

# Grassington Congregational Church



Approved September 2007

## CARE AND SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: A POLICY AND GUIDELINES

### 1. ATTITUDES AND VALUES

By law we have “ a duty of care ” in providing for the safety and well being of all children and young people in our care. This means that we are bound to follow a high standard of commitment, treating each child as an individual and keeping confidences about circumstances concerning the life of the family. We must keep up to date with current practices and child care legislation. (Children’s Act 1989) and be aware of the vulnerability of young people.

As Christians, we would want to go further than this and say that we are responsible to God for the way we treat everyone. So we seek high standards of child care because we want to, not just because we have to!

Grassington Congregational Church adopts the Congregational Federation Document ‘ Keeping Safe ’ as a standard for all its work with children and young people.
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### 2. APPLICATION OF GOOD PRACTICE

As Christians all belonging to God’s family we are responsible for the well-being of each child attending worship and any other activity within the church. This means that :-

- A. We provide a warm caring and safe environment with appropriate support and supervision to enable children and young people to feel confident and to develop their abilities.
- B. We have a plan for dealing with accidents and we keep a confidential record of each child with an emergency number or contact person. These names and phone numbers are quickly available on the premises. There is also an equipped First Aid box (located in the Kitchen) and at least one First Aider with each group.
- C. We seek to ensure that children and young people are never abused physically or emotionally whilst they are in our care.
- D. There is no land-line telephone on the premises however mobile phones are held by leaders

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The church's involvement with children falls into four categories :-

1. The informal fellowship of adults and children in the worshipping community.
2. Groups organised for children and young people by the church.
3. Uniformed Organisations.
4. Groups organised by other agencies on church premises.

Church members have a shared responsibility for the children attending worship and other all-age activities. No child should be left in a dangerous situation (for example, in the sole company of an unknown adult; or in an unsafe environment likely to cause injury).

No child should be subjected to physical or verbal abuse, or inappropriate contact of any kind. All members have a responsibility to step in and challenge such behaviour, and to report it straight away to a church leader/officer.

The Church has the shared responsibility of all children and young people, and undertakes to be diligent in their care and supervision.

### 3. CHILD PROTECTION

- We aim to be familiar with and operate within the local authority child protection guidelines and procedures. Each leader should be aware of any relevant and up to date information.
  - We discuss with and encourage children and young people to understand how to keep themselves safe.
  - We set rules to ensure that children and young people are not teased or excluded because they are different.
  - We obtain permission from the child's parent/guardian for outings and ensure that transport arrangements are legal and adequate.
- \* Levels of checking for CRB certificates are in place and the church requires that all people working with children and young people require Enhanced Certificates. Any new appointments are taken to the church meeting and necessary checks made.

The Church requires that all leaders and helpers of groups complete a Voluntary Helpers' form. These are kept confidentially and seen only by the Minister and Secretary.

### 4. CHURCH GROUPS

At present there are:

Sunday School	Leaders,	Kathryn Thomas, Jean Foster.
Wednesday Pilots	Leaders	Peter Thomas
	Leaders	Peter Thomas
	Helpers	Jean Slater, Jean Worswick, Paula Jackson, Denise Foster
Youth Focus	Leaders	Peter Thomas, Denise Foster
Girl Guides	Leaders,	Faye Maude, Lisa Hirst,
	Helpers,	Carly Metclafe

- All leaders in a position of overall responsibility for a group must be church members.
- That person/s is required to inform the church meeting of any changes to the leadership structure of their group and seek its approval
- Any person invited in to help on a long term basis (ie six weeks or more) must be approved by the church meeting and fit any of the above criteria for volunteer helpers of the church.
- We value the help and support of volunteers and helpers and would seek to encourage them into becoming church members in due course.

The Church advises holders of the positions above that all work on its premises should meet the standards set down in " Keeping Safe " <sup>1</sup>

## 5. FURTHER ADVICE and GUIDELINES

The attention of leaders is drawn to some specific implications of good practice for their work.

- a. All leaders and helpers should be aware of this document and its guidelines.
- b. Treat all would be paid staff, leaders and volunteer helpers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children and young people. Interview all applicants, gaining at least one reference or recommendation.
- c. Find out if any of the applicants has a conviction for criminal offences against children or young people.
- d. We should ensure that every person who works with children and young people in the life of this church completes a volunteer helpers form.
- e. No child may be admitted to the building for a group meeting until at least two adults are present. That is one leader and one authorised helper.
- f. Leaders and helpers should avoid being alone with a child at any time.
- g. Always have at least two adults present with a group of children.
- h. Introduce a system whereby children and young people may talk with an independent person if they feel they have been abused in any way. The church will appoint such a person and his/her name and telephone number be clearly displayed within the church.
- i. The kitchen area is out of bounds to children and young people unless they are invited to be there or taking part in an organised cooking activity.

The Church appoints, **Mrs Jean Worswick**. (01756 751966) as the children's confidential adviser.  
All disclosures of abuse or maltreatment should be reported to her  
and brought to the immediate attention of the Minister.  
Further Information and external help can be obtained from  
**CHILDLINE 0800 1111**

- i. Mixed gender groups should have both male and female leaders. Recommended ratios of adults and children are:

0 - 2 years.	1 adult for 3 children
2 - 3 years.	1 adult for 4 children
3 - 7 years.	1 adult for 8 children
8 + years.	1 adult for 10 children

These ratios are advisory and reference should be made to point G above.

- j. Leaders and Helpers are required to maintain a high standard of work, and wherever possible to take up training opportunities to enhance their skills.
- k. The church seeks to support and encourage all leaders in their work, and expresses this support through the Diaconate and Church Meeting. Leaders are encouraged to maintain and enhance their communication with the minister and church membership in ensuring the Care and Safety of all Children and Young people.

## 6. DECLARATION

This declaration is to be filled in and returned, as a record to the church.

*Please fill in, detach and return to the church secretary.*

To :            The Secretary, Grassington Congregational Church.

I have read the document ' CARE AND SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE '

I agree to abide by the sections which apply to my work at Grassington Congregational Church.

I enclose such information and documents as have been requested,

Name of Leader .....

Name of Group .....

Signed ..... Date .....

## Notes and References

1.        Keeping Safe. A response to 'Safe from Harm' by the Congregational Federation. 1987