

Section 4

Working with Children and Young People

This section gives practical, 'hands on' guidance on HOW to act when working with children and young people.

It is written to assist all those working with children and young people, whether paid or unpaid.

4.1	Basic principles about working with children	3
4.2	Good working practice	3
4.3	Responding to a child	3
4.4	Working with children from minority ethnic groups	5
4.5	Children and adults with learning disabilities.....	6
4.6	Physical Contact with Children and Young People.....	7
4.7	Dealing with challenging behaviour.....	8
4.8	Internet and Mobile Phone Safety.....	9
4.9	Photography of Children and the Risk of Abuse	15
4.10	One to One Youth Work	17
4.11	Praying with Children and Young People	20

4.1 Basic principles about working with children

Our ways of working with children are shaped by our own experiences of being children, and of raising or caring for children, by our culture and beliefs, and by the community and the state.

Our theological and Christian understanding about children and our practice is a profound influence.

The Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is paramount and that, when considering a child's needs, issues of race, religion, language and culture must be taken in to consideration.

The UN Convention of the Right of the Child and the Human Rights Act 1998 address, among other things, issues of gender, disability and sexual orientation of children.

4.2 Good working practice

- Treat all children and young people with dignity and respect
- Respect personal privacy
- Be sensitive to others
- Be sensitive to a child's wish to opt out of an activity
- Provide access for young people to talk to appropriate others about their problems
- Follow accepted guidelines relating to contact with children and young people
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour, e.g. bullying
- Plan activities appropriately
- Do not rely on your good name to protect you
- Provide an example for others to follow
- Do not show favouritism to any individual
- Remember that your actions may be misinterpreted by others
- Regularly review your work with others
- Never exaggerate or trivialize child abuse issues
- **Seek support, i.e. don't try to deal with everything on your own**
- Be aware of inappropriate physical contact

4.3 Responding to a child

For a child to confide in an adult that s/he is being/has been abused, they must feel enough trust to be able to tell about their problem. This is both a privilege and a responsibility. It is important to be aware that:

- the child may want the abuse to stop but still love the abuser
- the child may think you are able to stop the abuse without anything else happening.

If it is possible, try to have another adult present whilst the child speaks, **but do not prevent the child from speaking if this is not a possibility or if it would inhibit the child.**

DO

- Listen
- Take time
- Take it seriously
- Reassure the child that he/she is right to tell
- Be honest with the child
- Be clear that, in order to help the child, you cannot keep this information to yourself
- Explain to the child what will happen next, and reassure that you will support them
- Consult and get support, but only from someone who needs to know and who will keep the matter confidential
- Write down immediately what the child has said. Have your signature witnessed and dated
- Report to the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser (BCPA) or the Social Services Department

A SUGGESTED FORM APPEARS AT APPENDIX Q

DON'T

- Show shock
- Try to silence
- Ask leading questions
- Keep the secret or agree to keep the secret
- Jump to conclusions
- Alert the perpetrator
- Make promises you can't keep

HOW DO I RESPOND – WHAT DO I SAY?

Try to avoid asking:

- What, why, how, when, where, who?
- Are you sure?
- Why didn't you say before?

Or saying:

- I can't believe it
- I am shocked

Try to say:

- I'm glad you came to me
- I'm sorry this has happened
- I'm going to get help so that this stops happening
- You have been very brave to tell me
- You were right to tell me

How you get these messages across will depend on the age and ability of the child/young person.

See Section 3 for guidance on when you should discuss with the child's parent/carer before reporting.

4.4 Working with children from black minority ethnic groups

Please see Section 1.2.10 for a definition of racism. The Report (2003) by Lord Laming of the Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié comments on the role of people in voluntary agencies, including the Church, and their duty to report concerns about a child and to work with statutory agencies in the care and protection of children.

When working with a black child and their family, there needs to be awareness of the impact of racism upon the family, and particular attention paid to institutional racism, alongside any deep-rooted personal prejudices or stereotypes held by the worker. Black children and adults are often reluctant to talk about abuse, as they are afraid of stigmatization and betraying their community. **Such fears particularly relate to sexual abuse.**

As regards physical abuse, black children may be reluctant to disclose physical harm because they may have been taught that physical chastisement is acceptable. Therefore, having no real concept of physical abuse, they may feel they are being 'disobedient' if they reveal what they are experiencing.

Churches with black workers and black volunteers who are listened to and respected by both black and white children and adults are rich in resources, which will promote the safety of all children.

We in the Church who want to help a child feel safe enough to confide in us if they are being, or have been, abused, and to help them overcome the effects of abuse, need to understand the effects of racism on that child. The black child's identity is usually only positively reinforced within the home, so if this is where the abuse is taking place, then the abuse mirrors for them the negative societal images of being black. In responding to black children, we need to be aware of this and seek advice and guidance from black workers with expertise in their area. We should not, however, leave it to black workers but address the issues in ourselves in order to be helpful to children.

All churches should receive training that includes some racism awareness, and have accessible contact points for advice and support (see Appendix U).

4.5 Children and adults with learning disabilities

By learning disability, we are referring to those adults and children with significant lifelong difficulties in intellectual development and the adaptive behaviours involved in everyday living skills. Learning disability is the term generally preferred in official legal and medical circles, and is commonly used in adult services. Educational services often use the term 'learning difficulties', although this encompasses a wider range of children than those specifically addressed here.

Abuse of all types happens to children and adults with learning disabilities much more often than was initially realized. Research is beginning to reveal the enormity of crime specifically committed against people with learning disabilities. Mencap has highlighted in a recent campaign the high incidence of bullying experienced by people with learning disabilities. There is also some evidence to suggest that some perpetrators of sexual abuse may target people with learning disabilities.

It is important that special consideration is given to the possibility of abuse of those who may be **especially** vulnerable. This includes both children and adults with a learning disability. It is important to stress that such adults should not be considered or treated in any way as children, but may be vulnerable and require protection from abuse. Hence our particular concerns. **Adults (i.e. those aged 18 and over)** with learning disabilities do not have the same legal protection offered to children through the Children Act and Child Protection Procedures.

Our instinctive reaction to the fact that children and adults with learning disabilities may be abused can be an unwillingness to contemplate it. It seems inconceivable that such a vulnerable group should be submitted to abuse. Abuse is often not recognized, or is denied in this group due to our unwillingness to recognize it or as a result of the difficulties we experience in communicating with people with learning disabilities. Our feelings may include those of distaste, intense anger, or guilt. As we know, the enormity of feelings associated particularly with sexual abuse can result in our turning away from the survivor's needs. In the face of so much pain, it becomes easy to deny the existence of abuse. We must not pretend that the presence of a learning disability somehow protects the individual from the impact of his/her abusive experience.

There are indeed many reasons why this group of people may in fact be more vulnerable to abuse. It is well recognized that many children and adults with learning disabilities may have a greater than usual belief in the power of others. They may be more vulnerable to bribes and threats of perpetrators, which can make it more frightening to reveal that they are being abused. Some people with learning disabilities remain dependent on others for care, including intimate care, throughout their life, which may make it difficult for them to distinguish appropriate and inappropriate behaviour from others. The distress and trauma caused by the abuse may not always be shown when disclosed, thus giving an impression of a lack of concern or distress in the victim. We must be extremely cautious in how we interpret this apparent lack of distress. This is particularly important when it is possible to ask a person a question that they understand but to which they are unable to respond verbally.

There will be other groups of adults in the community who may be at increased risk of harm. They are classified as 'vulnerable adults'. A 'vulnerable adult' is defined by Birmingham City Council as anyone who is 18 years of age or over who cannot protect themselves from abuse because of age, illness, disability or a mental health problem.

Communication issues

It is now recognized that a learning disability, especially if accompanied by significant communication difficulties, makes a person more vulnerable to the possibility of abuse. The communication difficulties encountered may be:

- experienced by the person with learning disabilities. They may have difficulties in either understanding what is being said to them or in expressing themselves in a way that others understand. It is important to remember that not being able to speak is not the same as having nothing to say.
- encountered by those in contact with the person. They may lack the appropriate personal communication skills themselves (e.g. using appropriate spoken and non-verbal language or using particular forms of communication, such as signing or symbol systems). They may also have limited ability to interpret attempts to communicate made by the person with learning disabilities.

Support

Communicating what has happened to them may be especially difficult for the person with learning disabilities. If they do disclose abuse, others may find it hard to interpret both their verbal and non-verbal communication. The provision of additional support – such as individuals who are familiar with the person's methods of communication, visual aids and the use of specialized communication methods such as signs and symbols – will be especially useful. There may be people in the congregation and local community with particular skills to share in this area, such as speech and language therapists, or special needs teachers and tutors.

Action

As we may have difficulty in both identifying abuse and in hearing and believing a disclosure, advice should be sought as soon as there is the slightest concern about someone. To protect, it is necessary to be vigilant and err on the side of caution if necessary (see Section 3).

NB In July 2001 the House of Bishops agreed that a paper entitled '*The protection of vulnerable adults: the mistreatment of adults by those authorized by Bishop's Licence to leadership positions in the Church*' should be sent to all Diocesan Bishops in order that they might consider how the paper could provide resource material for those concerned with continuing ministerial education, adult education and anyone developing codes of conduct, e.g. a parish.

4.6 Physical Contact with Children and Young People

The question of physical contact with children is often highly emotionally charged. This is perhaps inevitable, as adults will all have very personal experiences of touch from their childhoods – both positive and negative experiences. Such individual childhood experiences shape adult views and beliefs about physical contact with children and young people.

Many of us have a special attachment to the image of Jesus, with children on his knee and sitting at his feet, pictured in the stained glass windows of our churches, but in most schools today such touch would not be permitted.

What is the way ahead, then, in our congregations? Perhaps the principle at stake is not whether touching/physical contact should be allowed or forbidden, but how to ensure that physical contact is safe – safe primarily for the child, but also safe for the helper.

The following guidelines are recommended both for those who work with children and for other adults who come into contact with children informally:

- Any physical contact should only take place in public.
- Physical contact should reflect the child's needs, not the adult's. As adults, we do well to check what is motivating us to reach out physically to a youngster. Do we need this contact for our own comfort/reassurance?
- Any physical contact should be age-appropriate, and generally initiated by the child rather than the adult.
- Remember that it is children who have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances where they need medical attention.
- Any physical activity which is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child should be avoided.
- Thus in offering physical contact, it is not appropriate to hold the youngster face to face. An arm around the shoulder when the youngster is alongside the adult is more appropriate.
- It is appropriate for helpers to monitor one another in the area of physical contact. Helpers should be free to help each other by pointing out anything which could be misunderstood.

If a worker persists in inappropriate touch with a young person, this must be challenged. If there are concerns about an adult's contact with a young person, advice must be sought, without delay, from the incumbent and/or the Parish Child Protection Co-ordinator and/or the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser.

- Any guidelines on physical contact should be discussed with parents/carers and confirmed in writing with them. The wishes of parents/carers in relation to physical contact should always be respected and adhered to.

Reference:

David and Pauline Pearson – *A Touching Subject*, Promoting Christian Care and Action (PCCA), Autumn '98 News Bulletin

4.7 Dealing with challenging behaviour

For people working with children and young people, this is perhaps the area where most anxiety is raised. Having to handle challenging behaviour often results in workers carrying added stress, and without having any support to resolve the situation. Increasing awareness about child protection issues means that workers know that 'old fashioned' ways of dealing with children and young people are inappropriate.

Managing challenging behaviour can be an occurrence that catches the worker unaware: the important thing is to be prepared. On the other hand, managing behaviour can be an ongoing problem when it has to be dealt with every time the group meets. Whether the challenging behaviour is one-off or ongoing, there is no doubt that having to manage it can leave the worker feeling exhausted and, in the long term, disillusioned. There are a number of steps a worker can take to increase the chance of a positive outcome when challenging behaviour arises.

1. Assess what response is appropriate. Challenging behaviour can range from mild rudeness to the placing of people in danger or the damaging of property. Depending

on the circumstances, it might be appropriate to ignore it, delay dealing with it, or deal with it immediately.

2. No worker should be isolated. If a member of staff has to deal with challenging behaviour from a young person or child they should not be left to deal with it alone. Other staff should be aware of what is going on and be prepared to provide appropriate support. Staff should avoid ganging up on a young person.
3. If conflict arises out of the challenging behaviour, it is essential to work in ways which calm rather than escalate this situation. The worker should try to create space to think. They could:
 - a. Take a deep breath and count to five. This will help the worker not to react 'off the cuff' but provide space to decide what to do next.
 - b. Take note of their feelings. Don't let feelings override what you know to be good practice, in the interests of the child or young person and yourself.
 - c. Try to engage with the person in a way that does not put them down, but helps them work through what's happening. Asking them questions may help, e.g. "How do you think other people feel about what you are doing?"
4. In times of conflict, steps should be taken to take the heat out of the situation. For example, avoid eye-to-eye and physical contact. But do try to negotiate a resolution. Remember that situations of conflict are potential learning opportunities for young people and children.
5. If challenging behaviour is part of a group's culture, then the leaders should meet to plan how to deal with it.
6. Similarly, when challenging behaviour arises, it is necessary for leaders to meet and debrief after a meeting. This will be a good mechanism to learn from any mistakes that have been made and identify the strengths of the way the situation has been dealt with to date. Make a record of what has happened and what was decided should be done about it.
7. Inform someone who is outside the situation; preferably a representative of the PCC or PCC sub-group or Incumbent, about what is happening/has happened.
8. If challenging behaviour is persistent and unmanageable, then further support should be sought. Ultimately, support is available from the Bishop's Advisers for Children's Ministry and for Youth Work, and the Bishop's Child Protection Adviser.
9. A "time-out" safe zone with soft furnishings and appropriate toys should be provided where possible for children to cool off in if they wish to remove themselves from a difficult situation. Should not be used to lock children up!

4.8 Internet & Mobile Phone Safety

1. Introduction

Most churches now have or use computers and benefit from the many opportunities offered by the internet. Many young people have mobile phones, which can be very useful to them and their parents/carers. However, you should be aware of the potential dangers offered by this new technology and take appropriate precautions.

There are dangers if:

- your computer can be accessed by children, and/or

- you run your own website, and/or
- you use e-mail, chat rooms, instant messaging websites (e.g. MSN Messenger or Yahoo Messenger) or text messaging to communicate with children

Among the potential dangers are:

- sites with pornographic, racist or violent material
- unsolicited e-mail ('junk mail' or 'spam') advertising the above
- the chance to form unsuitable friendships through chat rooms
- computer viruses
- cyber-bullying

This section provides information about group practice. For guidance on one-to-one youth work refer to section 4.10. The purpose of this Section is to alert you to these dangers and suggest what you might do to avoid them, and to suggest advice you might give to children. In tackling these issues you may find it helpful to involve a responsible computer-literate youngster, who may possibly know much more than you! The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre website www.thinkuknow.co.uk provides information on all aspects of staying safe online and the use of technology in communication.

You should also be aware that a child may choose to disclose abuse to you through these mediums, in which case you should refer to Section 3 of this policy and whenever possible you should save a copy of the 'conversation'. Make sure you know how to do this before a situation arises.

2. What to do if you have concerns

Concerns could come to light if you become aware that:

- a leader or helper is e-mailing individual children.
- a leader or helper is text messaging individual children.
- a leader or helper is allowing a child(ren) to use his/her computer.
- a leader or helper is showing children sexual pictures from the internet.
- a leader or helper is using a mobile phone or digital camera to take photographs of individual children

Such concerns must be acted on. While this may cause anxieties, a decision not to pursue these could lead to failures in safeguarding a child and adequately supervising the adult.

You must immediately refer your concerns to the Incumbent or the PCPC who will advise you what action is needed and support the action being taken.

3. What to do if your computer is accessible to children

A connection to the internet means that a child could be in touch with harmful material. One of the biggest growth areas in the internet is social networking and instant messaging services which have the potential to bring children and young people into contact with material and 'friends' that are unsuitable for children. (See advice below). 'Spam' or unsolicited e-mail, is also frequently of a dubious nature, unsuitable for children. A 2003 survey by Symantec (an Internet security firm) of 1,000 net users between seven and eighteen years of age showed that 47% had received e-mails with links to X-rated sites. 51% said that their parents had never talked to them about spam.

It is estimated that there are millions of abusive images of children on the net. Adequate internet child protection is essential to make sure that all those using your computer cannot access such material. The following guidelines should be followed.

Guidelines

Consider appointing a responsible person to be 'system administrator', who would issue passwords, set security levels and monitor activity on computers on church premises. **If you cannot resource this in your parish, then your computer should not be accessible to children.**

If a system administrator is appointed, the following guidance needs to be followed:

- Consider fitting a locking device and/or using passwords to prevent unauthorized use (you may also wish to install anti-theft devices).
- Ensure that any internet access or e-mail software uses filtering software which allows access to certain sites to be blocked. Most software manufacturers' packages, such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox or America on Line (AOL) will filter out content not rated by the Internet Content Rating System (ICRA).
- Familiarize yourself with the range of security facilities available on your computer(s) and use them as appropriate.
- Teach children to deal with the danger – it can be as effective as any filter. Try to spend time on the web with them, discuss sites and help them to become more discriminating. However, do not search for sex sites.
- Encourage all potential internet users and their parents/carers to agree and sign an agreement (see Appendix S1).
- Ensure that potential users complete an internet consent form, including parental permission (see Appendix S2).

(You can, of course, also help parents to set up browser software at home so that the children who come to your church are safe there too. Some Internet Service Providers (ISPs), for example AOL, have parental controls to ensure that only appropriate web sites are visited. There are also a number of pieces of software which will allow for this, such as Netnanny, Cyberpatrol and Surfwatch.)

Note also that publishing indecent material is a criminal offence. If you do come across any, you must report it immediately to the Police. Appendix S4 lists the statutes governing these offences.

4. What to do if you run your own website

If you have your own website, you should get it rated with the Internet Content Rating System (ICRA – <http://checked.icra.org/>).

If you are using photographs of children on the site, follow these guidelines:

- Get the permission of the parent/carer in writing **before** taking or using any photographs, using the form (see Appendix S3).
- Only use group photographs rather than photographs of individuals. Ensure that people are suitably clothed.

- Do not give any identifying details, e.g. names. This information could be used by an abusive adult to gain an introduction to the child. Keep the caption to the photos on a general level.

5. Using e-mail, chat rooms, text messaging and instant messaging software

These are the means of communication of choice for most young people, and church leaders and youth workers are increasingly likely to use them. You need to bear in mind the following points when doing so:

- **E-mail:** Youth workers should ensure that any communication they have with young people is always public, not private. If workers are sending e-mails to young people, e.g. to remind them of future youth meetings, ensure that the church leaders are aware you are communicating with young people via e-mail and that the parents/carers are happy with this. The content should be 'public'. Ideally send group e-mails rather than individual e-mails and copy the e-mail to a colleague.
- **Text messages:** are private by nature, so take care when you use this medium. Save messages as text files to ensure an open record exists. Churches should have protocols about the use of Instant Messaging Services (IMS).
- **Chat rooms:** Due to the potential for misuse by those who are a risk to children and the difficulties of managing it is strongly recommended parishes do not use chat rooms to communicate with young people.

(Written by Childnet International for the Department for Education and Employment, March 2001)

- **Instant messaging software:** as with text messages and chat rooms, care should be taken when using this form of communication. It is recommended seeking approval from church leaders and obtaining parental consent before adding under 18s to your address book or contact list. Save 'conversations' to ensure an open record exists.

All forms of instant messaging and email are conversational in style. However, it should be remembered that these forms of communication are in fact written and that the written word is more permanent than verbal conversation. You should therefore consider the following:

- The boundaries between your church role and private life. All communication should be appropriate to your church role.
- Communication should be clear and not open to misinterpretation
- The agreement of protocols and boundaries between children, young people and their leaders

6. Advice for children and young people

This advice could be made available to children and young people you come into contact with to encourage them to take best care when using their own computers/mobile phones. There is age specific advice and information for children and young people available on the government website www.thinkuknow.co.uk. Children and young people can also report abuse or anything that makes them feel uncomfortable whilst online via this site.

Personal information

- Agree to a contract with your parent/carer or with your group/activity leader on the use of the internet, e.g. length of time on the net, sites which you intend to visit, behaviour whilst online, etc.

- Never tell anyone you meet on the internet your home address, your telephone number or any other identifying information, e.g. church name or youth group name, unless your parent/carer give you permission. Be careful if ever a web site asks you to type in your name and address in order to receive anything.
- Never send anyone your picture, credit card or bank details, or anything else, without first checking with your parent/carer.
- Never give your password to ANYONE! (even your best friend)
- Always be yourself and do not pretend to be anyone or anything you are not.
- Always remember: if someone makes you an offer that seems too good to be true, it probably is. Be careful if you are offered any gifts while online; they could contain harmful material such as pornography or viruses.
- Never arrange to meet anyone in person without first agreeing it with your parent/carer, and get them to come along to the first meeting, which should always be in a public place.

Chat rooms

- Never stay in a chat room or conference if someone says or writes something which makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, and always report your concerns to your parent/carer or children's/youth leader.
- Check that any chat room you enter is regulated and run by a reputable company or organization which monitors activity.
- Remember that chat rooms are 'public places' and that you may not know the true identity of anyone you meet in a chat room.

Instant Messaging Software

- Never respond to nasty, suggestive, rude or bullying remarks
- Always report the above and any other concerns to a parent/carer or children's/youth leader
- Save all conversations/remarks that make you uncomfortable
- Only add the address of people you know and block the address of anyone who makes comments that you find offensive and upsetting

E-mails

- Never respond to nasty, suggestive or rude e-mails or postings in Usenet Groups
- When receiving e-mails, delete attachments from strangers without opening them, they may contain viruses that can damage your computer. Make sure you know where files are from before you download them. They may also have viruses.
- Never send chain letters, i.e. a letter which starts "You must forward this message to 10 people today or something bad will happen, etc.", via the internet. Chain letters are forbidden on the internet. If you receive one, inform your parents/carers, who can then notify your ISP.

- Never respond to junk e-mails or spam. It is logical to reply asking to be taken off the e-mailing list, but DO NOT – it simply tells the 'spammer' (i.e. the sender) that yours is a 'live' account and so worth exploiting or selling on to someone else.

7. Use of Mobile phones

Recent technological advances mean that some mobile phones can now be used to access the internet, to read e-mail or browse websites as well as send text messages. Similar care to that outlined in 4 above should be exercised when children have such a phone. You may wish to set out some rules for the use of mobile phones within church premises.

Picture-messaging phones

Another development in mobile phone technology is the 'picture-messaging phone'. These come in many shapes and sizes and with a variety of facilities, and there is concern because photos taken with these can be downloaded onto the worldwide websites.

Some local authorities have banned the use of picture-messaging phones in changing rooms, toilets and shower areas, and have trained staff to be on the look out for people using mobile phones to take photos. The NSPCC have said, "We would like sports facilities and leisure centres to take the threat of using picture messaging by sex offenders seriously", and the Institute of Sport and Recreation management suggests that prior written permission must be obtained, even by parents.

You should ensure that group and activity leaders are aware of the potential dangers posed by the use of such phones – and bear in mind that that includes children being shown unsuitable images as well as the taking of them. It may be necessary to challenge their use in unsuitable circumstances and require the phone user to obtain consent as in section 3 above. When using any facilities away from the church, group leaders should ascertain what the policy of the body providing the facilities is.

8. Social Networking

Social networking has become an increasingly popular form of communication amongst teenagers and young people. For many young people social networking has become part of everyday life and certainly more popular than watching tv. It is estimated that 7 out of 10 young people are now using social network sites (MySpace, Freespace, Bebo, Live Journal, Facebook, MSN spaces) which provide each person with their own web page. Most sites recommend that users should be 13+, but this rule is easy to work around.

A typical web page will include a description of the person, a photo gallery, information about their favourite music and films, hobbies, links to friends sites and a blog. They can be personalised with artistic backgrounds, music, and video clips. From their site, users can send and receive instant messages from other sites. Some sites allow users to talk to each other over a web cam.

The potential for young people to post whatever material they like online – no matter how explicit – has raised concern. There is no doubt that not all users are who they appear to be. Some young people have been lured into meeting up with people they have met online. Here in the UK, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) has been set up to look into the dangers. The CEOP operated website www.thinkuknow.co.uk provides information on how to stay safe on social network sites.

Within the Church, social networking might be considered a useful form of outreach, but users should be aware of the dangers and protect themselves from allegations or misinterpretation. Clergy, youth workers, children's workers and those working as professionals on behalf of the church in positions of trust and authority, may wish to set up their own social networking web

pages either as a form of outreach or simply for personal communication. In these cases the following good practice is recommended:

- Consider the aim and purpose of the site before you do anything
- If you are going to have a site, it is best to make it specific to a group or project (when the page is about the group, young people being on the site as 'friends' is less of an issue)
- The profile/group site needs to have an administrator who takes responsibility for the 'friends' who are allowed membership of the site
- The Administrator needs to continually monitor the content of the site, particularly a 'Facebook wall'
- Think carefully about the boundaries between your church 'role' and your 'personal life'
- Spend time looking at the Privacy and Security options contained in whichever site you use
- Inform your PCC about your site and obtain their permission
- Inform parents that you have a site, and obtain parental permission for all under 18's to be 'friends' on the site
- Work with your young people to explore both the opportunities and risks associated with social networking
- Do not accept or add anything on the site which could bring the name of the church into disrepute
- Do not place or add photographs of under 18's on your web pages unless you have obtained parental consent, and only then on a site with controlled access
- If anyone under the age of 18 wants to enter into an online communication with you, obtain their parents permission in writing
- Be aware that whilst your site may be totally wholesome, you have no control over the content of your friends' sites which are only one click away

4.9 Photography of Children and the Risk of Abuse

The use of digital cameras, video/DVD recorders, the new generation of mobile phones together with the availability of photo editing software presents an opportunity for misuse. Images taken on a mobile phone or digital camera can be posted on the internet in seconds. The magnification and manipulation that is possible and the fact that there is no need for a third party to develop and print images adds to the risk. The main problem relates to child pornography and child abuse images. It has been estimated that 5 million images of child abuse are circulated on the Internet, featuring some 400,000 children. Photographs taken of children in innocence and placed on the internet can be edited to become 'pseudo photographs' with obscene results.

The Data Protection Act also affects the use of photography. There are several issues to be aware of

- Permission must be sought of all the people who will appear in a photograph, video or web cam image before the footage is recorded. Permission to photograph children or young people should be obtained from the parent or person with parental responsibility.
- It must be clear:-
 - Why that person's image is being used;
 - What it will be used for;
 - Who might want to look at the pictures.;
 - Where digital images will be stored; and
 - Who will have access to the stored images

If images are being taken at an event attended by large numbers, such as a worship event or festival, this is regarded as a public area so it is not necessary to get the permission of everyone in the crowd shot. However it would be sensible to ask permission of those who are in the foreground.

It is advisable for parishes to have a policy on photography during services and include this in information given when arranging marriages and baptisms. Churches should consider the following:

- Whether/when it is appropriate to allow photography/recording during services, in church buildings and/or in church grounds.
- Whether all photography/recording should be done only by an official appointed by the church or by the family in the case of weddings, baptisms, confirmations etc.
- How parental consent is to be obtained when photographing/recording a child – churches may decide that parents/carers may only take photographs of, or record, their own child(ren).

It is recommended that churches, and individuals working on behalf of churches, do not place photographs of children or young people on the internet in which they can be easily identified, it is advisable to use group shots or scenes.

It is also better not to give any identifying details of the child or personal information that could be used to gain the trust of a child/young person. Parents and carers should also be notified of what will happen to any photographs/film after it has been used e.g. disposal

Photographs or film recorded on disc should be kept safe and disposed of carefully as soon as it is no longer required.

Parishes should be aware that there is the potential for photographs displayed in church buildings to be taken, scanned and posted on the internet and should therefore take measures to protect displayed images.

Child Pornography and Photography

Key points

- Children suffer knowing that a record of their abuse is being endlessly re-circulated among people with a sexual interest in children.
- The Internet has become the main medium for the distribution and consumption of child pornography. It has allowed those individuals with a sexual interest in children to form 'virtual communities' of like-minded people who regard the sexual abuse of children as normal and acceptable.

- Little is known about the full and long term impact of being used in pornography upon children and their families, their coping strategies and the support they do or do not receive.
- A suggested form of consent for the use of group photographs of children appears at Appendix S4.

4.10 One to One Youth Work

One to one youth work is recognised to be one of the most effective means of youth work. Good and safe practice in this, however, is of paramount importance. Working one to one with young people takes us way beyond anything that a textbook, news headline or stereotype could suggest. One to ones enable us to encounter the reality of the issues as *our* young people see them.

Sitting one to one with young people is one of the greatest privileges of youth work. Taking time to listen as young people share their concerns, and offering ongoing support and advice, speaks volumes about how we, and God, value them as individuals. Indeed, many judgements about faith are made as young people see the way we respond and react to them. Yet with this greatest privilege comes the greatest responsibility. Procedures, guidelines and accountability structures are all a necessary part of one to one working in today's climate. These should not be regarded as constraints, but rather, handled appropriately, these guidelines can free us to experience healthy, productive, and safe one to ones.

1. Key elements of One to One Youth Work

Central to one to one work is the art of conversation. While one to ones will demand that workers adopt a variety of roles, a basic ability to communicate with and listen to young people is paramount. Every youth worker undertaking one to ones will need good basic listening skills, as it is upon this foundation that good practice, and therefore safe and productive one to one work can be built. But while listening skills are a minimum requirement, they alone are not sufficient to ensure successful work. If we wish to see one to ones incorporated into our youth work, we have to be *intentional* in their development, and this operates at a number of levels. Workers must demonstrate availability to, and genuine interest in individuals, and must have grasped the fundamentals of knowing their group members' names and something of their circumstances. A simple offer to pray for a young person's exam, and then a call later in the week to see how it went, for example, is exactly the foundation upon which a one to one might be built. Young people have to be convinced that we care before they will consider spending time with us individually.

2. Good Practice; 'Public and Appropriate'

In essence, one to ones provide the opportunity for those we know as *members* of our youth groups to become *individuals* who are seeking to examine, meet with and follow Christ. Putting it another way, they provide the place where programme becomes personal. It is this personal dimension that can act as such a dynamic catalyst for growth and development. Young people are, without a doubt, searching for authentic Christian adults they can relate to. It is imperative that such work is safe: safe for both the young people concerned, and those of us who seek to work with them.

We might consider the term; 'public and appropriate'. Any contact we have with young people, whether following youth group sessions, or elsewhere, should be 'public and appropriate'. That is, workers should not meet young people alone, out of sight of another adult, and the content and context of any meetings should be within expected parameters. 'Public and appropriate' gives workers a memorable guideline, and one against which to easily measure their actions. Hence, a one to one following a main session can occur within

the main meeting room, rather than taking young people into side rooms, and mid-week one to ones are held in public places.

Another issue facing many Christians is coming alongside young people when there are only one or two in the church. In a small youth group setting where perhaps two adults meet with two or three young people in a house, using the front room for the meeting aspect, and the kitchen for more in-depth one to one conversations.' Public and appropriate' applies as much in this setting as any other.

A preferred location for one to ones is often a local coffee shop, which easily fulfils the 'public' requirement, and ensures that workers are not alone with young people. Different communities might call for different approaches – a fast-food outlet, cinema café, bowling alley or sports centre foyer – and it may be challenging for those in some localities to find a suitable place to meet. Some ingenuity may be called for. There are of course restrictions of operating in rural settings, and these challenges may make financial and practical demands of the church or organisation involved. Organisations wishing to undertake one to ones must be set up to do so.

Whenever and wherever workers meet with young people, travel home and the personal safety of the young person after the meeting also need to be taken into consideration. For example, do bus timetables allow for one to ones to take place after school? If the young people are to be collected by their parents, are they happy that they know about these meetings?

Adhering to the rest of the guidelines in this policy should ensure the protection of workers as well as young people and seek to meet the needs of both.

3. Gender?

In terms of good practice, one of the first questions likely to arise is whether one to ones should uphold strict male-to-male and female-to-female guidelines. Different churches and organisations will approach this issue differently, but interestingly research suggests that most local authorities do not regard this as a major concern. Many churches have developed a general principle that members of the same gender should handle issue-based work together, whether in a counselling or small group context. The ideal has always been that males should only work with males, and females with females, but with increased awareness of issues of sexuality this is no longer considered quite so vital. It is naïve to presume that same gender working will exclude the risk of the young person having inappropriate feelings towards the worker, and vice versa. Again, the need to monitor *all* one to ones is clear, as is the need to be open with other workers and line managers to reduce potential risks.

Any decision to undertake mixed gender one to ones will at the very least impact on how and where such meetings can occur. It will also directly affect the judgements which will have to be made. The appropriateness of the location, frequency and topics addressed, will need to be constantly reviewed. The level of accountability required also naturally increases and this might be outworked in a number of ways, as indeed it should be for any one to one work:

- Keeping records of which worker is seeing which young person gives opportunity for others to raise any concerns about individuals and their allegiance to a particular worker; a simple log sheet recording who, where and when they have met, together with a summary of what was discussed, and any recommendations made. (See Appendix P)
- Supervision of workers can be used to monitor frequency of appointments as well as content.
- Workers may find it helpful to have someone of the opposite gender to whom they can refer things as necessary.

- Meetings need clear boundaries.

4. Space to Process

Whatever the context, when meeting with a young person it is good to begin by asking certain questions to clarify expectations and roughly determine how long should be allocated to the one to one. After a small time of general chitchat it is often helpful to say something like, 'It's great to see you today. Was there anything particular you wanted to talk about?' This helps ensure any important topic is covered, whilst allowing for general conversation.

We need to be aware of non-verbal communication. Our body language communicates much about our interest in the young person and the conversation. We need to ensure we remain alert and actively engaged with the discussion as it develops. It is worth recognising that one to ones can be physically and mentally taxing given their inherent intensity, so it is wise to space them accordingly if we wish to approach each meeting fresh.

We also need to consider the style of questioning we might employ. It is particularly important not to ask leading questions, but rather hear what young people really wish to say. Open questions are vital to constructive one to ones as they encourage broader answers. An open question might be, 'How do you feel about this?' rather than a closed question such as 'And you feel alright about this, do you?' which can only lead to a 'yes' or 'no' answer. We have to ensure that we do not lead young people down a particular route simply by our questioning style, and we need to ask questions that encourage openness.

Giving young people space to process their responses is vital, and goes some way towards ensuring progress is made. Therefore, the constructive use of silence in one to ones can be a powerful tool. Workers may find it challenging not to fill silences, perhaps that is a good time to take a sip of coffee until they speak up! This 'thinking time' can be extremely beneficial to both parties.

5. Look after yourself!

This type of work, while a great privilege, can also be very demanding. Sometimes the weight of the world will rest on our shoulders. It can be painful to watch young people struggling to work things through. Additionally, helping a young person confront certain issues, may well raise personal issues for us which need addressing, and it is important that we recognise this and respond appropriately. Certainly, if we wish to help those who are drowning we have to ensure that we are not sinking ourselves. It is interesting to note that those working in services such as mental health and counselling are obliged to have a designated support worker – whether a manager or a peer – to whom they regularly report. Furthermore, Jesus himself sent out his disciples in pairs (Luke 10:1-12), and the Scriptures clearly suggest that while we might work alone, we are not to *operate* alone. From a biblical, professional, and practical point of view, we must recognise that we need the support of others to be effective in our work.

Talking with others and making notes of meetings can help constructive reflection. Taking time out to look back over individuals' journeys can encourage us to see the bigger picture, as well as learn valuable lessons.

Whenever and wherever we find ourselves sitting one to one with young people, we owe it to them and ourselves, to ensure good guidelines and practice are in place. Once we are familiar with, and comfortable operating within these guidelines, a real sense of openness is obtainable and our conversations can really take off.

4.11 Praying With Children & Young People

When we pray we communicate with and form a relationship with God and it is important that all those praying with children and young people have considered the nature of prayer, the way children and young people communicate and form relationships, and the possible meanings of prayer to them at different ages and stages of their faith development and spiritual journeys. There are many different ways of praying and forms of prayer not previously experienced by the child or young person may initially feel 'alien' or 'threatening'.

In general when praying with children and young people we should:

- Create a culture within the church where children and young people feel able to freely express their wishes and opinions
- Be accepting of them as individuals and of their views and questions
- Respect them and their wishes
- Listen non judgementally
- Be sensitive to them, their situations and issues
- Use language appropriate to the age of the child or young person
- Be aware of the dangers of using prayer that dominates, controls or brings pressure
- Be aware of, and sensitive to, their culture, ethnicity and physical ability

1. Prayer Ministry

A church that offers prayer ministry to children and young people should do so under guidelines approved by the incumbent and PCC. Any such guidelines should include:

- a theology of and model for prayer ministry
- a guide for good practice, especially in relation to children and young people
- a structure for supervision and accountability

All those offering this ministry should receive appropriate training.

If you offer a prayer ministry to individual children and young people the following basic principles should be followed:

- Ensure that parents/carers are aware that you are praying with their child
- Ensure the child or young person is aware of what is going to happen
- Ensure the child or young person is happy with this and that they want to pray with you
- Ensure you are in an open area / public space where you can be seen
- Whenever possible there should be 2 people praying with each child or young person
- Ensure the child or young person is comfortable with those who are carrying out the prayer ministry
- Ask the child or young person what they would like prayer for – check your understanding of what they've said, and don't attempt to give advice or interpret it
- Be aware of your physical proximity to the child or young person – consider where you put your body in relation to them and their body; do not invade their private space. Never physically restrain or dominate a child or young person.
- Try to be the same height as the child or young person, by sitting or kneeling if necessary

If your prayer ministry includes the laying on of hands or anointing with oil you should consider:

- Explaining exactly what you are intending to do and ensuring that the child or young person is happy with this.

- Where you place your hands and what message this sends – is it controlling, domineering, restraining, inappropriate etc
- Agreeing where and how you will touch – placing your hand lightly on the child or young person's shoulder may be more appropriate than placing hands on the head or other sensitive parts of the body. However, during public worship, giving a blessing by laying hands gently on the head is acceptable.
- Always ask the child or young person if they are happy to be touched and respect their wishes

If you believe God is talking to the child through you, always discuss this with the incumbent, an appropriate supervisor and parents before revealing this to the child.

Other groups that use the church and/or other buildings, who may offer prayer ministry, should be made aware of your guidelines and have guidelines of their own governing this ministry. If you witness or become aware of any abuse during prayer ministry by others this should always be reported following the guidelines in Section 3 of this policy.

2. Deliverance Ministry

Deliverance Ministry is also referred to as 'exorcism'. The ministry of exorcism and deliverance may only be exercised by priests authorised by the Diocesan Bishop, who normally requires that permission be obtained for each specific exercise of such a ministry. On occasions when exorcism and deliverance are administered, it is for the Diocesan Bishop to determine the nature of the rite and what form of words should be used. Therefore, no form of Deliverance Ministry should be undertaken without prior consultation with the Bishop's Adviser for Deliverance Ministry, who can be contacted via Bishop's Croft.

Where it would be pastorally helpful to pray with those suffering from a sense of disturbance or unrest the 'Prayers for Protection and Peace' from 'Common Worship: Pastoral Services' (p.94) may be used.