

Revision Log for the Brookwood Community Church Child Protection Policy

Revision	Date	Author	Summary of changes
1.0	30/08/02	Graham Method	Original draft
1.1	30/08/09	Martin Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added revision log ▪ Amended references to the church building ▪ amended reference to Jon Rashbrook as Church Leader
1.2	22/02/10	Martin Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Changed Child Protection Coordinator to be Niki Method ▪ Changed Child Protection Recruiter to Jill Day ▪ Added a note stating that the Church has no premises
1.3	22/04/10	Martin Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Changes to reflect the Brookwood Community Church Trust as now being the overseeing body rather than the Brookwood Community Church which has now been de-structured and so no has no formal leadership. Specifically, the occurrences of the word 'Church' is replaced by the word 'Trust', and references to 'Leaders' become 'Trustees' along with appropriate rephrasing.

CHURCH STATEMENT

Brookwood Community Church has a growing children's and young people's ministry. The Trustees of the church (the "**Trustees**") take seriously the church's responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to the church's care. The Trustees are therefore committed to:

- Listening to, relating effectively to, and valuing children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within church activities
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers
- Ensuring that children's/youth workers are given support and training
- Having a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Maintaining good links with the statutory child care authorities

- Ensuring that the Trust has clearly defined procedures to protect against wrongful allegations of abuse

AREAS OF POLICY

The Trustees recognises that many children and young people today are the victims of neglect, and physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Accordingly, the Trustees have adopted the policy contained in this document (the “**Policy**”). The Policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

1. Appointing children’s/youth workers
2. Supervision of activities and practice issues
3. Responding to allegations of abuse, including those made against members of the church

This document also contains additional information relevant to matters referred to in the Policy in the following sections:

Appendix 1 Definitions of abuse

Appendix 2 Signs and symptoms of possible abuse

Appendix 3 How to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse

Appendix 4 Helping victims of abuse

Appendix 5 Working with offenders

Appendix 6 Guidelines for discipline of children

Form 1 Application form for paid or voluntary work with children and young people

Form 2 Contract for children’s workers and young people’s workers

Form 3 Statement of Child Protection Policy as displayed at a venue where children’s work regularly takes place

The content of the Policy forms the basis of a seminar for all children’s/youth workers in the church run by persons nominated by the Trustees. The Trustees are committed to an on-going training programme for all such workers.

A Church Child Protection Guidelines Statement (see Form 3) will be on display at any venue where children’s work regularly takes place.

APPOINTMENT OF WORKERS

Procedure

1. The Trustees has appointed Jill Day as recruiter for the purposes of the following procedure. In appointing workers, the Trustees will be responsible for the following:

- Asking the potential worker to complete an application form (see Form 1). It should be explained to all candidates that questions are asked at short-listing stage about criminal records to ensure that people with such records are not inadvertently placed in vulnerable positions within the church (having a criminal record, in itself, would not necessarily prevent a person from being appointed). Completion of the application form enables the discussion of any issues at an early stage. The recruiter is able to take advice from CCPAS.
- Interviewing a potential worker and finding out about their past and ensuring that they have resolved any issues of their own from the past.
- Talking to others who may know the person, e.g. previous church leaders, friends, home group leader etc and taking up formal references
- Discussing with the applicant in detail the trust's policy on safeguarding children's welfare and expectations in relation to practice issues e.g. supervision of children's activities and workers etc
- If considered appropriate by the Trustees, agreeing to a probationary period e.g. 3 months, during which the new appointee is attached to a more experienced worker. During and at the end of this probationary period, receiving feedback from other workers on the progress of the new appointee. Only then confirming the appointment – perhaps with regular reviews and support where there are particular concerns.
- When the Trustees are satisfied that a person is suitable for the appointment, the person is then asked to make application for an “enhanced disclosure” to CCPAS. CCPAS is registered as an “umbrella organisation” with the Criminals Records Bureau. As a result the Trust carries out its disclosures through CCPAS. Disclosures will provide details of a person's criminal record (including records held by local police forces), details of lists held by the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department of Education and Skills (DfES). The person should be made aware of the Criminals Records Bureau Code of Practice and, if requested, a copy should be made available.
- Either the person telephones the Criminals Records Bureau, supplying them with appropriate information regarding the post, organisation and registered body (CCPAS) or he is given a form by the Trust or organisation concerned. Experience indicates that forms completed via telephone application have a higher rate of accuracy than those completed manually. Upon completion, the person gives the form to the recruiter who completes the details on the form and checks his identity with *original documentation*. The recruiter then forwards the document to CCPAS.

- CCPAS countersigns the application, forwarding it to the Criminals Records Bureau. Copies of the certificate are returned by the Criminals Records Bureau to the applicant and CCPAS. If nothing is disclosed, or offences are disclosed which are not relevant, CCPAS will contact the recruiter to say there is nothing to indicate that the person is unsuitable for work with children.
- If a relevant past conviction is revealed on the certificate, CCPAS will contact the recruiter for the Trust to advise them that the person is unsuitable for the post. CCPAS will also advise the recruiter as to how they might respond to the situation.
- No appointment will be made until these procedures have been completed. The offer of the appointment will then be made in writing.

Issues to consider on appointment

2. When considering the suitability of a prospective worker, reference will be made to the following criteria:
 - (a) An adult who is a known convicted offender who has committed acts of violence or sexual offences against children or adults should not be allowed to work with children, help with crèche, serve refreshments to children or have any contact with children which may place them on a pedestal in the children's' eyes and give opportunities to cultivate relationships with children.
 - (b) If the Trustees have reservations about an individual's behaviour, lifestyle, attitudes or spiritual commitment, then they should not be appointed to work with children. Children will not be used as experiments if the Trustees have reasons to doubt a worker's suitability for the job. **No one has a right to work with children.**
 - (c) Applicants who are not successful will be offered a discussion as to why this decision has been made.

Job description

3. Workers will be given a clear job description on appointment (see Form 2). Workers will be given a copy of the Child Protection Policy and will need to acknowledge that they have read them.

Regular meetings

4. Children's workers will be given opportunities to meet regularly with a trustee to discuss work programmes and areas of concern including issues relating to discipline (see Appendix 6 for discipline guidelines).

Casual helpers

Occasionally it is recognised that "casual helpers" may assist with the crèche or children's' work (e.g. holiday clubs or a young person who assists in crèche in a work experience role). In these circumstances the Trustees will not require the person to go through the full recruitment process and a criminal records check is not required. However the person should not function as a member of staff. In other words, the person should not fill in for absent

workers. They should always work to a named “approved” worker and never on their own. So, for example, a casual helper would not take a child to the toilet (unless they are the parent of the child concerned).

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPERVISION OF GROUP/CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

We recognise that churches and groups often fail to provide guidelines in relation to and supervision of children and specific activity. It is easy to assume that everyone knows what is appropriate in the circumstances and is working to the same end. This is rarely the case when there is an absence of specific expectations. We believe that clear guidance is required to protect children from abuse and workers from false accusation.

Child Supervision: Practical Issues

- We as a Trust will attempt to follow the ratio of adults to children recommended by the CCPAS and based on regulations governing day care for under eights. These are:

	Adults :	Children
0 to 2 years	1	: 3
2 to 3 years	1	: 4
3 to 8 years	1	: 8

- Where possible, ensure that a worker is not alone with a child, but being realistic in acknowledging circumstances when this might be necessary or helpful. In these circumstances we would leave doors open when seeing a child.
- Where confidentiality is important (eg counselling) and a young person is being seen on their own, then ensure that others know the interview is taking place and that someone else is around in the building.
- No person under 16 years of age should be left in charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.
- A register of children or young people attending the club or activity should be kept, and a register of helpers.
- We will encourage workers to record unusual events with each leader recording what they witnessed. This can be very helpful if leaders have to deal with a difficult young person who may subsequently make accusations of assault. A young person who constantly makes throwaway sexual comments about church workers may later make an allegation of actual abuse. Records of previous examples of this behaviour will enable any allegation to be seen in context. Of course, if a number of young people all make similar comments about one worker, this should warn the leaders that they have a problem with that person. Log books can protect both children and workers.
- It is suggested that workers also record in the log book incidents such as fights and what action was taken by the leaders. As the information in the log book is likely to be very sensitive, the log book should be kept separate from the accident book which is used to record any accidents or injuries. Parents (and older children) should be

asked to sign the accident book, (but they would not see what was written in the log book). Because accusations of abuse may be made many years later, records should be kept for as long as possible. Insurance companies advise that records should be kept indefinitely. The experience of the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) is that allegations can be made very many years after an event.

Boundaries

Wherever possible workers need to follow the following guidelines or boundaries:

- The level of personal care, eg toileting, must be appropriate and related to the age of the child whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- Guidance on touch – eg physical contact between adults and children – can be quite healthy and acceptable in public places, but discouraged in circumstances where an adult/child is on his own.
- Workers should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- Respect the privacy of children, avoid questionable activity, eg rough/sexually provocative games and comments
- If you invite a child to your home, ensure this is with the knowledge of the team/leaders and that a parent is aware. (This will not necessarily mean that a child will be safe.)
- Ensure that arrangements for transporting children are with the knowledge of the team/leaders and have parental approval. In some circumstances it may be unwise to carry a particular child on their own.
- Consider carefully arrangements for residential holidays and whether adults should share sleeping accommodation with children. This might be an unwise practice generally, but appropriate, say, with very young children or in a large dormitory situation or on an activity such as youth hostelling where it is the custom.

Safety matters

- The Trustees will expect workers to be aware of and adhere to the Trust's policy on safety.
- For transportation of children, check that drivers carry a full driving licence and valid insurance and that seat belt rules, requirements for minibuses etc are complied with. A fact sheet, *Driving a minibus in Great Britain*, explains the rules in more detail and can be obtained from The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (Tel: 01792 782318).
- As part of an annual review of this document, safety will be reviewed.

Supporting/supervising workers

- In supporting our workers we will encourage teamwork and mutual accountability.
- We will encourage anyone seeing another worker acting in a way which could be misinterpreted to speak to the individual or the supervisor about the concern.
- We will arrange regular workers' meetings to review procedures to ensure common approach, sharing of concerns and identifying other matters which may need clarification and guidance.
- We would expect all our workers to adhere to the guidelines in this document. In circumstances where it is necessary to depart from agreed procedures, say in an emergency or for some valid reason (perhaps to protect a child), permission should be sought in advance from a trustee or reported immediately afterwards where this is not possible.
- We will review reported incidents and the extent to which the guidelines were adhered to. This provides protection to the individual and draws the trustees' attention to shortcomings and problem areas. Based on these experiences we will amend this document.
- We will keep a written record of issues/decisions discussed at meetings.

Other users of church premises

(Note: At present the Trust has no premises but this section has been included to allow for any future change in this regard)

When letting church premises to individuals or organisations we will seek to include the following clause in agreements:

*The Licensee confirms that they are fully aware of the principles contained in the Home Office Code of Practice "**Safe from Harm**" and undertake to adopt the recommended practice in all work with children and young people under the age of sixteen years.*

As a church we undertake to follow the principles found within the Home Office guidance entitled "Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable – Guidance for Preventing Abuse of Trust". It will therefore be unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

The Trustees takes the possibility of abuse very seriously and has appointed Niki Methold to act as “Co-ordinator”. A Co-ordinator’s responsibility is to ensure that the incident is properly discussed, followed up and action recorded. The Co-ordinator will contact the statutory authorities if necessary. They may be required by conditions of the Trust’s Insurance policy to immediately inform the insurance company. The Co-ordinator has a responsibility to make sure that procedure is reviewed annually.

What To Do If You Suspect That Abuse May Have Occurred

- Don’t panic. Report concerns as soon as possible to Niki Method (who has been appointed as the “**Co-ordinator**”) who is nominated by the Trustees to act on their behalf in referring allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. For Definitions of Abuse, see Appendix 1. For Signs and Symptoms of Possible Abuse see Appendix 2.
- If the suspicions in any way implicate a designated Co-ordinator and the others are not available, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Churches’ Child Protection Advisory Service (the “**CCPAS**”), PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0845 120 4551 or 0845 120 4550.
- If a child has talked to you about abuse make notes as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told), writing down exactly what the child said, write what you said in reply to the child, when he/she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. description of activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand written notes securely, even if these have been typed subsequently. These records should be kept safely for an indefinite period. For guidelines on how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse refer to Appendix 3.
- You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than the Co-ordinators.
- Once a child has talked about abuse the worker/co-ordinator should consider whether or not it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services and/or Police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.
- Wherever possible, suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than the Co-ordinator.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from CCPAS. If you feel that the Co-ordinators have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the relevant organisation direct. We hope by making this statement that we demonstrate the commitment of the Trustees to effective child protection.

- When the incident is resolved the Co-ordinators will review what has been learned in dealing with it.

Allegations Of Physical Injury Or Neglect

If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, the Co-ordinator will:

- 1 Contact Social Services (or CCPAS) for advice in cases of deliberate injury or where concerned about the child's safety. In these circumstances the parents should not be informed.
- 2 Where emergency medical attention is necessary it will be sought immediately. The Co-ordinator will inform the doctor of any suspicions of abuse.
- 3 In other circumstances speak with the parent/carer and suggest that medical help/attention is sought for the child. The doctor, (or health visitor) will then initiate further action, if necessary.
- 4 If appropriate the parent/carer will be encouraged to seek help from the Social Services Department.
- 5 Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, if appropriate, the church Co-ordinator will offer to go with them. If they still fail to act, the Co-ordinator should, in cases of real concern, contact Social Services for advice.
- 6 Where the Co-ordinator is unsure whether or not to refer a case to the Social Services, then advice from CCPAS will be sought and followed. CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing in case this is needed for reference purposes in the future.

Allegations Of Sexual Abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Co-ordinator will:

- 1 Contact the Social Services duty social worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team directly. The Co-ordinator will **NOT** speak to the parent (or anyone else).
- 2 If, for any reason, the Co-ordinator is unsure whether or not to follow the above, then advice from CCPAS will be sought and followed. CCPAS will confirm its advice in writing in case this is needed for reference purposes in the future.
- 3 Under no circumstances will the Co-ordinator attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicions of sexual abuse. The role of the Co-ordinator is to collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and to provide this information to the Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- 4 Whilst allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse will normally be reported to the Co-ordinator, the absence of a Co-ordinator should not delay referral to the Social Services Department.

- 5 Exceptionally, should there be any disagreement between the person in receipt of the allegation or suspicion and the Co-ordinators as to the appropriateness of a referral to the Social Services Department, that person retains a responsibility as a member of the public to report serious matters to the Social Services Department, and should do so without hesitation.
- 6 The Trustees will support the Co-ordinator in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

Working with Offenders

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused children, then whilst extending friendship to the individual, the Trustees in their commitment to the protection of all children will meet with the individual and discuss boundaries that the person will be expected to keep. Before this takes place the Co-ordinators will meet to discuss this. For guidelines on working with offenders see Appendix 5.

Helping victims of Abuse

As a Trust we are committed to supporting victims of abuse, and encouraging them in their faith. For guidelines on working with victims of abuse see Appendix 4.

This Policy is based on a model child protection policy supplied by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service – a project of PCCA Child Care. A copy of the policy and all amendments will be filed with CCPAS. This policy must not be copied by other churches/organisations without the written agreement of CCPAS.

APPENDIX 1

Definitions of Abuse

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

Abuse and Neglect

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

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy*.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

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

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Organised Abuse

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

A child may suffer more than one category of abuse.

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

APPENDIX 2

Signs and Symptoms of Possible Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Physical Signs Of Abuse

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

Indicators Of Possible Sexual Abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia

Emotional Signs Of Abuse

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

APPENDIX 3

How to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may help:

General Points

- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound)
- Keep calm
- Look at the child directly
- Be honest
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

Helpful Things You May Say Or Show

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says)
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

Don't Say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"

Concluding

- Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens (you might have to consider referring to Social Services or the Police to prevent a child or young person returning home if you consider them to be seriously at risk of further abuse)
- Contact the person in your church/organisation responsible for co-ordinating child protection concerns or contact an agency such as CCPAS for advice or go directly to Social Services/Police/NSPCC
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed

APPENDIX 4

Helping victims of abuse

1. Pastoral Care/Counselling

Counselling for sexual abuse is complex, requiring a great deal of skill and training. As a general rule counselling will not be offered until after any court proceedings unless agreed by Social Services and/or Crown Prosecution Service/police. Where professional counselling is needed before a court case, it should be made available subject to the above.

Pastoral support, however, is often useful in helping the survivor to deal with the situation, acknowledge feelings and pray about issues.

2. Physical effects

Some children will have been hurt so badly that they will need medical help. There could be lasting damage. Sexual and emotional abuse and neglect may not, perhaps, leave visible scars (although in certain cases it will) but there are often other possible effects which could continue into adulthood as outlined below.

3. Emotional and spiritual effects

There can be problems of poor self image and blame. A child may feel s/he is “dirty” or unlovable. Self esteem may be affected. “God couldn’t love me, I am too bad”. We need to stress that they are not to blame for the abuse. Sensitive pastoral support can help a child to accept that God loves them just as they are, no matter what. Romans 8 v 35-39 asks if anything or anyone can separate us from the love of God. The answer is no, nothing can.

As this truth begins to dawn on them, their self esteem and confidence may grow. They also need to know that you will not reject them either because of the “shameful” things that have happened to them. John 15 v 12 says, “*Love each other as I have loved you.*”

4. Issues of Father God

Abused children and adults will often speak of difficulties in relating to “*Father God*”. This may be because “*Father*” represents an absent, silent, mocking, violent or sexually abusive person in a position of power and authority. A child or young person needs to understand that truth that Father God will not treat them as the abuser did, but it may take some time to fully accept. Be patient – God is patient!

Some survivors may relate more comfortably to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, or the imagery of a Mother Hen (Matthew 23 v 37).

5. Future relationships and sexual issues

Sexual abuse may make the victim feel they could never have a sexual relationship again – they have been too hurt; it would bring back memories of the abuse and the abuser; they feel that they are not good enough for someone to love.

Others might feel that the only safe sexual partner would be one of the same sex, because their abuser was of the opposite sex. Still others might chose to have a same sex relationship because they “*must be gay for it to have happened*”. Just because a person is abused by a person of the same sex, it does not mean that they will necessarily acquire homosexual tendencies. Conversely, just because someone is homosexual it does not mean they have been abused.

A young person may need reassurance on what is *OK* within the sexual side of a relationship. Although a partner may be of the same sex as the abuser, it does not mean to say that s/he will abuse them also.

Sexual abuse may have the effect of awakening the sexual feelings of the child in a way which they find hard to deal with and feel guilty about. They might have “enjoyed” certain touches and feelings, they might even have approached the abuser for further contact because it felt “nice” or because it was expected. They may indulge in frequent masturbation. All this happens because children may have had their sexual beings aroused for the purpose of gratifying their abuser. Such activity is age-inappropriate. A crime has been committed against them. They will need reassurance that they are not to blame for the abuse. Sexual feelings just show that their bodies are working OK. (Read Song of Solomon, ch 8 v 4 NIV)

6. **Forgiveness**

Sometimes Christians make the mistake of forcing an abused person to forgive. Certainly, many Christians accept that God expects us to forgive those who sin against us, (Matthew 6 v 12) but you cannot rush people – forgiveness may eventually be achieved in stages. In counselling, survivors of abuse are helped to understand that it is impossible to fully forgive until the full effects of that abuse is known (eg a child who is abused and subsequently suffers pelvic inflammation leading to sterility, will not understand that at the time. Further *layers* of forgiveness must follow as an adult). Forgiveness may be an act of the will first but, by God’s grace, it can become a reality. This has the effect of freeing the victim and releasing the abuser into God’s hands. Forgiveness may be at the end of the road to healing. Whatever we believe, the victim may choose not to forgive and it is not for us to condemn them. God knows the difficulties that survivors face in this area.

7. **The other side of forgiveness**

The other side of forgiveness is for an abuser to understand the awfulness of the crime committed by them against the child. If they are able to lessen the harmful after-effects by a full apology and an offer to pay for any therapy needed by the person, so much the better, providing that the survivor does not see this as another attempt to control them. However, just because someone apologises and is forgiven, it does not mean that all can be forgotten and that the victim can/should be fully reconciled with them. That might be very unwise nor would we assume that forgiveness is inevitable.

8. **Issues of touch**

The abused person may be frightened by touch because they associate it with violence or sexual assault. They may not have received tenderness and love, so hugging or even a handshake could feel threatening.

Consider how you pray for someone who has experienced abuse. Don't assume it will be OK to "*lay hands*" on them. Ask first and respect their answer.

Children and young people who associate touch with sexual activities may feel sexually aroused and flirt provocatively with adults or other children, touching them in the genital or breast area. For your own safety and to help them learn what is acceptable behaviour, you will need to explain why you are not responding to their overtures. It might be wise not to see such children and young people on their own. (See chapter 6 section 3 page 27)

9. **Other counselling issues**

Like some victims of other kinds of trauma, survivors of child sexual abuse may try to avoid remembering what happened and many report periods of time when they totally or partially forgot the abuse. Remembering may be triggered by an event or may be spontaneous. Memories leading to allegations of abuse may emerge in the course of counselling or therapy quite unconnected with abuse.

Church leaders and counsellors need to take *memories* of sexual abuse seriously. They are not necessarily the key to the person's present problems. The counsellor or therapist should work with the individual examining memories, thinking about experiences and dealing appropriately with the past and the present. *Counsellors must not impose their own conclusions even if they suspect that child sexual abuse may have occurred.*

Distressed people are in a vulnerable state and may be susceptible to suggestion from an untrained counsellor or other helper. They may fear being rejected if they appear unco-operative or may want to please the person helping them. Both counsellor and client may be tempted to look for a single identifiable cause for a complex problem. Group sessions, hypnotism, workbooks or other techniques which strongly encourage the pursuit of *memories* of abuse may actually make it harder to determine truth unless carried out in a professional way. It could damage not only the individual, but others too, if that person responds to what they have come to believe by, for example, wrongly accusing family members of abuse.

There have been occasions when a well-meaning leader has suggested to a person seeking counsel that perhaps they have been a victim of abuse. Such remarks can be taken on board and *owned* by the counsellee without any foundation whatsoever, but the person comes to believe it. In some cases it has been known that an individual providing this information has claimed it is a message from God —a *word of knowledge*. Great pastoral care is required in churches which use spiritual gifts and the Bible also tells us to test these gifts (1 John 4:1).

10. **Counselling and confidentiality**

Trained counsellors will need to consider very carefully the basis on which services are provided, as in some circumstances it will not be possible to maintain confidentiality if this places a child at risk. This can include circumstances when an adult tells you of past abuse, naming the perpetrator as someone who is known still to have responsibilities for or contact with children. Understandably, you are concerned for your counsellee, but it is quite possible that other children are being abused now or could be in the future. You may have information which could protect them.

There are a couple of things we need to remember. Firstly, the sexual abuse of children is often addictive. People can continue abusing into old age. Secondly, it is our view that responsibilities for the protection of children override our responsibility towards a counselee. Clearly the matter has to be handled very sensitively and the *Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service* would be happy to advise in individual circumstances. We suggest that in any event total confidentiality should never be offered.

APPENDIX 5

Working with Offenders

1. Safety of children first

NB Don't forget that a sexual offender could be male or female, though we have referred to "he" consistently in this and sections which follow. Sexual offences are addictive in nature, so no matter how old the offence is, there may still be a current risk.

An adult who is a known convicted offender who has committed acts of violence or sexual offences against children or adults should, in our view, never work with children again. This is in the interests of children and the person who has offended in the past. They might have accepted responsibility for their previous acts, be genuinely repentant, and have responded positively to a programme of help but it would be completely unacceptable to place children in a situation where there is a known risk – ie the abuser could succumb to temptation and re-abuse.

There is a place for each of us within the church, but for those who have offended or are not suited or we have reservations about, it should be in an area unconnected with children's and youth activities. Don't even think about letting them serve the refreshments or drive the minibus! You will be placing them on a pedestal in the children's eyes and give opportunities to cultivate relationships with children.

Churches should consider the criteria by which they exclude young people and adults from being involved with children. If churches have reservations about an individual's behaviour, lifestyle, attitudes and spiritual commitment, then they need to consider the risks to which they might be exposing children. We should never use children as experiments if we have reasons to doubt a worker's suitability for the job. No one has a right to work with children.

2. Boundaries and contracts for offenders in churches

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused children, then it will be important to extend love and friendship to the individual, but at the same time the leadership will need to ensure that a frank discussion takes place with the person concerned and efforts made to sustain open communication. It will be necessary to establish clear boundaries for both the protection of the young people and to lessen the possibility of the adult being wrongly suspected of abuse.

Someone who is on an after-care licence for sexual offences against children may be receiving a high level of intensive supervision from a specialist probation officer. There could well be a restriction on where he lives and works – particularly if he is thinking of returning to his family when children are still living there, or if he was lodging where there are children, or if he was living close to a school. An offender who has served his sentence may still have restrictions placed on him and be registered with the police. Not everyone who commits sexual offences against children will have a custodial sentence, some will have been placed on probation.

Sexual offences are often addictive, so you cannot assume that he has "*learnt his lesson*", "*forgive and forget*", etc. He may well be tempted to re-offend, he may fantasise about

abusing and he might try to gain access to children and young people by befriending their parents. He may try to manipulate and control and be coming to the church specifically to contact children.

Churches should be looking for direct contact with the person's supervising probation officer, and also expect that the supervising officer would be making contact with the church on any issue relating to the safety of children.

With the individual's agreement, (and, in certain cases, even without the individual's agreement) it may be possible to explain the circumstances to the church congregation in such a way that promotes understanding and support to the individual, but at the same time ensuring that other church members do not unwittingly allow children contact with the individual concerned. Often church leaders fear the effect that telling everyone would have on the congregation --they may gossip it widely, tell the press or vote with their feet! The offender might not want the church to know anyway, or get sexual pleasure or undue attention from relating their story.

In deciding whether or not to tell the church, it will be important to not only listen to what the offender says but talk to statutory agencies who may be involved. For example, a probation officer will know the person's background, crime details, risks, treatment plans, etc and will be able to advise you on management.

In any event, it will be important for key people, like crèche leader, Sunday school leader, youth leader, etc to know that the person is attending the church and that he should not be having contact with the children. He should never be on his own with children and young people.

In all circumstances we advise that leaders (we suggest more than one) should meet with the offender at an early stage. Boundaries that the person will be expected to keep to should be discussed. A written contract is advisable. Although this sounds very formal, it would need to be because of the manipulative ways of sex offenders. This contract should involve the person's family and partner who may also be attending church and will need to be informed. The statement might begin by setting out the pastoral support and care which is being offered. The following example might be helpful in considering other points to be included:

- *I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children/young people*
- *I will attend meetings/house groups as directed by the church leadership*
- *I will sit where directed in the church and will not place myself in the vicinity of children and young people*
- *I will not enter certain parts of the building designated by the leadership, nor any area where children's activities are in progress*
- *I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children in the home*
- *I accept that "x" and "y" will sit with me during church activities, accompanying me when I need to use other facilities. They will know I am a Schedule 1 offender/registered with the police under the terms of the Sex Offenders Act*

- *I accept there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children/young people for whom they care*
- *I accept that contact will need to be made with my probation officer, who will meet with church leaders as and when necessary (where appropriate)*
- *I accept that “z” will provide me with pastoral care*
- *I understand that if I do not keep to these conditions, then I may be barred from attending the church, and in such circumstances the leadership may choose to inform the statutory agencies (eg probation and social services) and any other relevant organisation, and the church congregation*
- *I understand that any other concerns will be taken seriously and reported*
- *I understand that this contract will be reviewed regularly every _____ months and will remain for an indefinite period*

The document will need to be signed and dated by the offender and by the church representatives. There is, of course, always the issue of someone not keeping to the boundaries set. The legal advice we have received is that the management body of the church (Trustees or whoever) are perfectly entitled to prohibit someone coming onto the premises. In circumstances where you have concerns and someone leaves to go elsewhere, then we do feel that the statutory agencies, such as probation and social services, as well as other local churches or relevant organisations, should be informed.

These issues do raise a lot of anxiety. However, if you know of someone’s past, then you can do something actively to protect children. The fact of the matter is that the majority of those who offend against children are not caught. Of those who are, few are prosecuted, and of those few are convicted. Therefore, there is a sense in which it is easier to deal with one known person than the other ninety and nine we don’t know about and who could be coming to our church every week. Sometimes it is worth reminding congregations of this fact. In certain circumstances the grass might seem greener down the road, but that church might not take child protection as seriously as we do!

Every effort should be made to protect children whether or not we have a known problem. If we have established boundaries already as to who has access to the crèche, etc then we don’t suddenly have to change everything immediately a person with a known problem comes into our church. However, be prepared to re-assess arrangements on a regular basis as well as when a known offender joins the church. See also Chapter 6, section 3 page 27.

3. Pastoral care and other issues

When an allegation/suspicion arises in a church, a period of investigation will follow, which will be stressful for all involved. Support will need to be given to the suspected perpetrator without compromising the children or their families. This is one reason for limiting information in relation to allegations of abuse on a “need to know” basis. In this way leaders not privy to the details are free to offer support to other parties, including the suspected perpetrator. Where an investigation is under way this support should be with the knowledge of the child protection authorities.

It may be necessary, for the sake of the child (or to satisfy the needs of an investigation) for the alleged perpetrator to worship somewhere else and in such cases the new church leaders

will need to be informed of the reasons so that the individual is given as much support as possible and so that child protection issues in the new church can be considered.

Whilst pastoral care for an alleged perpetrator is essential – retaining contact, prayer, support, encouraging him to seek legal advice and possibly accompanying him to court hearings – it should not be at the expense of the victim, their family or of justice. The victim should not sense collusion or the taking of the perpetrator’s side. There should be no minimising of what has been done (or alleged) or even the denial of the perpetrator’s responsibility.

The church can help by ensuring that one person is responsible for dealing with the authorities, another offers support to the victim and their family, and yet another gives pastoral care to the alleged perpetrator. It may be necessary to appoint yet another person to support the perpetrator’s family.

Where the perpetrator is accepting some responsibility, then they should be encouraged to seek specialised interventions/treatment to reduce the risk of re-offending. This may only be effective once the investigation and legal processes have been completed.

APPENDIX 6

Guidelines for Discipline of Children

- Discipline is the education of a person's character. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life, is evidence of love and is God's heart. (Hebrews 12:5-12 and Proverbs 22:6)
- Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding and pray for and with the child.
- Work on each individual child's positives, do not compare them with each other, but encourage and build them up, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with children and be a good role model, setting a good example. You can't expect children to observe ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved children attention and don't allow some children to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said – this avoids manipulation.
- Look honestly at your programme – if children are bored, they misbehave. Is the programme at fault?
- NEVER smack or hit a child and don't shout – change voice tone if necessary.
- Discipline out of love NEVER anger. Call on support from other leaders if you feel you may deal with the situation unwisely in your anger.
- Lay down ground rules e.g. no swearing, racism or calling each other names, a respect for property, and make sure the children understand what action will be taken if not kept.
- Each child is unique, special and individual, and each child needs a different method of being dealt with. We need to ask why the child is behaving that way.
- Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. Give them a chance, warn them and only separate if they are disruptive as a last resort.
- Have the child sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to the child.
- Be pro-active and encourage helpers to be pro-active and not wait to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take the child aside and talk to them, challenge them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths.
- Warn a child that you will speak to their parents and do so if necessary. Warn them, send them outside the room (care re supervision), back into the service or ban them for a week. (Never a total ban without reference to your leader and ensure parents are advised in cases of banning.)
- If a child's behaviour is constantly disruptive, seek advice and guidance from a leader (See Church Child Protection Policy)

- Pray before you meet and talk over the session before you leave.

FORM 1

Application Form For Paid Or Voluntary Work With Children And Young People

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

1. Personal Details

Please provide an **original** copy of birth/marriage certificates. A copy of these will be taken and the original returned to you as soon as possible.

Full Name _____

Maiden/All former Name(s) _____

Date and place of birth ___/___/___ _____

Address _____

Town _____

City/County _____

Postal Code _____

Daytime Telephone No. _____

Evening Telephone No. _____

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

If less than 3 years, please give previous addresses with dates

From/To ___/___/___ ___/___/___ From/To ___/___/___ ___/___/___

Previous _____ Previous _____

Address _____ Address _____

Town _____ Town _____

City/ County _____ City/ County _____

Postcode _____ Postcode _____

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

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

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

YES NO (Please tick)

If yes, please give details

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

If yes, please give details.

2. Employment History

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

Employers Name & Address	Employed From (Date)	Employed To (Date)	Job Title & Description of Duties	Reason for Leaving

3. References

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

	1	2
Name	_____	_____
Address	_____	_____
Town	_____	_____
City/County	_____	_____
Postal Code	_____	_____
Telephone No	_____	_____
Role	_____	_____

4. Declaration (see note below*)

Have you ever been charged with or convicted of a criminal offence; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations? (NB The disclosure of an offence may not prohibit your appointment.) YES NO (Please tick)

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

* Please note that because of the nature of the work for which you are applying this position is exempt from the provision of section 4(ii) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Order 1975), and you are therefore not entitled to withhold information about convictions which for other purposes are “spent” under the provisions of the Act and in the event of appointment, any failure to disclose such convictions could result in the withdrawal of approval to work with children and/or young people within the church.

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

YES NO (Please tick)

If yes, please give details and dates

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

YES NO (Please tick)

If yes, please give details

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

YES NO (Please tick) If yes we will need to discuss this with you.

If considered appropriate, do you agree to co-operate in obtaining a formal police and Department of Health Consultancy check?

YES NO (Please tick)

I confirm that the submitted information is correct and complete.

Signed _____

Date _____

FORM 2

Contract for Children's and Young People's Worker

Name of Worker _____

We Welcome You At _____

Name of Group _____

Meeting Details _____

Age Range(s) _____

Person to Whom You Are Responsible (e.g. Youth Group Leader)

Range of work/tasks to be undertaken:

We want to help you give the best possible service to your group, so we will meet with you from time to time to see how things are going. We would also like to make sure that you receive any training needed.

Signed _____ Date _____

(Trustee)

To Be Completed By the Worker With Children/Young People

I confirm that I have read the church policy on protecting children and young people.

I will endeavour to carry out the policy and if there are things I do not understand or if I have reason to be concerned about a child I will check with the appropriate leaders.

I will follow guidelines on safe working practice and the code on discipline.

Signed _____ Date _____

FORM 3

Policy Statement

For display

CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT BROOKWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH TRUST

- We are committed to supporting our parents and families.
- As trustees of the church we are committed to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all, especially the young and vulnerable.
- We recognise that child protection is everybody's responsibility.
- We are committed to following the agreed procedures and following statutory and specialist guidelines.
- We review this policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or in relation to any child protection matter then speak to one of the following who have been approved as child protection Co-ordinators for this Church.

Niki Methold

A copy of the Church's Child Protection Policy is available on request.

Signed

Trustee

Date: