual tuition are required to follow their professional code of ethics. Both the RSCM and the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers have produced Codes of Conduct that recommend one to one tuition should not be given on church premises without another adult present. St Michael's PCC has acquainted itself with these documents, copies of which are held by the Rector and Church Wardens. These Codes of Conduct do not supersede the House of Bishops' Policy on Child Protection (1999).

It is a requirement of all Children and Young People's Groups operating in St Michael's, that, at all times, there is a minimum of two adults present within the building. In addition, without an Enhanced Disclosure having been received which provides clearance for a leader, best practice dictates that there should be a minimum of two adults present in the room in which the meeting with children or young people is taking place.

All people working with children and/or young people in such a capacity are required to have completed an application form and been subjected to receipt of satisfactory references. In addition, successful applicants for such positions (paid or voluntary) are now required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure application (the costs of which will be borne by St Michael's PCC).

8. Appointments to posts involving work with children at St Michael's

St Michael's PCC recognises that in the care and nurture of children and young people, a long term commitment is especially important. In that regard, the PCC recognises the importance of ensuring that those working with children and young people should be carefully selected, supported and trained.

The PCC must satisfy itself that everything is being done to provide a safe environment for its children and young people. It is also responsible for making sure, as far as possible, no false accusations can be made against staff and volunteers.

St Michael's PCC has identified the following groups of children and young people who are covered by these guidelines:

- Servers
- Choir
- Bell-ringers
- Sunday School
- Young People's Discussion Group
- Music Group

The list of such groups will be reviewed at the first meeting of the new PCC after the APM each year. In addition, the leader(s) of each Group working with children and/or young people will be confirmed at that same meeting following the APM.

Leaders of Children and/or young people's groups and the Rector are responsible for identifying any prospective new volunteers and ensuring that the proper recruitment processes are put in place, including receiving references and liaison with the

Approved Parish Representative with regard to an Enhanced Disclosure application from the CRB (see Section 9). The Approved Parish Representative should maintain a register of paid staff or volunteers who work with children or young people in a position of care or supervisory responsibility.

St Michael's PCC has determined that existing volunteers will not be required to submit to an Enhanced Disclosure, provided that, since January 2000, a satisfactory police check has been received.

The PCC is responsible for ensuring that all information sent to applicants interested in paid or voluntary positions which requires them to care for, or undertake a supervisory role, in relation to young people or children, requires any appointment made to be subject to receipt of satisfactory references, including those provided by the Criminal Records Bureau.

St Michael's will deploy rigorous recruitment procedures, and will exercise that responsibility through ensuring that:

- Information provided to an applicant explicitly states
 - what the post involves, and
 - describes the skills/attributes which the successful applicant is required to possess
- Effective and anti-discriminatory interviewing procedures are deployed
- Reference requests require the referee(s) to provide responses to specific questions designed to elicit factual information about the candidate
- An Enhanced Disclosure application is submitted for relevant positions involving children and young people, and that, until a satisfactory response has been received from the CRB and been considered by the relevant person(s) in St Michael's, the individual potential leader is never placed in a position whereby he/she is left in sole charge of children or young people, and that at least one adult co-worker/co-volunteer has received criminal records clearance.

9. Obtaining disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau

9.1 Introduction

Disclosure is an information service provided by the Criminal Records Bureau to help employers and volunteering organisations make informed recruitment decisions. It replaces the police checking procedures, and incorporates checks made against the lists of those banned from working with children, held by the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills.

Oxford Diocese has advised that the CRB Disclosure Process will not apply to people working with Vulnerable Adults, but only those working with children and young people. The Diocese is continuing discussions with the CRB to confirm whether it is appropriate for activity such as bereavement visiting and pastoral care to be subject to Disclosure.

9.2 Parish of St Michael's position on Disclosures

St Michael's will request an **Enhanced Disclosure** for any employee or volunteer who will work with children or young people in a capacity that requires them to care for or undertake a supervisory role. The requirement

for this Disclosure will be made clear at the advertising for, or recruiting to, such a position.

9.3 Applying for a Disclosure

When the form has been completed, all Disclosure applications need to go to the CRB via a registered body, in order to be countersigned. In the case of St Michael's, the Oxford Diocese has registered as our umbrella body. Countersignatories have been appointed for specific areas of ministry. Completed application forms should be sent to the relevant Countersignatory, who will then forward the application forms to the CRB and inform the parish of the outcome.

For Volunteers:

The Disclosure application should be sent to:

*Volunteer Countersignatory
Diocesan Church House
North Hinksey
Oxford
OX2 0NB
Telephone: 01865 208215*

A cheque for £5 made out to 'The Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance' should be enclosed (this is to cover the administrative costs incurred by the Diocese).

For Employees:

The Disclosure application should be sent to:

*Diocesan Youth Adviser
Diocesan ChurchHouse
North Hinksey
Oxford
OX2 0NB
Telephone: 01865 208253*

A cheque for £12 made out to 'The Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance' should be enclosed (this is the set payment levied by the CRB for paid posts).

Clergy, Ordinands and LLMs are checked separately and are not a parish responsibility.

9.4 St Michael's Administrative Requirements

The Parish of St Michael's has adopted a policy statement (Appendix C) regarding recruitment, disclosures and the security of disclosure information. In addition, the Parish has signed the Agreement form between the Diocese of Oxford and St Michael's (Appendix B) on obtaining disclosures from the CRB.

St Michael's PCC undertakes to, at all times, ensure that one of its members fulfils one of the following three roles

- PCC Member appointed to monitor compliance with Child Protection Procedures: This person is appointed to monitor compliance and to report to the PCC at least annually. The role involves:

- Checking that any new recruits are asked to comply with the guidelines set out in Better Safe than Sorry Part 1 and that a correct appointments process is followed
 - Keeping abreast of new guidelines and ensuring that the PCC discusses them where necessary
 - Reporting to the PCC at least annually on the process and to induct new members of the PCC in the issues
- Approved Parish Representative: The Approved Parish Representative acts on behalf of St Michael's and has the responsibility for checking identification documents as required by the CRB. This role is primarily an administrative one. St Michael's PCC, at its 18 March 2003 meeting, determined that the same PCC member would act as Compliance member and as the Approved Parish representative. The appointed person is not, however, permitted to be an Appointing Body Nominee.
 - Appointing Body Nominee: This role should be carried out by a minimum of two people. They are the Rector and a Churchwarden. However, at the 18 March 2003 meeting, the PCC agreed to co-opt a third person as necessary. The appointing body is responsible for having a conversation with the volunteer/paid worker to establish their suitability for the role and to establish clear roles and expectations of the job to be undertaken. The Appointing Body asks the individual to fill in the Criminal Declaration form in Better Safe than Sorry Part 1 page 25. The information submitted must be treated as strictly confidential and should only be seen by the appointing body.

New volunteers/paid workers will also be required to complete a CRB check as set out in Better Safe than Sorry Part 3. Details of the nominated member of the Appointing Body will need to fill in their details on page 31 of Part 3 as the person to whom the result of the check from the CRB will be sent.

The offer of any voluntary or paid position at St Michael's which involves working with children or young people in a capacity that requires them to care for or undertake a supervisory role, will be subject to submission of an Enhanced Disclosure application, and satisfactory information being received from CRB regarding the applicant's suitability for such work.

For such a position, the relevant leader should contact the CRB on 0870 90 90 811 (Disclosure Application Line) to request a Disclosure Application Form.

The CRB will require the following information:

- *Name of Registered Body:* The Diocese of Oxford
- *Registration Number:* 21307000001
- *Name of Applicant:*
- *Address of Applicant (including post code)*
- *Date of Birth of Applicant*
- *The fact that an **Enhanced Disclosure** is being applied for*
- *Whether it is a **voluntary or paid** position.*

The leader may choose to ask the Parish Secretary to request the Disclosure Application Form. The Approved Parish Representative should then ensure that the applicant has completed the application form. It should then be countersigned by the Approved Parish Representative. It is the responsibility of the Approved Parish Representative to assure themselves that the person making the application is correctly identified.

Better Safe than Sorry Part 3 page 15 identifies the identification documents that an applicant is required to submit.

Category 1 documents:

- Passport
- New UK Photo Card driving licence

Category 2 documents:

- Old UK driving licence (it must be signed)
- Original Birth Certificate issued during the first 12 months of life

Category 3 documents:

- Birth certificate issued after the first 12 months of life
- Marriage certificate
- P45
- P60
- Bank Statement to address stated
- Utility bill to the address stated.

To enable the CRB to verify the person's identity, the Approved Parish Representative will need to see either:

1 category 1 document and one other

or

1 category 2 document and two others

or

5 category 3 documents.

The Approved Parish Representative is required to keep a record of the documents that have been presented as evidence of identification. This information should be held with the application form, references etc.

St Michael's Policy on Child Protection

The PCC of St Michael's Church, Tilehurst, agreed and adopted the following Policy on Child Protection at its meeting held on 18 March 2003.

We commit ourselves to nurture, protect and safeguard all our members, particularly our children and young people.

We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church community.

We accept and endorse the principles of the *Children Act 1989* and the *House of Bishops' Policy Statement (1999)* and the *Diocesan Guidelines*.

We undertake to exercise proper care in both the selection and appointment, and the support, of those working with children, whether paid or volunteer.

We wish to support parents and carers who have responsibility for bringing up children.

Copies of the House of Bishops' Policy and the Diocesan Guidelines, 'Better Safe than Sorry', are held by the Rector and Churchwardens. The PCC, at its first meeting following the APM will appoint a member of the PCC to monitor compliance of these policies and procedures. The PCC shall review this policy annually.

Signed

Rector: Date:

Churchwarden: Date:

Churchwarden: Date:

Appendix B

Agreement between the Diocese of Oxford and the Parish of St Michael's, Tilehurst on Obtaining Disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau

1. The Diocese of Oxford has registered with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) as an Umbrella Body. It will provide a service to parishes so that they can obtain Standard and Enhanced Disclosures when recruiting to positions – for both volunteers and paid staff – where a Disclosure is required.
2. The Diocese will operate in compliance with the CRB's Code of Practice and other guidance; it has the requisite policies in place. It will provide for the parish procedures, guidance and a policy that the parish will need to adopt.
3. The Diocese will countersign applications for Disclosure, submit them to the CRB and advise St Michael's of the outcome.
4. The Diocese will assess the relevance of any Disclosure information and, if necessary, carry out a risk assessment. It will assist St Michael's in dealing with any situation where the Disclosure information could affect an appointment.
5. Currently the Diocese will make an administration charge for all volunteer appointments. However, St Michael's will also need to reimburse the Diocese for the charge made by the Criminal Records Bureau for Disclosures relating to paid staff.
6. St Michael's will comply with the CRB's Code of Practice. It will also operate in compliance with Diocesan policies, procedures and guidance.
7. St Michael's will assess positions for both paid staff and volunteers and determine if a Disclosure is required, and, if so, at what level.
8. St Michael's will check the person's identity before submitting a Disclosure application form, as set out in Diocesan procedures.
9. St Michael's will protect Disclosure information as required by law.
10. St Michael's will refer to the Diocese any complaints regarding the Disclosure process, or the accuracy of Disclosure information, so that appropriate action can be taken.

Signed: (Churchwarden)

Date:

Once signed and dated, this agreement should be returned with the first application for a Disclosure to:

CRB Voluntary Countersignatory, Church House, North Hinksey, Oxford, OX2 0NB

**St Michael's Policy Statement regarding recruitment, disclosures
and the security of disclosure information**

1. St Michael's is committed to the recognition of each person's skills, experience and qualifications. We shall attempt to ensure that these are fully considered in the recruitment and appointment of paid staff and volunteers.
2. We shall assess all positions (whether for paid staff or volunteers) in order to determine whether a Disclosure is required from the Criminal Records Bureau, and, if so, at what level. For those positions requiring a Disclosure, we shall indicate in any advertisement (or other information about the position) the level of Disclosure and make clear that any offer of the position will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory Disclosure information.
3. Where a position involves a Disclosure, we shall encourage all applicants invited to an interview to provide details of any criminal record before the interview.
4. We shall obtain Disclosures through the Diocese, following Diocesan procedures.
5. If the Diocese advises that a Disclosure contains information relevant to the position, we shall work with Diocesan staff to assess the risks and agree a course of action.
6. We shall follow Diocesan guidance on the re-submission of applications for Disclosure.
7. We shall ensure that Disclosure information is passed only to those entitled to receive it.
8. We are committed to the fair and sensitive use of Disclosure information. We shall refer to the Diocese any complaints about the Disclosure process or the accuracy of Disclosure information so that appropriate action can be taken - this may involve the use of the formal complaints procedure.
9. In dealing with all matters relating to Disclosure, we shall comply with the Criminal Records' Bureau's Code of Practice. We shall also comply with Diocesan policies and follow Diocesan procedures and guidance.