



St Matthew's Code for Safer Working Practice Agreement

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Matthew's Parish Church has a 'Safeguarding Policy for Promoting a Safer Church' which adheres to the Southwark Diocese' 'Code of Safer Working Practice' both of which can be found on the Safeguarding page of our website: (www.stmatthew.org.uk/safeguarding/).

In accordance to the aforementioned policies, this 'Code for Safer Working Practice' agreement is for all non-church related groups who use St Matthew's. Your use of St Matthew's to run your activity is conditional upon you complying with this agreement unless you already have an equivalent policies of your own.

You are required to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected at all times, by taking all reasonable steps to prevent injury, illness, loss or damage occurring; and that you carry full liability insurance for this.

In particular this means that:

All those working with children, young people and adults must:

- treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- respect people's rights to personal privacy.
- ensure that their own language, tone of voice and body language are respectful.
- ensure that children, young people and adults know who they can talk to about a personal concern.
- record and report any concerns about a child, young person or adult and/or the behaviour of another worker with their activity leader and/or the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO). All written records should be signed and dated.
- obtain written consent for any photographs or videos to be taken, shown, displayed or stored.
- always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
- ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet.
- respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
- ensure that the child and parents are aware of any activity that requires physical contact and of its nature before the activity takes place.

- you will recruit safely all current paid and voluntary workers who work with children and/or vulnerable adults, by obtaining satisfactory disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service where eligible, and keeping records of dates and disclosure numbers indefinitely.
- you will keep a list of the names of all paid and voluntary workers with regular and direct contact with children/vulnerable adults, and update it annually;
- you will always have at least two leaders over the age of 18 years in any group of children and young people, no matter how small the group; the minimum staffing levels by age are: 0-2 years - 1 adult for every 3 children; 2-3 years - 1 adult for every 4 children; 4-8 years - 1 adult for every 6 children; 9-12 years - 1 adult for every 8 children; 12-18 years - 1 adult for every 10 children.
- no person under the age of 18 years will be left in charge of any children or young people of any age.
- no child or group of children or young people should be left unattended at any time.
- a register of children, young people or vulnerable adults attending the activity will be kept securely. This will include details of their name, contact details of parent/guardian/carer etc., date of birth and next of kin.
- you will immediately (within 24 hours) inform the PSO of:
- (a) the occurrence of any incidents or allegations of abuse or causes of concern relating to members or leaders of your organisation, and contact details for the person in your organisation who is dealing with it.
- (b) any known offenders against children or vulnerable adults seeking to join your membership, and manage such allegations or agreements with offenders in co-operation with statutory agencies, and with the church.

All those working with children, young people and adults must not:

- use any form of physical punishment.
- be sexually suggestive about or to an individual scapegoat, ridicule or reject an individual or group.
- permit abusive peer activities, for example initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying show favouritism to any one individual or group.
- allow an individual to involve them in excessive attention-seeking.
- allow unknown adults access to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable. Visitors should always be accompanied by an approved person
- allow strangers to give lifts to children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable in the group.
- befriend children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable on social media.
- take photographs on personal phones or cameras as this means that images are stored on personal devices.

- give lifts to children you are supervising, on their own or your own (unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example in an emergency for medical reasons or where parents fail to collect a child and no other arrangements can be made to take a child home. In such situations, the circumstances and your decision must be recorded and shared with an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity).
- smoke or drink alcohol in the presence of children and young people
- arrange social occasions with children and young people (other than events which also include family members/carers) outside organised group occasions.

Acceptable touch

Sympathetic attention, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, can be wholly appropriate. However, abusers can use touch that appears safe to 'normalise' physical contact which then becomes abusive. As a general rule, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility and those with whom they are working or volunteering should be initiated by the person themselves, and kept to the minimum. In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

- ask permission before you touch someone
- allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (for example, when they need medical attention)
- avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive
- keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
- touch should be in response to a person's needs and not related to the worker's needs. Touch should be age-appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.

In the event of an incident, the PSO will seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team on whether a Serious Incident Report needs to be made to the Charity Commission.

The Parish Safeguarding Officers for St Matthew's Church are:

Judith Spencer-Gregson

E-mail: jsgregson@btinternet.com

Tel. No: 07973 130934

and Carolyn Tweed

E-mail: carolyntweed@hotmail.com

Tel. No: 07905 695 821