



Child Protection Policy

to help safeguard all children of age 17 and under, during Church activities

St. Paul's United Reformed Church, Harrogate

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If you have been issued with this policy because of your contact with children in connection with the Church, please read carefully. If you require clarification on any issue, or you believe the policy is not being followed in any respect, or you believe improvements should be made, please contact one of the two coordinators listed below.

At the time of the issuing of this copy of the policy, the people with particular/direct responsibilities for safeguarding at St Paul's are

Mary Ann Steers, Church Safeguarding Co-ordinator (CSC) (01423 509278)
Alison Mearns, Deputy Safeguarding Co-ordinator (07802 785146)

(Other titles used for this role within the URC have included Safeguarding Link, Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Lead.)

The person appointed for children to contact if they feel they are being abused in any way is: **Sheila Dickson, Telephone: 01423 565609**

Other Useful Telephone Numbers:

Social Services	0845 034 9410 (Outside hours: 0845 034 9417)
Designated Officer (DO/LADO)	01609533080
Police	Non-emergencies: 101 (Emergencies: 999)
NSPCC	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
CCPAS	0845 1204550 (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service)
URC Safeguarding Team	0207 520 2729 (safeguarding@urc.org.uk)

1. Policy Statement

St. Paul's United Reformed Church, Harrogate:

- 1.1 Seeks, as one of its major activities, to serve the needs of children, promoting holistic development;
- 1.2 In doing so, takes seriously the welfare of all children who come onto its premises or who are involved in its activities;
- 1.3 Aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring, Christian environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere;
- 1.4 Recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its members and workers, paid and unpaid, to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and to report any abuse discovered or suspected;
- 1.5 Recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and review procedures, which are designed to prevent such abuse;
- 1.6 Is committed to supporting, resourcing and training, where appropriate, those who work with children;
- 1.7 Will contact and cooperate fully with, whenever appropriate, the statutory child care authorities.

For the purposes of this policy:

- the words **child** or **children** refer to those under the age of 18;
- the term **parent** has been used to include anyone with parental responsibility for a child;
- the word **worker** refers to any adult engaged in Church activities which result in contact with children, whether paid or unpaid, full time, part time or occasional, and includes, for example, staff, activity leaders and voluntary helpers;
- activities of **unformed organisations** associated with St. Paul's are not Church activities regulated by this policy. However, when using Church premises, those unformed organisations will be expected to adhere to their own child protection policies and to all relevant legal requirements;
- reference to the **Church** is to St. Paul's URC, Harrogate.

2. Recommended Procedures

The following procedures are recommended to be implemented in accordance with the guidelines in section 3:

- 2.1 Appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator and Deputy
- 2.2 Plan work to minimise situations where the possibility of abuse of children may occur;
- 2.3 Where appropriate, have procedures on the management and supervision of activities, and, where appropriate, provide training on the implementation of them;
- 2.4 Give all workers clear roles;
- 2.5 Where appropriate, carry out a recruitment procedure for workers;
- 2.6 Use supervision and support as a means of protecting children;
- 2.7 Use cooperation with parents as a means of protecting children;
- 2.8 Establish a system whereby children know they may talk with an independent person;
- 2.9 Zero tolerance in connection with the use of controlled drugs;
- 2.10 Issue copies of this policy to all workers.

3. Guidelines for the Implementation of Recommended Procedures

3.1 Appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator & Deputy

- 3.1.1 The 'Coordinators' will be given responsibility for overseeing the policy and the way it is put into practice. They will also be responsible for ensuring that child protection issues are reported to the relevant authorities.
- 3.1.2 The appointments should be ratified by the Elders' Meeting.
- 3.1.3 Neither person should be the Minister.
- 3.1.4 Where possible, a 'Coordinator' should be someone with experience of working in a child or youth or social services context.
- 3.1.5 The persons must be capable of being sympathetic to children but objective in the pursuance of their task - with an ability to cope with the shock and upset abuse allegations may produce.
- 3.1.6 The persons must be able to act confidentially, speedily and decisively, relating well to statutory authorities, parents and carers etc
- 3.1.7 The persons must be willing to undergo training in procedures, when appropriate, and be prepared to brief workers and the Church and Elders' meetings on relevant local policies and procedure development, and review their effectiveness when appropriate.
- 3.1.8 The persons must have clear lines of accountability to the Elders.

3.2 Plan work to minimise situations where the possibility of abuse of children may occur:

- 3.2.1 Provided the Church is entitled to do so having regard to regulations in force at the time of the application, in respect of each worker, the Church should make an application for an **enhanced criminal records disclosure certificate (plus Barring List check) from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**.
 - 3.2.1.1 The application for the certificate should be made through Due Diligence Checking Limited (DBS), or whatever route is at the time specified by the United Reformed Church. The application should be verified by the Church Secretary or someone that has been registered as a verifier with DBS through the URC central safeguarding office. If an application for a certificate does not result in clearance from CAS, the individual concerned must not assist as a worker.

- 3.2.1.2 The content of an application and of the response must not be disclosed

beyond the Church Secretary, the Church Elders and the Coordinator(s), and only then where necessary for the purposes of submitting the application and assessing the applicant as a suitable person for working with children.

- 3.2.1.3 Other than temporary data required to process and monitor a DBS application, the only information that should be kept relating to an application is listed below. The overall record must be stored securely (whether it be a paper or electronic record) and access should be strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties:
 - 3.2.1.3.1 DBS disclosure type (ie enhanced)
 - 3.2.1.3.2 Position applied for by applicant
 - 3.2.1.3.3 Name of applicant
 - 3.2.1.3.4 Criminal records disclosure certificate number
 - 3.2.1.3.5 Date of issue of certificate
 - 3.2.1.3.6 A copy of the response from the Churches' Agency for Safeguarding
- 3.2.1.4 All other information concerning an application must be securely destroyed except to the extent it is necessary to retain this information on a temporary basis as part of the application procedure. During this period, any documents or information held as part of the application process must be stored securely and confidentially by the Church Secretary or a Coordinator or a verifier.
- 3.2.1.5 URC guidance states that DBS checks must be renewed every 5 years.
- 3.2.2 As far as possible, an adult should not be left alone with a child where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This may mean groups working within the same large room or working in an adjoining room with the door left open.
- 3.2.3 Ensure that, as far as possible, no worker meets a child off Church premises without a parent or other adult being present.
- 3.2.4 As far as possible, observe the adult to child ratios and guidelines set out in **Appendix IV**.
- 3.2.5 Think about the location of the activity. For example, do not expect children to have to walk along a dark unsupervised path in order to reach the activity.
- 3.2.6 In the rare occasions when a worker has to work individually with a child, observe the guidelines set out below:
 - 3.2.6.1 Let a Coordinator know the time and place of meeting;
 - 3.2.6.2 Meet at a 'neutral place' if possible, never in a home if possible;
 - 3.2.6.3 Let other people know that you are there and/or remain visible in a public place;
 - 3.2.6.4 Establish mutually understood behaviour of both parties at the outset;
 - 3.2.6.5 Keep a detailed record of the appointment.

3.3 Where appropriate, have procedures on the

management and supervision of activities, and, where appropriate, provide training on the implementation of them:

- 3.3.1 Ensure that clear guidelines exist for each activity and that, where appropriate, training is provided.
- 3.3.2 For activities on Church premises (or those starting and finishing at Church premises and remaining in the locality, such as a walk to the Stray), the procedure set out in **Appendix II** should be followed.
- 3.3.3 For activities away from Church premises (other than those starting and finishing at Church premises and remaining in the locality, such as a walk to the Stray) the procedure set out in **Appendix III** should be followed.
- 3.3.4 Ensure that, where appropriate, a risk assessment is developed for each activity (including one-off activities and trips) and rooms used for the activities, which addresses child protection as well as other safety issues. Guidelines and a suggested format are set out in **Appendix V**.
- 3.3.5 One worker should be designated as having overall responsibility for any activity, whether at or away from the Church.
- 3.3.6 A registration form should be completed for every child participating in activities. This should be in the format set out at **Appendix VI**. This has been written to be suitable for sending by email, but a paper equivalent is also acceptable.
 - 3.3.6.1 One worker in each activity group must be appointed with responsibility for keeping the registration forms up to date, for storing them securely, and for making sure they are available when necessary;
 - 3.3.6.2 Copies of all relevant registration forms should be available to workers at all times during the group's activities; the only exception to this is when a person with parental responsibility is on the same premises as the activity in respect of each child involved (as will usually be the case, for example, during Junior Church).
 - 3.3.6.3 Where the registration form contains specific instructions in relation to a child, all relevant workers should know what they are and how to carry them out.
- 3.3.7 All workers must familiarise themselves with:**
 - 3.3.7.1 The location and operation of fire exits;
 - 3.3.7.2 The location and operation of fire extinguishers;
 - 3.3.7.3 The location of the First Aid Kit and Accident Book(in the kitchen);
 - 3.3.7.4 The operation of the Fire and Accident Procedures in Appendix I;
 - 3.3.7.5 The location of the Register and completed Registration Forms relating to an activity with which they are involved

A fully charged mobile phone should be available in connection with all activities, in case of emergency.

- 3.3.8 Make sure children know their workers and their names.
- 3.3.9 Once a year (shortly after the start of the first session) each group should arrange a fire drill to practise the exit procedure (**See Appendix I**).
- 3.3.10 If an incident ever occurs where an issue is in dispute with a child or parent and/or the police become involved, all workers with knowledge of the incident should put all details in writing and pass them to a Coordinator without delay.
- 3.3.11 If photographs are displayed of children in the Church, there should never be any indication of any contact details other than the child's name.
- 3.3.12 A worker should never administer medication to a child unless specific and detailed arrangements have been put in place as follows. Where a child has specific medical needs and the parent wishes medication to be administered during activities, the Church should be open to the possibility. Each case should be looked at individually by one of the Coordinators, who should consult the guidelines in the latest edition of the United Reformed Church's guide "Good Practice – Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church". A detailed "Administering Medication" form would have to be completed, and appropriate procedures would have to be put in place to make sure relevant workers were fully informed and trained.

3.4 Give all workers clear roles:

- 3.4.1 Volunteers should have a clear idea of what is expected of them. Abuse of children is most easily concealed where there is confusion amongst adults about roles and responsibilities for the protection of children.
- 3.4.2 All workers should be aware that their contact with children in the course of their work within the United Reformed Church puts them in a relationship of trust (i.e. in a position of power or influence over another by virtue of their work or the nature of the activity, both within and outside of working hours).
- 3.4.3 Relationships in which either the child or worker could be at risk should be avoided. Nothing should occur which gives rise for ambiguity and misunderstanding.
- 3.4.4 Workers should know all information required to carry out their roles, and be trained where appropriate, such as:
 - 3.4.4.1 The whereabouts of any keys needed;
 - 3.4.4.2 Where equipment is stored;
 - 3.4.4.3 Where cleaning materials are kept;
 - 3.4.4.4 The names, telephone numbers and roles of others in the team;
 - 3.4.4.5 Who to contact if they are unexpectedly delayed or ill;
 - 3.4.4.6 The time and place of any meetings they should attend;
 - 3.4.4.7 Any record keeping required.

3.5 Where appropriate, carry out a recruitment procedure for workers:

- 3.5.1 Where an individual is taking on a role (whether paid or not) within the Church, which will involve significant, frequent (e.g. once a week or more) and regular contact with children, they should complete an application form of the type attached as **Appendix VIII**. This will not normally be necessary for occasional workers on a rota such as Junior Church helpers.
- 3.5.2 For some roles, such as work involving a commitment of several hours or more a week, or any paid role, additional questions will be appropriate. These will include obtaining details of education, qualifications and training, a history of employment and voluntary roles including responsibilities held and reasons for leaving, and the obtaining of two satisfactory references from appropriate people which cover the suitability of the applicant to work with children. Further, an interview for the position should be held.
- 3.5.3 Failure to return a form should halt the application process. Pastoral support may need to be offered.
- 3.5.4 Any concerns arising from the application process must be investigated thoroughly.

3.6 Use supervision and support as a means of protecting children:

- 3.6.1 Workers should discuss with each other (such as at coffee following Sunday Services) their work, their experiences, and their relationships with the children.
- 3.6.2 Special attention should be paid to any situation in which a child is being either highly favoured or harshly treated as these could be signs of abuse.

3.7 When a known abuser is in the congregation:

- 3.7.1 They cannot undertake any role which is directly concerned with children, but this should not prevent such people from having some part in the life of a congregation.
- 3.7.2 The Elders' meeting should consider how children are to be protected and the adult supported and properly supervised.
- 3.7.3 A full discussion with the person concerned should be held with the Minister and two selected Elders, or appropriate members of the congregation. These representatives should, if possible, have relevant experience in social services, the police, or schools etc. They should ensure sensitivity and confidentiality and have an ability to be open and frank about the nature of the offences.
- 3.7.4 It may be appropriate to seek help from Synod or from the URC Safeguarding Team

3.7.5 Agreement needs to be reached as to how it will be ensured that the offender is not left alone with children at any time during social events, church weekends, outings etc. (e.g. A constant other adult alongside the offender, a night time procedure). A written agreement should be made to safeguard both church leaders and children in the congregation.

3.8 Use cooperation with parents as a means of protecting children:

3.8.1 The Church requires the cooperation of parents of children to ensure that:

3.8.1.1 There is a safe transfer of responsibility at the point and time of entrance to and exit from the building;

3.8.1.2 Any matter of concern about the safety and well-being of a child is relayed to the worker in charge;

3.8.1.3 While on Church premises, children recognise the authority of the workers, behave responsibly and follow all reasonable instructions.

3.8.2 The Church looks to parents to comment, make suggestions for improvement and discuss the provision made in this policy.

3.8.3 Where any comments, concerns or complaints are passed to a worker from a parent, that worker should write down details immediately and pass them to one of the Coordinators.

3.8.4 When requested, workers should give copies of this policy to parents. Copies can be obtained from a Coordinator.

3.9 Establish a system whereby children know they may talk with an independent person:

3.9.1 Appoint a person to be available for children to talk to if they feel they have been abused in any way. The person should be totally independent of the children's activities, but should be someone to whom they could relate.

3.9.2 Display the telephone number of the appointed person and of Childline or a similar organisation, on a notice board which is regularly seen by children.

3.9.3 On being notified of any potential abuse, the appointed person must immediately follow the procedures set out at in section 4 below.

3.10 Zero tolerance in connection with the use of controlled drugs:

3.10.1 The supply and use of controlled drugs will not be tolerated in or near the premises. Anyone suspected of supplying or using controlled drugs will be told to leave by any worker; they may be banned for a period appropriate to their circumstances and their details may be passed on to the police.

4. How to Deal with Abuse

4.1 Duty both to prevent abuse and to report abuse

4.1.1 It is the Church's duty both to prevent abuse and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

4.1.2 The normal rule of client confidentiality cannot be observed when abuse is discovered or suspected. When workers suspect, discover or are told about abuse occurring in or outside the Church setting, they should follow the reporting procedures outlined below.

4.2 Recognised types of abuse:

4.2.1 **Physical:** Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy;

4.2.2 **Sexual:** Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child;

4.2.3 **Emotional:** Actual or likely severe adverse affect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment;

4.2.4 **Neglect:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of a child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

4.3 Potential signs of abuse:

4.3.1 **Physical:** Unexplained injuries or those which have received no medical attention, hidden injuries, shrinking away from unexpected arm movements;

4.3.2 **Sexual:** Allegations made by the child, pre-occupation with sexual matters, sexual activity through words, play or drawings, severe sleep disturbances with fears and phobias, being sexually provocative with adults;

4.3.3 **Emotional:** Regression in behaviour, nervousness, sudden underachievement, inappropriate relationships with peers/adults, attention seeking, running away/stealing/lying, looking uncared-for;

4.3.4 **Neglect:** Scavenging for food, unkempt clothing, listlessness, underweight, poor hygiene

4.3.5 Physical abuse and neglect are difficult to hide. Sexual abuse can be almost impossible to identify and prove. Many symptoms of distress can point to abuse but there may be other explanations. It is important, therefore, that the above signs are not taken as indications that abuse has taken place. They should make you stop and think, but not necessarily jump to conclusions.

4.4 Reacting to Suspected Abuse

4.4.1 Never delay, and in an emergency act at once.

4.4.2 If a child is clearly in serious distress from a physical injury seek medical attention immediately. Take the child to A & E or phone for an ambulance. Tell the medical services what the child has told you or of any suspicions you may have.

4.4.3 Make a written record of the incident as soon as possible. This should include:

4.4.3.1 Your name and role;

4.4.3.2 The name of the child;

4.4.3.3 The date and time of making the written record;

4.4.3.4 The nature of the concern;

4.4.3.5 Details (as precisely as possible) of anything the child has said relevant to the concern, including where and when the child made the statements, and what you have said to the child in response;

4.4.3.6 Details of all people with whom you have discussed your concern, including what was said by you and them, and when the discussions took place;

4.4.3.7 Your signature.

4.4.4 The written record should be updated as necessary.

4.4.5 Keep any hand-written notes even if they are subsequently typed up.

4.4.6 It is not your role to investigate - concentrate on presenting information clearly.

4.4.7 Do not confront the person who is alleged to be responsible for the abuse.

4.4.8 If a child wants to talk about abuse:

4.4.8.1 Accept what the child says, keeping calm and looking at them directly from time to time;

4.4.8.2 Let them know that you need to tell someone else, do not promise confidentiality; you may need to explain that even if the child has broken a rule, they are not to blame;

4.4.8.3 Be aware that the child may be being threatened;

4.4.8.4 Never push for information; avoid asking questions; let the child talk;

4.4.8.5 Reassure the child they were right to tell you;

4.4.8.6 Let the child know what you are going to do next, and who you need to tell;

4.4.8.7 If it is considered that the person making the disclosure is likely to be at risk by returning home, immediate contact should be made with the Social Services or the Police.

4.4.9 Report the abuse as follows:

4.4.9.1 If the child is in immediate danger, contact the police or social services;

4.4.9.2 Contact one of the Coordinators in charge of overseeing this policy, provided they are not implicated in the abuse. If they are both implicated, report the incident to the Church Secretary or Minister;

4.4.9.3 Do not discuss the suspected abuse with anyone else;

4.4.9.4 If you are not satisfied that the person to whom you have reported your observations is dealing with your concerns, or that they are implicated in some way, contact should be made with the police or social services direct, or advice sought from the NSPCC or CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service). Relevant telephone numbers are set out on the front of this policy.

4.4.10 The Coordinator, Church Secretary or Minister to whom the abuse has been reported should act as follows:

4.4.10.1 Inform the police or social services without delay;

4.4.10.2 Where the person reporting the abuse to the Coordinator or Elder is an adult, full clarification should be obtained concerning:

- the nature of the allegation or suspicion;
- details of the child/children and family/families involved;
- any relevant information relating to the person against whom the allegation is made;
- dates and times of the incident as appropriate;
- details of any others involved and/or any witnesses;

4.4.10.3 This information should be committed to writing immediately and given to the police or social services, together with a copy of the written record prepared by the person reporting the abuse;

4.4.10.4 Any allegation made against any volunteer, employee, minister or any other officer of the United Reformed Church must be taken very seriously. If this is the case, the URC district/synod must be informed;

4.4.10.5 If requested, attend any relevant child protection case conference organized by social services. If a case conference is attended, it is important to agree with social services in advance whether attendance is to share information, or whether it is purely in a support capacity;

4.4.10.6 Agree with social services any further action to be taken, including support which can be given to an abused child, recognising that the support needs to be non-judgemental, appropriate and long term;

4.4.10.7 Report the matter to the Elders of St. Paul's, calling an emergency meeting if necessary. The Elders must consider what further action should be taken

4.4.11 When an allegation or suspicion of abuse involves a volunteer, an employee, a minister or any other officer of the United Reformed Church, the Elders should consider the following:

4.4.11.1 Does the person against whom the allegation is made have ongoing contact with children? In most circumstances where social services become involved they can assist in offering advice about suspending any activity that involves contact with children;

4.4.11.2 For a paid employee there will be a need to consider whether a period of suspension from active duties is appropriate while an investigation is ongoing. Depending on the type of post of the employee, it should be clear in their contract who has responsibility for this level of decision making and which United Reformed Church bodies need to be consulted and advised;

4.4.11.3 For any allegation against a Minister of the United Reformed Church there is clear guidance about suspension/disciplinary matters. Synod Moderators should be informed of any concern immediately. They will be able to advise which District Council members should be informed and how to proceed;

4.4.11.4 Who can offer appropriate care and pastoral support to the person under suspicion? This should not be the same person offering support to any alleged victim or informant;

- 4.4.11.5 The practice of a short-term suspension pending the outcome of any investigation is a measure used to protect the volunteer, staff member, or minister as well as the child. It is not a method of apportioning blame but should be regarded as a neutral way of protecting all involved until an investigation can be concluded;
- 4.4.11.6 At the conclusion of an investigation, opportunities should be created for all those who have been involved in any supportive capacity to debrief and to obtain any support they may need themselves.

Appendix I – Fire and Accident Procedures

These procedures are the responsibility of the person in charge of an activity. In their absence, all workers present must cooperate to follow the procedures.

IN CASE OF FIRE

1. Advise all present to **immediately vacate the premises** using the appropriate Fire exit away from the fire
2. Only immediate personal possessions should be taken
3. Arrange for the **Fire Brigade** to be contacted advising them the following address as applicable:

Centenary Rooms- Victoria Avenue, Harrogate HG1 1EL – Opposite the Library

Church Hall- Belford Road, Harrogate HG1 1JA – Next to St Peter's School
4. **Extinguishers** should only be used when not putting yourself at danger and are appropriately marked as to suitability
5. **On exiting the premises** ensure that all areas occupied are quickly examined to ensure no attendees are still on the premises e.g. Toilet Areas and Kitchen
6. **Collect the Register** if it is possible to do so safely and quickly.
7. **Collect people together** in St Peter's School playground.
8. **Take a record of those people assembled**, checking them off against the Register (if it is available) which was filled in at the beginning of the activity.
9. **Do not return to the building** until authorisation is received from the Fire Service.
10. **After the event** the details of the incident must be carefully logged in the Accident Book, recording all action taken, and one of the Safeguarding Coordinators must be informed.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENTS

One of the workers present will be required to attend to the child involved in the accident.

Continued supervision of the other children must be maintained by the remaining workers.

Where appropriate, First Aid should be administered with use of the First Aid kit in the Kitchen.

In the case of emergency treatment proving necessary:

1. Immediate attempts should be made to **contact the person with parental responsibility** for the child;
2. Where appropriate, **an ambulance should be called**;
3. **The patient should not be moved** (except where necessary to administer required First Aid); no attempt should be made to take the patient to hospital using private transport;
4. **At no time may a worker give any form of medication** to a child without prior authorisation from the person with parental responsibility;
5. **At no time may a worker consent to treatment being given to a child.** The worker should give a copy of the child's registration form (and where appropriate the consent form for offsite activities) to the medical practitioner attending the incident. It is the person with parental responsibility for the child or (where contact with them has not been possible) the medical practitioner who should decide whether or not to administer treatment;
6. **Any incident must be carefully logged in the Accident Book** (kept in the Kitchen), with a record of action taken. The record must be signed by the worker involved in the incident. One of the link people should be informed.

Appendix II – Procedures for Activities in the Church

Before the activity

One worker should arrive in good time before the beginning of the activity and check through the premises to ensure their suitability for use (eg that there have been no intruders and that there are no hazards remaining from earlier use of the premises), especially the following:

1. Ensure that all **fire exits** are closed and have no obstruction hindering access.
2. Ensure that the **First Aid kit** (in the Kitchen) and **Accident Book** (in the Kitchen) are in place.

Note: If there is need to improve ventilation in warm weather, the fire exit doors may be opened at the discretion of the workers but must remain supervised by a worker at all times.

Arrival and departure

The **time** at which children should arrive at and leave the premises should be clearly established and notified to parents.

The **point of arrival** is the Belford Road vestibule and it is here that workers take responsibility for care of the children.

Each group should maintain its own **register** of members and workers and the arrival of each child should be marked off on that register. A note should be made of anyone leaving before the end of the session.

The register should be kept in a safe place and be immediately accessible in the event of any emergency (eg fire).

During the activity:

Heating thermostats can be adjusted according to the directions next to each of them. No alterations should be made to the radiator valves themselves.

Outside doors should be kept closed and if possible locked during activities.

Anyone using the Kitchen is asked to follow the **Kitchen Code of Practice**. A copy is mounted on the wall in the Kitchen. Before leaving the Kitchen, the checklist in the Kitchen Code of Practice must be completed.

In the kitchen children must always be accompanied by a worker.

Electrical equipment, other than that belonging to the Church, should not be used without permission from the Church Secretary.

Ensure that **children under 10 years old** (together with any older children whose special needs are such that it would not be safe to let them leave the building alone) cannot leave the building on their own. They should only be handed back to an identified person.

Ensure that **children aged 10 and over** cannot leave the building unchecked.

In the case of **Junior Church**, the Belford Road entrance should be kept locked throughout all lessons. Following lessons, all children attending Junior Church should be returned to their parents in the main body of the Church during the last hymn of Sunday Worship **or** kept under close supervision in the Church Hall until safe handover to parents is complete

Identify any visitors before allowing them access.

Before leaving

Before leaving the premises, workers should complete the following checklist:

1. **Emergency maintenance work** must be reported directly to a Coordinator (who will liaise with the Church Secretary to ensure the matter is dealt with);
2. Leave the premises in the **same state of cleanliness and order** as when the activity started, including stacking tables and chairs at the side of the rooms but not in front of radiators). Rubbish can be placed in the dustbins at the foot of the cellar steps;
3. Switch off and **unplug any electrical equipment** that has been used;
4. Make sure that the **Kitchen is left safe** as outlined in the Code of Practice for kitchen users;
5. Ensure that **everyone involved in the activity has left the building**;
6. If **another group** is using another part of the premises, inform its leader of the intention to leave;
7. Ensure all **internal doors** are closed;
8. Ensure all **windows** are closed;
9. **Switch off lights** as appropriate and ensure that **all exits used are properly closed and locked**.

Appendix III – Procedures for Activities away from the Church

For events taking place away from the Church (other than those starting and finishing at Church premises and remaining in the locality, such as a walk to the stray), the organiser should:

1. Complete a **risk assessment** (see **Appendix V**);
2. Let parents of children attending have **relevant information** in advance, including those details indicated on the consent form at **Appendix VII**;
3. Obtain a completed parental **consent form** for each child in the format attached as **Appendix VII** (an electronic version of the form returned by email is acceptable);
4. Be satisfied that the venue meets **health and safety** requirements;
5. Be satisfied that the activity is covered under appropriate **insurance**;
6. Be satisfied that **transport** arrangements are suitable and safe (for example, where children have to be transported by car or minibus arrange, as far as possible, to have more than one adult in the front of the vehicle with children seated in the back seats of the vehicle wearing seatbelts);
7. Have a **list of all children** participating together with relevant personal details and ensure a worker not attending the event also has a copy;
8. Ensure the children know their **responsibilities**;
9. Consider any **special needs** and decide how to respond to them.

Appendix IV – Adult to Child Ratios

The recommended ratios are a minimum and may need to be increased where special needs are involved or where the activities concerned require a greater degree of supervision (eg outward bound activities with a higher level of inherent risk).

Where groups of mixed ages are involved, observe the ratios for the younger children.

Where possible, all groups and any individual children should be accompanied by at least two adults, one of whom should be female. This is particularly important when the activity is outside the Church premises, or it is the only activity taking place on Church premises.

Under Eights

The Children Act specifies the minimum legal requirements for ratios of adults to under eights as follows:

- **0 to 2 years:** 1 adult to 3 children
- **2 to 3 years:** 1 adult to 4 children
- **3 to 7 years:** 1 adult to 8 children (or 6 children for activities not inside the church)

Eight and over

The Children Act does not specify ratios for children aged eight and over, but the following are recommended:

Inside the Church

- **up to 20 children:** 2 adults (preferably one of each gender)
- **over 20 children:** 1 additional adult for every 1 to 10 extra children

examples: 20 children = 1 male and 1 female adult (at least)
 21 children = 1 male and 1 female plus 1 extra adult
 30 children = 1 male and 1 female plus 1 extra adult
 31 children = 1 male and 1 female plus 2 extra adults

Not inside the Church

- **up to 15 children aged 8 to 12:** 2 adults (preferably one of each gender)
- **over 15 children aged 8 to 12:** 1 additional adult for every 1 to 8 extra children
- **up to 20 children aged 13+:** 2 adults (preferably one of each gender)
- **over 20 children aged 13+:** 1 additional adult for every 1 to 10 extra Children

examples: 15 children aged 9 = 1 male & 1 female adult (at least)
 16 children aged 9 = 1 male & 1 female plus 1 extra adult
 23 children aged 9 = 1 male & 1 female plus 1 extra adult
 24 children aged 9 = 1 male & 1 female plus 2 extra adults

Appendix V – Risk Assessments

Awareness of potential areas of hazard in buildings and activities is important.

Possible dangers should be anticipated and dealt with in order to minimise the risk of any possible harm.

The person or group undertaking the risk assessment should:

- Identify potential hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how this could happen
- Assess the risks and take action to remove or reduce them as far as possible
- Record the details and action taken
- Check the risks regularly to assess further preventative measures

Possible hazards might be – stacks of chairs, hot radiators, power points/cables, window fastenings, glass doors, splintered wood floors, blocked fire exits, lack of fire escape signs, debris, missing light bulbs, loose carpet, electrical equipment, loose fittings, uneven floors, unclean toilets, overfilled cupboards, high shelves, damp, kitchen equipment etc.

A column diagram can assist the process with four headings comprising:
Possible hazard; Action to be taken; By whom; Done

Appendix VI – Registration Form

Please complete the details below and reply to this email stating the following and signing off your email with your first and last name:

"I have parental responsibility for the child named below. I agree with the statements set out below".

Name of Child: **Date of Birth:**

Person(s) with parental responsibility:

Name:

Email address:

Contact telephone numbers (including emergency contact number):

Address:

Please let me know if:

- you do not have parental responsibility for the named child; or
- you do not agree with any of the statements set out below.

Also let me know if there is anything you think the helpers at the children's activities need to know or if you have any specific instructions. (For example, any of the following, but only if you think we should know them about your child for participation in the children's activities: allergies, medical conditions, regular medication, activities or substances to be avoided, disabilities, special needs). If so, I will put you in touch with one of the people responsible for children's activities in the Church so you can discuss what appropriate measures should be put in place.

Statements to be agreed:

All activities:

1. I give permission for my child to take part in the normal activities of the group attended by my child;
2. If I am not contactable in an emergency, I agree to my child receiving medical, surgical or dental treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present;
3. I will ensure there is a safe transfer of my child to the helpers of the activity at the time for the start of the activity; in particular, I agree that if my child is under 10, they will always be accompanied by an adult and be handed over to an adult helper;
4. My child will be collected promptly at the end of the activity; if my child is under 10 and is to be collected by someone unknown to the helpers, I will make sure the helpers are informed in advance;
5. I will inform a helper of any complaint or concern I have about the safety and wellbeing of any child;
6. I will inform a helper if any of the details in this email change;
7. I consent to all the information set out in this email being stored (including by electronic means) and used by all helpers concerned for the purposes of keeping in touch and running the Church's children's activities, including notification of future events and sending birthday wishes. The information will not be transferred to unconnected parties.

All activities except crèche:

1. I give permission for my child to join the group on local walks and visits with the group, such as to the stray;
2. So far as can be expected of a child of their age, I acknowledge my child must recognize the authority of the helpers, must behave responsibly and must follow all reasonable instructions from the helpers.

3. I give permission for photographs of Church activities which include my child to be used on notice boards within the Church on the understanding they will not bear any address or contact details other than the child's name.

These statements apply to children's activities organised directly by helpers at St. Paul's United Reformed Church, Victoria Avenue, Harrogate HG1 1EL. Examples of these activities include Crèche, Junior Church and Junior Stewards. They do not apply to Guides, Scouts or other uniformed organisation activities, or any independent activities held on Church premises.

You are invited to make suggestions for improvements to the arrangements for safeguarding the welfare and well-being of children attending Church children's activities, including those set out in the Church's Child Protection Policy, a copy of which can be requested from any helper.

In the event of any questions, please contact a helper for the activity concerned or the Church Secretary or secretarystpaulsurc@gmail.co.uk

If you wish to change or amend any of the matters set out above, please notify a current leader of children's activities at St. Paul's in writing.

Appendix VII – Parental Consent Form

St Paul's United Reformed Church Harrogate

**CONSENT FORM FOR CHILDREN ATTENDING SPECIAL EVENTS AWAY FROM THE LOCALITY OF THE CHURCH, TO BE COMPLETED IN ADDITION TO THE REGISTRATION FORM IN APPENDIX VI
TWO COPIES TO BE ISSUED – ONE FOR PARENTS TO KEEP AND ONE TO BE RETURNED**

· **ACTIVITIES :**

- Date and duration:
- Venue:
- The makeup of the group:
- Staffing levels:
- Costs:
- Transport options:
- Drop-off location and time:
- Collection location and time:
- Name and number of person to contact with queries:

Name of Child:

Name of Person with Parental Responsibility:

Address:

Emergency Contact Telephone Numbers: Home:

Work:

Mobile:

I give permission for my child to take part in the above activities.

I give permission for my child to travel in a car driven by another parent or helper, provided that appropriate insurance is in place and safety belts are used on all occasions.

I confirm my child is medically fit to take part in the above activities.

If I am not contactable in an emergency, I agree to my child receiving medical, surgical or dental treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.

I will inform the contact person listed for the activities if any of the details on this form change.

Is there anything you think we need to know? (eg allergies, medical conditions, regular medication, activities or substances to be avoided, disabilities, special needs). Please note that if you want our helpers administer medication to your child, you need to complete a separate "Administering Medication" form and discuss the situation with one of the Church's Safeguarding Coordinators. Please speak to one of our helpers who will give you details of the Coordinators.

So far as can be expected of a child of their age, I acknowledge my child must recognise the authority of the helpers, must behave responsibly and must follow all reasonable instructions from the helpers.

Name:

Date:

Signed:

Appendix VIII - Children Worker's Application Form

St Paul's United Reformed Church Harrogate

APPLICATION FORM FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORKERS

Everyone who is involved in any capacity in working with children and young people will want to ensure care and protection within a safe environment.

This application form is for volunteers and unpaid workers to record information and ensure that the best possible care is taken for the protection and safety of all.

APPLICATION for the post of:

Full Name:

Address:

Telephone Numbers: Home:

Work:

Mobile:

Email:

Any former names:

Date & place of Birth:

If you have lived at the above address less than three years please give previous address/es with dates:

Please tell us something about yourself, such as special interests, skills and experience, which lead you to wish to work with children:

What is your church background and current place of worship?

Is there any other information you think should be known?

DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

Do you have any criminal convictions, cautions or bind overs?

If you have answered yes please enclose details with your application form.

Is there any other information you should declare that might affect your suitability for working with children and young people?

(e.g. Allegations which have been the subject of investigation; any current criminal investigations).

If you have answered yes please enclose details with your application form.

Do you agree to undergo the relevant vetting processes, including 'Enhanced Disclosure' through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), to establish your identity and your suitability for work with children and young people?

(A separate form will be issued for the implementation of this procedure)

I declare that the information in this application is true and complete.

Signed:

Date: