

# GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH AND PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

*Every child and young person is important to God, created in His image. Each is a vital part of the community of the Well and we want to provide a safe environment which encourages their growth in Christ and facilitates their ministry to the whole body.*

We want all that we do with children and young people to be helping them to be disciples, for foundations in God's work to be built into their lives, for them to develop a personal prayer life, grow in their spiritual gifts and to win their friends for Christ.

However, we must be alert to the sad reality that many children are abused in our society. We need to have effective structures in place in the church to protect children and young people, as well as those that work with children.

## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

These guidelines are designed to protect both children and adult staff/volunteers. Above all we want children in our care to be safe and blessed.

All Children and Youth ministers:

1. Are required to read The Well Community Church's Policy, to attend annual Safeguarding training, and have an up to date DBS check.
2. Should work in pairs and avoid being alone with a child or group of children. Where this is unavoidable, always leave the door of the room open. Wherever possible the parent should take their child to the toilet before the session. If a child needs to go to the toilet and needs help, best practice is to take another child with you.
3. Treat everyone with dignity and respect. Do not hit a child or use other forms of physical discipline. In unavoidable interventions (e.g. breaking up a fight, stopping dangerous behaviour) use a minimal amount of physical contact with care. Avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour (e.g. tantrums and crushes). Remember this code even at sensitive moments (e.g. when responding to bullying or bereavement).
4. Encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like and allow young people to talk about any concerns they may have. Do not trivialise abuse, or let

allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported.

5. Make everyone aware of the Church's child protection procedures - young people, parents/carers, and other helpers. Remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned. Take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately.

## HOW TO REFER CONCERNS OF ABUSE

If you suspect abuse, a young person confides in you, or a complaint is made about any adult or about yourself, it is your duty to report the concern. In an emergency (young person at imminent risk of significant harm) contact police or social service/work department directly.

If a child tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. Allow them to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
2. Offer immediate understanding and reassurance, while passing no judgement
3. Advise that you will try to offer support but that you must pass the information on
4. Immediately fill in a Cause for Concern form
5. Write careful notes of what was said; quote verbatim wherever possible
6. Ensure that no ministry situation arises which could cause any further concern.
7. Inform the Child Protection Officer and your Team Leader of the action you have taken

If you have a concern about a child's safety and well-being, or you receive a complaint or allegation about any adult or about yourself, follow steps 4-7.

The full Child Protection Policy is available on the church website at:

[www.thewellcc.org.uk/childprotection](http://www.thewellcc.org.uk/childprotection)

