



# **ST JOHN'S**

**DOWNSHIRE HILL**

**Children's & Youth Handbook 2020:  
policies, procedures, and guidance for  
working with children and young people**

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PART I: GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR RELATING TO CHILDREN .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>General Attitude to Children.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Physical Contact .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Toileting.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Crèche .....	4
Scramblers/Starters .....	4
Adults .....	4
<b>Discipline .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Dealing with unacceptable behaviour .....	4
After the Event.....	5
General Guidelines.....	5
What to do if a child misbehaves or engages in inappropriate behaviour .....	5
<b>Health &amp; Safety .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART II: GENERAL PRECAUTIONS FOR THE CARE OF CHILDREN .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recruitment of Leaders &amp; Helpers .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Information on Parents and Children .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Attendance Registers .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Incident Report Forms .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Record-keeping .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Training.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Part III: SAFEGUARDING .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Reporting procedure .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Annex A: Useful Contacts.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Annex B: Recruitment of Volunteers – a practical guide for what happens at St John’s .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Annex C: Terms of Reference for the Children’s &amp; Youth Task Team (CYTT) .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Annex D: Signs of abuse &amp; neglect .....</b>	<b>14</b>

## Introduction

1. We are committed to pursuing high standards in caring for children entrusted to us. This document sets out general principles and guidelines for all those involved in working with children at St John's and is in line with: 'Promoting a Safer Church'; House of Bishop's Statement (2017), the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy 'Protecting All God's Children' (safeguarding policy for children and young people, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2010), and the Diocese of London's Safeguarding Policy.

2. This document will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated annually by the Sunday Club Coordinator, the Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO), and the Children's & Youth Task Team (CYTT) (see [Annex C](#) for more info on the CYTT).

## PART I: GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR RELATING TO CHILDREN

### General Attitude to Children

3. We want to treat the children in our care with respect and dignity. We will therefore:

- Avoid ridiculing, scapegoating or humiliating children
- Avoid showing favouritism to any particular children
- Be aware of speech, tone of voice, body language, and the effect that they may have on the children
- Treat each child as an individual and don't make comparisons between children (whether peers or siblings)
- Work hard to encourage the children, highlighting their strengths and where appropriate giving them responsibilities

### Physical Contact

4. Physical contact is a normal part of many relationships. There is no reason to avoid appropriate physical contact with children in our care. However, we need to ensure that such contact is neither inappropriate nor misunderstood. We will therefore:

- Remember that we are physically stronger than most children
- Avoid engaging in rough games or behaviour or in any activity that puts the child at unnecessary risk of injury
- Avoid physical contact in any place or context that isn't open and in sight of others
- Avoid engaging in any activity or game that could be considered sexually provocative
- Avoid touch which is inappropriate to the age of the child
- Respect the child – allow them to decide how much physical contact to have with others and, in most cases, allow them to initiate contact
- Encourage each other to avoid behaviour that might be perceived to be inappropriate. This will mean raising our concerns with fellow leaders either on the spot (if urgent) or after the event. Where we are concerned that behaviour is inappropriate, we may need to take further action ([see paras 8 & 9 below](#)).

## Toileting

### Crèche

5. Nappies may need to be changed during crèche. If the parents have given you permission, and you are comfortable doing so, then please follow these guidelines:

- Tell another leader you're about to change a nappy
- Use the changing table in crèche (unless an older child expresses discomfort or unease about being changed in public)
- Tell parents after the service that you had to change their child's nappy during crèche
- Wash your hands afterwards using the sink in the disabled toilet

### Scramblers/Starters

6. Some of the children in our younger groups (Scramblers/Starters) may ask for help when it comes to toileting – in these instances it is best to get parents from upstairs, as a club leader it is not your responsibility to help the children use the toilet - that responsibility remains with their parents.

If a parent has asked you to help their child and you are comfortable doing so, then that is acceptable but do observe the guidelines above and remember that if you are uncomfortable helping a child use the toilet then you don't have to.

**Parents are to be encouraged to take their children to the toilet before dropping them off at Sunday Club.**

### Adults

7. During SJDH Sunday and midweek clubs, adults are required to use the disabled toilet to avoid being alone in the toilets with children.

### Discipline

8. From time to time, children will engage in unacceptable behaviour and, as responsible leaders, we must be ready to discipline them. Our fundamental principle is to discipline out of a love and concern for the individual and group rather than just anger or irritation on our part.

### Dealing with unacceptable behaviour

- Act sooner rather than later – be observant and don't let situations get out of control
- Ensure that you understand the situation as fully as possible – give the children involved an opportunity to explain
- Pinpoint the behaviour that you find unacceptable
- If appropriate, mention positive behaviour and encourage them to extend it
- Avoid raising past (and possibly unrelated) behaviour in general terms e.g. 'What's wrong with you?' or 'You're always so selfish'
- Explain to the child the implications of their behaviour for other individuals and the group as a whole
- Ask them to respect other individuals and the group
- If they refuse, lay down clear and specific rules and explain what will happen if these rules are not kept

- Ensure that you carry out the action that you have indicated - don't make empty threats
- Judge your response accordingly and escalate your sanction if children continue to misbehave – for example:
  - General request to behave acceptably
  - Specific rules e.g. 'please don't climb on the table'
  - Separate child from others
  - Have the child sit in a particular place e.g. in front of you or next to another leader
  - Speak to their parents later
  - Send them out / take them to their parents now

### **After the Event**

- Reflect on why the child may be behaving in this way
- Reflect on whether there is something that can be changed in the structure of the club that would help remove the opportunity or temptation for unacceptable behaviour e.g. are the children bored?
- Discuss persistent unacceptable behaviour with other leaders and decide on a consistent course of action
- Reflect on whether you should alert the child's parents and ask their advice

### **General Guidelines**

- As leaders, take a collective approach to discipline – don't side with a child against another leader or allow children to play leaders off against each other
- If you have concerns about the approach taken by a leader do raise your concerns but don't do it in front of the children – either take them aside there and then (if urgent) or speak to them afterwards
- Be wise in deciding whether to discipline a child in front of others or whether to take them to one side
- Don't use physical punishment e.g. smacking
- Try to avoid shouting - use a change in tone instead
- Stop abusive peer activities e.g. ridiculing, bullying, name-calling, at the earliest opportunity, and make it clear that they will not be tolerated

### **What to do if a child misbehaves or engages in inappropriate behaviour\***

- Tell the child that their language or behaviour is unacceptable, even if this is embarrassing for you or for them
- Report the incident to the Sunday Club Co-ordinator - however embarrassing the incident
- Agree with the Sunday Club Co-ordinator what action should be taken to help the child and to minimise the chance of a recurrence
- The Sunday Club Co-ordinator should file a brief written record of the incident, using the '*Incident Record Form*' ([see paras 19 & 20 below](#)) in case the matter is raised in the future

Note: \* - to clarify whether this might be a safeguarding issue, it might be helpful to ask yourself if anyone is being harmed. If so, please seek advice directly from Ruth McIlmoyle (CSO) or Tom Watts (Senior Minister), David Rue (Assistant Minister for Families), or Corinne Brixton (Assistant Minister for Women). See [Annex A](#) for their contact details.

## Health & Safety

9. We must be careful to ensure the safety of the children in our care. To that end:

- Ensure that you have access to a telephone and first aid kit in the place where you are meeting – 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Kits can be found at the back of church, in the church kitchen, and in the activity cupboard in the undercroft.
- Take special care with children when:
  - crossing the road
  - ascending and descending stairs
  - where hot liquids are present e.g. the kitchen
- Ensure that, after the group has finished, the children are supervised until they are picked up by their parents or adult carer *only i.e. do not sign them out to an older sibling who is under 18yrs*
- Ensure that you have an up to date copy of the parent's contact details
- Ensure that you are familiar with any specific medical requirements of the children in your care – these are detailed on the Parent's Declaration Forms (PDFs) stored in the Church Office (this information is also available on ChurchBuilder)
- Do not allow children with infectious illnesses to attend the group
- Ensure that you know where the escape route is in event of a fire
- Ensure basic hygiene in the preparation of food and drink
- Should any injury occur (to child or adult) an incident record form should be completed as soon as possible by those involved or responsible

## PART II: GENERAL PRECAUTIONS FOR THE CARE OF CHILDREN

10. We must take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety and comfort of the children who are entrusted to our care. Although the process can seem a little excessive it is designed for the benefit of all concerned.

### Recruitment of Leaders & Helpers

11. All those who will come into contact with children at St John's will be asked to complete a '*Confidential Declaration Form*' and '*Job Application Form*' before so doing. These forms ask for information regarding both past experience in working with children and any potential cause for concern e.g. past convictions, allegations. The forms also ask for the names of two referees who must satisfy certain conditions. The information collected will be used to assess an individual's suitability for work with children.

12. All individuals will need to complete such a form before being involved in working with children at St John's. They may be asked to fill in a form again in subsequent academic years whilst they continue to be involved.

At least one reference will be taken up, with the referee being asked to complete and return a standard 'Referee's Declaration'.

13. All those who will be leading or helping with children's clubs will also be asked to complete a DBS disclosure *specifically* for children's work at St John's. While an application for a DBS disclosure is being processed, a new helper may join in with a children's club but only if they are under the supervision of an experienced, DBS checked leader.

14. Only once David Rue (the Sunday Club Co-ordinator) is satisfied that suitable scrutiny has taken place will the individual be able to take up a position involving work with children. In addition, it is our general practice not to have a single individual alone with a group of children for a prolonged period of time.

15. Occasional helpers with the crèche, including mothers of the children in the crèche, will not be expected to produce a DBS disclosure, but there will always be a Supervisor in the Crèche who has satisfied the Sunday Club Co-ordinator in this way. Occasional helpers will never be left in sole charge of a child or group of children.

Examples of those who will need to satisfy the Sunday Club Co-ordinator:

- Sunday Club Leaders and Helpers
- Crèche Supervisors
- Mid-Week Club Leaders & Helpers
- Holiday Club Helpers
- Helpers with children's programme at occasional events such as the Weekend Away

16. The rota for each of these activities will take these principles into account. This therefore has a bearing on which individuals are available to cover for a leader who is unable to make a particular club. The Sunday Club Co-ordinator should therefore be informed of all such swaps *in advance* where possible.

### **Information on Parents and Children**

17. Prior to a child being involved in a Children's Club, we will ask those responsible for the child to complete a '*Parent's Declaration Form*' (PDF). This form asks for information about the child e.g. name, age, medical condition, and about the parent e.g. contact information. The form also requests the parent's consent for their child's involvement in the club. This form may need to be completed on a Sunday at the beginning of the club.

### **Attendance Registers**

18. We need to keep accurate records of the attendance of all children and adults. Registers will be provided for this purpose.

### **Incident Report Forms**

19. Should any out of the ordinary incident occur, which does not fall under the safeguarding procedure e.g. accidents or unintentional injuries, an '*Incident Report Form*' should be completed by those either involved or responsible for taking action. This form asks for information regarding the incident and what action was taken. Incident Report Forms can be found in the children's club folder and in each of the children's group's boxes.

20. After completing an incident report form, please return it to the Church Administrator (Kerry Jones) so it can be kept in the children's club folder in the church office. These forms will be reviewed by the Sunday Club Co-ordinator to see whether there are any trends or anything that may raise issues specifically relating to safeguarding that should be reported to the CSO.

## **Record-keeping**

21. Any information collected as detailed above will need to be carefully stored for possible future reference.

22. Information stored securely in the Church Office includes:

- Completed Leader's Declaration forms
- Completed Referee's Declaration forms
- Previously Completed Parent's Declaration forms (including emergency contact details & medical information)
- Completed Registers
- Completed Incident Report forms

23. Information stored in the Children's Folder includes:

- Newly Completed Parent's Declaration forms (including emergency contact details & medical information)
- Registers currently in use
- A copy of this policy and guidelines

**These records will be kept for a minimum of five years.**

## **Training**

24. We want to be able offer children the best possible care and we are committed to improving the leadership we offer to them. We are therefore committed to a continued pattern of training in teaching and looking after children, including the areas described in this document.

Note: as a minimum, all volunteers are required to complete the Diocese of London's online '*Safeguarding Basic Awareness*' course every three years. (The course takes about 60-90 minutes to do and is free although you may need to register an account. To register you will need our parish code, which is 1601. You can access the course here: [Online Safeguarding Training](#))

## Part III: SAFEGUARDING

25. St John's has a legal responsibility, both to do what we can to ensure that our activities do not cause harm, and also to report any harmful activity or abuse of vulnerable individuals, which automatically includes anybody under the age of 18, to the appropriate authorities. This includes abuse involving church members or not, and abuse which happens on church property or not, i.e. if we have reasonable suspicion that a vulnerable person is experiencing abuse, we are legally required to report it. As well as complying with the legal requirements we, as Christians, want to carry out our activities in a responsible way, and to confront abuse where it occurs. Additionally, we want people to be in the best position, physically and mentally, to respond to the gospel.

26. Abuse refers to anything which harms a person's development or personal wellbeing, whether physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual or social. See [Annex D](#) for a list of signs of abuse or neglect.

27. St John's has adopted the Church of England's safeguarding policy, which is to **safeguard all children, young people and vulnerable adults at St John's so that they can worship and grow safely in Christ**. Towards that end, we aim to create a culture of care and vigilance, to have clear policies and procedures in place for safeguarding, and to respond promptly if and when an incident occurs.

28. St John's has put the following procedures in place to manage the safeguarding of children:

- A church policy statement – a full policy statement is available on the church website here: [Safeguarding](#), and is on display at the back of church
- The appointment of a Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO), who is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding procedures are in place, and reporting issues to the authorities
- The appointment of a Children's Champion, who is responsible for representing the interests of children in church activities
- Procedures for working with children (this document)
- Procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers ([see Annex B](#))
- [Training](#) – as a minimum, those who work with vulnerable people must do the Church of England's online safeguarding training. We also run face-to-face training from time to time.
- Risk assessments – of potential risks, and the actions that can be taken to mitigate for them
- Reporting procedure – as below.

### Reporting procedure

29. If you become aware that abuse has potentially taken place, whether it is something that you observe or something that someone brings to your attention, you should follow this procedure:

#### a. Listen

- Provide an environment in which the child can explain clearly and fully the nature of the problem without fear of being overheard
- Give the child your full attention, and stay with them until you feel they have said everything they want to say
- Probe gently with questions as needed, but take care not to push, or ask leading questions
- Be sympathetic, but do not express judgment, shock or anger. Remain calm.

#### b. Explain

- Be sympathetic and reassure the child that it is right to speak with you
- Be honest with them about the actions you will take. Do not promise confidentiality.
- Try not to leave them in a distressed state

#### c. Follow up

- Make a written note of everything you have heard and observed as soon as possible. Include as many details of the conversation as you can, and your observations about how the child appeared. Do not speculate about what has happened; include only the facts.
- Report the incident as soon as possible:
  - i. In the case of an emergency, contact the emergency services, and then inform the CSO as soon as possible
  - ii. Where there is not an immediate concern, report it to an appropriate person as soon as possible: to the CSO, or to a member of the staff ministry team
  - iii. If you are unable to reach any of these people, or have concerns about approaching them e.g. because they themselves are implicated, you should contact the London Diocesan Safeguarding team directly which has a 24-hour line (although they ask that you do not call them outside business hours unless you have to).
- Avoid talking to other people about the incident unless you have to. Do, however, consider your own feelings, especially if you have heard something upsetting, and speak to one of the people above as needed.
- Liaise with the CSO/appropriate person to ensure that the child is kept informed about what is happening. But once you have reported the issue, limit any further discussion with the child unless they bring it up, and keep the CSO informed of further conversations.

30. Remember, safeguarding is *everyone's* responsibility. Here are some things you can do to help make St John's a safe place for children:

- Familiarise yourself with the safeguarding policy and procedures
- Undertake any [training](#) you are asked to do. As a minimum, we require children's workers to undertake the Church of England's online safeguarding training every three years. We also run regular face-to-face training sessions and ask that you attend these if possible.
- Ensure that your paperwork is in order. Anybody who works with children must have a valid DBS check and references. Check with the church office if you are unsure.
- Familiarise yourself with the risk associated with activities you are involved in. If you are planning an activity, think 'safety'. If you are helping and notice a problem, highlight it and take *personal responsibility* for making sure it gets fixed.
- If an incident occurs, big or small, report it right away via the procedure above (or via an incident report form for non-safeguarding issues).

## Annex A: Useful Contacts

<b>The Senior Minister:</b>	Tom Watts ( <a href="mailto:tom@sjdh.org">tom@sjdh.org</a> )
<b>The Sunday Club Co-ordinator:</b>	David Rue - Associate Minister for Families ( <a href="mailto:davidr@sjdh.org">davidr@sjdh.org</a> )
<b>Church Safeguarding Officer (CSO):</b>	Ruth McIlmoyle ( <a href="mailto:safeguarding@sjdh.org">safeguarding@sjdh.org</a> ; tel: 079 7637 5379)
<b>The Assistant Minister for Women</b>	Corinne Brixton ( <a href="mailto:Corinne@sjdh.org">Corinne@sjdh.org</a> )
<b>The Children's Champion (and SEN Champion):</b>	Belinda Rogers ( <a href="mailto:childrenschampion@sjdh.org">childrenschampion@sjdh.org</a> )
<b>The Church Administrator</b>	Kerry Jones ( <a href="mailto:Kerry@sjdh.org">Kerry@sjdh.org</a> )
<b>A member of the Trustee body:</b>	Gareth Burns ( <a href="mailto:trustees@sjdh.org">trustees@sjdh.org</a> ) David Choi ( <a href="mailto:trustees@sjdh.org">trustees@sjdh.org</a> ) Abi Naidu ( <a href="mailto:trustees@sjdh.org">trustees@sjdh.org</a> ) Christopher Onaka ( <a href="mailto:trustees@sjdh.org">trustees@sjdh.org</a> ) Mary Wenham ( <a href="mailto:trustees@sjdh.org">trustees@sjdh.org</a> )
<b>The Diocese of London Safeguarding Team</b>	<b>Safeguarding Helpline phone:</b> 020 7932 1224; <b>email:</b> <a href="mailto:safeguarding@london.anglican.org">safeguarding@london.anglican.org</a>
<b>Camden Social Services</b>	<b>website:</b> <a href="https://www.camden.gov.uk/safeguarding-children">https://www.camden.gov.uk/safeguarding-children</a> ; <b>phone:</b> 020 7974 3317 (out of hours: 020 7974 4444).
<b>NSPCC</b>	<b>website:</b> <a href="https://www.nspcc.org.uk/">https://www.nspcc.org.uk/</a> ; <b>helpline:</b> 0808 800 5000

### Other useful numbers:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Police (all non-emergency enquiries)                                | 101   |
| • CCPAS 24-hour helpline  | 0303 003 1111 (mention you're from the Diocese of London) |
| • Family Lives  | 0808 800 222  |
| • Childline   | 0800 1111   |
| • Action on Elder Abuse helpline                                      | 0808 808 8141   |
| • 24-hour National Domestic Violence helpline                         | 0808 2000 247 (for females)<br>01823 334244 (for males)   |
| • NAPAC offers support and advice for adult survivors of sexual abuse | 0808 8010331  |
| • MACAS for people who have been abused by church officers            | 0808 801 0340   |
| • Stop It Now! (Lucy Faithfull Foundation)                            | 0808 1000 900   |

**Remember:** if you think a child is in immediate danger you should call the police on 999

## **Annex B: Recruitment of Volunteers – a practical guide for what happens at St John’s**

Action needed:	Person responsible:
1. Draft <i>Job/Role Description</i> , incl a <i>person specification</i>	Associate Minister for Families (David Rue) – see model volunteer job role document`
2. Identify/recruit volunteer leaders & helpers, including:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- volunteer completes the <i>application form</i>, which must include names and contact details of two referees</li> <li>- volunteer completes <i>Confidential Declaration Form</i></li> <li>- interview the candidate(s) i.e. have a chat about the JD/what the role involves, time commitment, training etc</li> <li>- all volunteers should also receive/be directed to our <i>Safeguarding Policy</i></li> </ul>	<p>Associate Minister for Families (David Rue)</p> <p>Church Administrator to obtain references from referees</p> <p>Church Administrator checks and files form</p> <p>Associate Minister for Families interviews candidate(s) either one-to-one or with another person</p> <p>Church Safeguarding Officer (Ruth McIlmoyle) is responsible for reviewing &amp; updating the SJDH Safeguarding Policy annually</p>
3. Carry out DBS application process:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- volunteer completes <i>online Safeguarding Basic Awareness course</i> and provides evidence that this has been completed to church administrator</li> <li>- volunteer completes <i>online DBS application</i></li> <li>- volunteer provides <i>original ID documents</i> to evidence checker</li> <li>- evidence checker inputs ID info into online DBS system</li> </ul>	<p>Church Administrator (Kerry Jones) – sends volunteer the link to online training plus info re DBS application</p> <p>Lead recruiter &amp; evidence checker (Kerry Jones) (or second evidence checker - Ruth Westwood)</p>
4. Complete & Issue <i>Volunteer Agreement &amp; Code of Conduct</i>	Associate Minister for Families (David Rue) who passes signed docs to Church Administrator (Kerry Jones)
5. Ensure records (paper & online) are updated	Church Administrator (Kerry Jones)

Model forms & templates can be found here:

<https://www.london.anglican.org/support/safeguarding/safeguarding-policy/>

## **Annex C: Terms of Reference for the Children's & Youth Task Team (CYTT)**

The children's and youth work in St. John's is large in size and growing. The pattern of ministry in the New Testament is always a shared work – beginning with the Lord Jesus and the Apostles and multiplying out to the church as it grew. It is therefore right that we have a group to provide input and practical help to the staff team so that this Biblical principle is reflected in the reality of our work.

### **Criteria for members**

The criteria for a role on the children's and youth team are as follows:

- Love for God
- Love for His people
- Love for children and teenagers
- A desire to see the kingdom grow through age-appropriate ministry and Bible teaching
- A stake and/or involvement in the children's & youth work in St. John's Downshire Hill

Team members are selected by the chair of the task team and approved by the minister. The team will be headed by the children's and youth worker. The children's champion should be a member of the team. The task team will report to the minister of St. Johns, with copies of minutes also sent to the trustees.

### **Meetings**

The team would aim to meet at least once a term to discuss progress in the ministry and areas which require attention, and also to pray for the children, parents, and leaders involved in the work.

### **Areas of service**

Areas of service for the CYTT would include:

- Partnering with the children's and youth worker as a critical friend in setting a vision and direction for the ministry.
- Practical help in overseeing the ministry – specifically in the areas of recruiting leaders, setting up teams, and ensuring rotas are in place.
- Input on matters of safeguarding.
- Liaising with parents about clubs and events.
- Participating in the work of ministry by leading or helping at one or more of our clubs.
- Any other matters pertaining to the growth of the children's and youth work.

### **Current members:**

**David Rue – Chair (Associate Minister for Families)**

**Siobhan Burns**

**Fiona Kennedy**

**Christopher Onaka**

**Belinda Rogers**

**Kerry Jones**

**Eddie Rajguru**

## Annex D: Signs of abuse & neglect

### Abuse

Abuse involves potentially or actually causing harm to a child. It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- i. **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may also involve frequently frightening a child or making them feel in danger or persistent rejection or humiliation.
- ii. **Physical Abuse:** Causing physical harm to a child.
- iii. **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or potential involvement of a child in sexual activity or sexually inappropriate behaviour (including the production or use of pornographic material), whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes deliberately causing a child to look at such material or activity.
- iv. **Domestic abuse:** Domestic abuse is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse has an impact on children because: they are at an increased risk of physical injury (by accident or because they attempt to intervene); they are greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent; exposure to parental conflict can lead to serious anxiety and distress; children in violent households are more likely to be exposed to other forms of abuse.
- v. **Spiritual abuse:** Within faith communities harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice, including the misuse of leadership authority or discipline, oppressive teaching, obtrusive/healing and deliverance ministries (including abuse linked to belief in spiritual possession) or rituals, any of which may result in children experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm.
- vi. **Sunday club leaders should also be aware that other forms of abuse can occur:**
  - Stranger abuse
  - By electronic communication, including internet abuse, or texting
  - Bullying – including by electronic communication
  - Fabricated or induced illness
  - Abuse of disabled children
  - Deliberate self-harm
  - Allegations of possession by evil spirits
  - Child trafficking
  - Sexual exploitation
  - Forced marriage
  - Peer abuse

### Neglect

Neglect involves a persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs. This includes failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing or appropriate medical care. It also includes failure to take reasonable steps to protect a child from potential or actual harm.

Abuse may be spontaneous or organised. Organised abuse involves one or more abusers and a number of abused children. Most cases of abuse or neglect involve those already known to the child rather than complete strangers. Abuse may be inflicted by other children, and children with special needs are especially vulnerable to abuse

Abuse and neglect of children can be difficult to spot. However, any of the following observations may be a sign of abuse or neglect (although, in many cases, there may well be another explanation). In general, **changes** in a child's behaviour or mood, either suddenly or over a period of time, may be significant. Such changes may be particularly important where a child becomes more **withdrawn** or more **aggressive**.

Examples of such changes are listed below.

- **Mood**
  - Anxiety or depression
  - 'Frozen watchfulness'
  - Loss of ability to learn or concentrate
  - Obsessions, phobias or fears
  - Loss of self-esteem
- **Behaviour towards others**
  - Excessive attention seeking
  - Truancy, running away or withdrawal
  - Aggression
  - Stealing or Lying
  - 'Clinginess'
- **Lifestyle**
  - Loss of appetite
  - Eating disorders
  - Severe sleep disturbances and persistent tiredness
- **Indicators of Physical Abuse**
  - Reluctance to reveal parts of the body (e.g. remove a jumper when hot)
  - Repeated urinary infections or tummy pains
  - Marks of injury, especially injuries which:
    - have not received medical attention
    - are not consistent with the explanation provided.
    - occur to the body in places not usually exposed to falls and other accidents.

## Guide to Injuries

- **Bruises**, especially:
  - those in or around the mouth
  - those of different colours (indicates injuries of different ages)
  - those from fingertips, especially on arms, chest or face indicating tight gripping or shaking
  - those from belt, implement, hand
  - those around ear lobes (also signs of tears)
  - those to head or soft tissue areas of the body
- **Bite-marks**
- **Burns and scalds**, especially:
  - those with a clear outline – in particular circular (e.g. cigarette burn) or linear (e.g. from hot metal rod)
  - those of a uniform depth over a large area
  - those caused by friction (e.g. from being pulled across a carpet)
  - those surrounded by a clear water line (e.g. from immersion or pouring of hot water)
  - those surrounded by splash marks (e.g. where hot liquid has been thrown)
  - those that have caused scars (indicating previous burns)

- **Fractures**, especially:
  - Any fracture on a child under one year
  - Any skull fracture on a child under four years
- **Cuts, scratches**

#### **Indicators of Sexual Abuse**

- Level of sexual knowledge inappropriate to the child's age
- Indication of sexual activity through words, stories, drawing, games or behaviour
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour towards adults or other children, especially where surprising given the age of the child
- Pre-occupation with sexual matters and requests for sexual advice
- Allusions to unusual practices (e.g. unusual bed-sharing arrangements at home)

#### **Indicators of Neglect**

- Under-nourishment
- Failure to grow
- Constant hunger
- Stealing food
- Untreated illness