

ST. AUGUSTINE'S SCAYNES HILL

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

Children Can Be Harmed By:

- Physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse
- They can be harmed within their own families, by a trusted adult, by someone involved with them in an organised activity or sometimes by a stranger
- On-line abuse through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse

If You Have Concerns About a Child:

All church staff and volunteers working with children should know what to do if they are concerned that a child or young person is being harmed, is at significant risk of harm or if they disclose abuse. Any such concerns need to be recorded in writing. A form for this purpose is attached to this procedure.

The form provides a method for recording safeguarding concerns about a child. This form is used to record concerns about a child's welfare, or that they may be being harmed. The recording should be clear, concise and contemporaneous. As far as possible it should be completed by the person who has raised the concerns. It should avoid emotive or 'spiritual' language and should distinguish between fact and opinion. It should contain enough information about the child to form the basis of a referral to statutory services if necessary. If there is a pattern of concerns about a particular child, a new form should be used as a 'continuation form' and file sequentially with the form that was used to document the initial concern. As with all safeguarding information, this form must be stored securely and only shared with those with whom it is necessary. The information contained must only be used for the purpose for which it is gathered.

You do not need to know for certain that a child is being abused. If you have concerns, you should report them to the relevant Children's Service department. You can contact them and ask them, on the basis of the information you are giving, whether they advise that you make a formal referral. It is very helpful for them if you have as much information as possible to help them identify which child you are talking about: first and last name, date-of-birth if you have it, which school they go to, and their address if possible.

If you are worried about a child and believe that child is in immediate danger you **MUST** contact the police on 999.

Hearing a Child Abuse Disclosure:

Church staff and volunteers are likely to get to know children and young people in their groups very well. A child or young person may feel enough trust to be able to talk about unhappy things that are happening to them at home, at school, during other activities or at church. Remember that the child may want the abuse to stop but still love the abuser and may think it is possible to stop the abuse without anything else happening. If a child asks to talk in confidence ALWAYS tell them that will depend on the circumstances as it will be necessary to get other people involved if the child is being harmed. If possible try to have another adult present whilst the child speaks, but do not prevent him / her from speaking.

As soon as possible write down as carefully as possible what the child has said, how they said it and how they appeared emotionally. Write down what you said, sign and date it. The attached form will facilitate your recording. Do not talk to the alleged abuser. Pass the information to the Parish Safeguarding Officer

If child abuse is suspected or a child discloses abuse the local Social Services Department must be informed.

If you are worried about a child and believe that child is in immediate danger you MUST contact the police on 999.

Advice can also be sought from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser Team:

Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser – Colin Perkins:
01273 425030 / 07500 771210; email: colin.perkins@chichester.anglican.org

Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser – Victoria Taylor:
01273 421021; email: victoria.taylor@chichester.anglican.org

St. Augustine's Incumbent – Rev. Beverley Miles
07786 924942; email: revbev.sash@gmail.com
(in interregnum from: Sunday 23rd June 2024)

St. Augustine's Safeguarding Officer – Phil Brett
07528 812443; email: safeguarding.sash@gmail.com

West Sussex LA: Multi Agency Safeguarding Help (MASH)
01403 229900: 8.00am – 5.00pm weekdays
033 022 26664: 5.00pm – 8.00am and weekends / bank holidays
email: mash@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

East Sussex LA: Single Point of Access (SPOA)
01323 464222: 8.30am – 5.00pm (4.30pm Fridays)
01273 335906 / 01273 335905: 5.00pm (4.30pm Fridays) – 8.30am and weekends / bank holidays
email: 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk

March 2024

Reporting Concerns About A Child

This form should be used in conjunction with the procedure for dealing with concerns about a child.

Details of Child and Parents / Carers

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| Name of Child: | | |
| M/F: | Age: | D.O.B: |
| Ethnicity: | Language: | Additional Needs |
| Name(s) of parent(s)/carer(s): | | |
| Child's home address and address(es) of parents (if different from child's): | | |

Your Details

| | | |
|------------|---------------|---|
| Your Name: | Your Position | Date & Time of Incident (if applicable) |
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Are you reporting your own concerns or the concerns of someone else? If the concerns came from someone else, how did you become aware of them?

If someone else, please give their name, and the nature of their relationship to the child:

Please give details about the name of the incident/concern (*any details you have, incl. time, date, location, who else was present, observations that led to concern, injuries, behaviour of child and others - especially observed changes in behaviour, first incident or pattern, anything else of relevance:*

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Please give any details about how the child described this incident/concern (*please use the child's own words if you know them*):

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Details of anyone alleged to have caused the incident or be the source(s) of concern:

Details of anyone who observed the incident or shares the concern:

PLEASE NOTE: concerns should be discussed with the family unless:

- a family member is the cause of the concern
- someone may be put in danger if the family is told
- telling the family may interfere in a criminal investigation

If any of these apply, please contact the Local Authority Children's Services Dept. first

If you have discussed the concerns with the family, please record their reaction here:

Are you aware of any previous incidents or concerns, which may aid the understanding of this present concern:

Please give details of who else you have discussed this with in the church, and/or Diocese:

Details of referral with Local Authority Children's Services:

What has happened since the above referral? *(please note: you may not be made aware of actions taken by the local authority):*

What actions have your church taken since the referral? *(E.g. pastoral care, etc.):*

| Signed: | Position: | Dated: |
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