



# **Child Protection Policy & Handbook**

January 2024

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### January 2024

<b>Current Children’s Worker:</b>	Esther Visser	(078 063 9239)
<b>Current Youth Worker:</b>	Joshua Visser	(067 709 9447)
<b>Current Child Protection Officer:</b>	Esther Visser	(078 063 9239)
<b>Current Rector:</b>	Shawn Hunter	(072 677 8707)

# **SECTION 1 – CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

## **1.1 Background and Introduction**

In formulating both this document and the Child Protection Handbook, the following documents have been taken into account:

The South African Constitution (Chapter 2, Section 28)  
Children’s Act (No. 38 of 2005) / Amendment Act (of 2007)  
REACH SA Child Protection policy 2014  
Christ Church Midrand Child Protection Policy 2016  
Co-Missions Churches Safeguarding Policy 2015/16  
King of Kings Baptist Church Child Protection Policy 2010  
Connections Church Child Protection Policy 2015  
The London Child Protection Procedures 4<sup>th</sup> Edition 2014

## **1.2 Why we need this Policy**

We believe that God has given us His mandate to protect the children within our care and this policy is the starting point of safeguarding children on the following levels:

1. To prevent abuse of children within the structures of Christ Church George.
2. To provide clear boundaries of behavior expected from all leaders thereby protecting them and the children in our care and the Church.
3. To manage the reporting of any complaints George.
4. To manage the reporting of suspected abuse of children by parties not affiliated to Christ Church George.

### 1.3 Definitions

**Child:** According to the Children’s Act, any person under 18, unless married or emancipated by Order of Court, is a child.

**Adult:** Any person over the age of 18 years.

**Abuse:** Any act or omission that results in a child being hurt, injured, or that interferes in the normal emotional, physical or intellectual functioning or development of a child. There are four types of abuse listed below and elaborated on in more detail in appendix 2 :

Physical abuse

Emotional abuse

Sexual abuse

Negligence

**Safe Guarding:** Activity of keeping from harm or injury.

**Leaders:** Volunteers serving in any of our ministries with children. There will be varying levels of responsibility eg. Assistant leaders, junior leaders and main Children’s Church leaders.

### 1.4 Legal Environment

The South Africa law pertaining to children is implemented and maintained through two legal vehicles: The Constitution (Chapter 2, Section 28) and the Children’s Act (No. 38 of 2005) and Amendment Act (of 2007).

The South African Constitution provides the following special rights to children:

- To be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation;
- To be protected from exploitative labor practices; and
- Not to be required or permitted to perform work or provide services that are inappropriate for a person of that child’s age or place at risk the child’s well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development.

The South African Children’s Act includes the following articles which relate to the protection and rights of children: Children’s Act 38 of 2005 123, 124, 126 and Children’s Amendment Act of 2007 110 (**See Appendix 1 for full text of articles**).

## SECTION 2 – POLICY STATEMENT CHRIST CHURCH GEORGE – JANUARY 2024

This document has been formulated with the end in mind of protecting both the children in our programmes and the volunteers who work with them.

Since we are commanded by God to submit to the authorities that he has set over us (1 Peter 2:13), it shall be the goal of Christ Church George to uphold the objects of the South African constitution with regards to child protection. The Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005 – Articles 123,124 and 126, Amendment Act, 2007 – Article 110) details the following with regard to rights and care of children:

- Protection from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.
- Best interest of a child is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.
- No person whose name appears in Part B of the National Child Protection Register may participate or assist in providing welfare services to children, including church ministries.
- Where possible (due to slow processing), before a person is allowed to work with or have access to children at Christ Church George it must be established whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the National Protection Register.
- Any worker and volunteer worker at Christ Church George who, on reasonable grounds, concludes that a child has been treated in a manner causing physical injury, sexual abuse/harm or deliberate neglect, must report that conclusion to our designated Child Protection Officer, \_\_\_\_\_, or our rector Shawn Hunter (072 677 8707) who will escalate it to the necessary Authorities.
- Emergency numbers:

Childline:	080 005 5555
Social Services:	011 355 7687
George SAPS:	044 803 4744

Children are entitled to be safe and protected. They have the right to be respected, listened to and their particular needs addressed in all Church activities. Ministry where children are involved requires absolute trustworthiness. This is our policy document. It is supplemented by our handbook, to help our leaders implement the policy of this document in varied contexts. Both documents are supplemented by in house Child Protection Training. Christ Church George, in the interest of the safety of our children and of Christ's name in our community, will always err on the side of caution. We seek your co-operation with this. All our actions are required to be beyond reproach in all

matters, particularly in matters relating to the safety of our children. Our aim is to create a safe environment in every case for children in our care. Our aim is to combine good leadership with a safe environment and safe practices. The more our leaders are equipped in this area, the closer we will be to achieving a safe ministry.

Before commencing ministry, every volunteer must:

1. Attendance at Christ Church George for at least 6 months.
2. Read this policy and handbook.
3. Fill out application form.
4. As soon as is practical, attend Safe Ministry Training
5. Clearances by 'The Guardian'.

## **2.1 Monitoring the Policy**

It is the responsibility of the Child Protection Officer to implement a monitoring procedure and when necessary, update this policy.

It is further the responsibility of the Child Protection Officer to review the policy on an annual basis to ensure relevance to the Children's Ministry.

## **SECTION 3 – CHILD PROTECTION HANDBOOK**

The following handbook provides the practical outworking and guidelines from our child protection policy. It will expand on the following four areas, as stated as our purposes in the policy.

1. To prevent abuse of children within the structures of Christ Church George.
2. To provide clear boundaries of behavior expected from all leaders thereby protecting them and the children in our care and the Church.
3. To manage the reporting of any complaints received regarding abuse of children in the course of ministry undertaken by Christ Church George.
4. To manage the reporting of suspected abuse of children by parties not affiliated to Christ Church George.

### **3.1 Prevention process at Christ Church George**

The objective of screening all leaders with any contact with children is to put reasonable restrictions at the point of access to our children. We will do everything in our power to protect children in our care. The screening process will also provide protection for leaders. Please co-operate fully and honestly for your own sake and for the sake of those who will be in your care.

**The screening process is as follows:**

1. Fill out application form
2. Reference checks
3. As soon as is practical, attend Safe Ministry Training
4. Clearances by 'The Guardian'

All screening will be completed in confidence with a Child Protection Officer. Temporary Holiday Club volunteers undergo a reduced screening, dependent on role at club.

### **3.2 Guidelines for conduct and behaviour of leaders**

#### ***3.2.1 General guidelines applicable to all leaders***

This section applies to everyone and needs to be read and digested by all.

- Two leaders, one of whom must be over 18, should always be present during a particular ministry that involves children.
- If for any reason a leader is alone with a child, they should ensure that there is a second adult nearby or other leaders and groups nearby. Leaders will leave doors open when seeing a child individually.

- No person under the age of 18 shall be left in sole charge of any children of any age.
- Children will not be left alone at any time.
- A record or register of children and adults attending ministries needs to be kept and stored securely for at least a year.
- All after hour's interaction must be restricted to Christ Church George's premises, or other suitable facilities, unless parents/guardians are present or have provided written consent.
- Leaders should never do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves (please see toileting details – 3.5.3).
- Leaders should ensure that a sense of accountability exists between them, so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged.
- Children must be transported according to the South African law, i.e. they must be strapped in properly, preferably in the back seat. Drivers must have legal licenses and keep to the speed limits. When transporting a number of children, suitable vehicles must be used and drivers with the required passenger transportation licenses must be used. Parents need to give written consent in order for leaders to transport their children.

### **3.2.2 Guidelines on touch**

- Whilst we encourage a warm and caring approach to children, leaders must be wise and careful in their physical behaviour toward children in their care. This must be guided by age, hugging and holding a baby on a lap may be essential in crèche, but may not be appropriate in Children's Church ages onwards.
- Keep everything public – a hug in a group context is very different to a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch must be related to the child's need not the leader's.
- Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.

### **3.2.3 Photography**

- Parents need to give written permission for their children's photographs to be taken.
- No photography of individuals by leaders of children. Children must always be in a group context.
- Where Christ Church George asks a photographer to be present at events or for promotional material where children are present, all photographs of children should be sent to be stored by Christ Church George.



### **3.2.4 Parents in Kids Ministry**

- Unless a parent is an assistant, we do not encourage parents to stay during any Children's Ministry slot.
- If a parent is needed to help settle their child, it will be the responsibility of the leader to make sure that the other children are not left alone with that parent. Ask a parent how to help settle the child to make the transition easier.
- A leader should encourage the parent to not stay longer than absolutely necessary. About 5-10 minutes. This time should also preferably be during the group time of the Children's Ministry.

## **3.3 First Aid and Emergency procedures**

**First Aid:** Gloves and emergency kits are stocked and are available in the cupboard above the urn in the kitchen. Please familiarize yourselves with the location of the medical kits, as well as their content. There is also an ice pack available in the freezer.

**Emergencies:** If there is an emergency requiring assistance, secure the area and immediately call the George Municipality Emergency number: 044 801 6300. It is wise to save this number on your phone for easy access. Once the call has been made, alert one of the staff or leaders of the ministry. First Aid training will be provided to the staff of Christ Church George and other leaders who volunteer to handle minor injuries. A trained person in First Aid should be present at a ministry involving children at all times.

**Medication:** No person is allowed to provide medication to a child, unless the parent has given written consent. This excludes covering wounds or life-threatening emergencies, such as helping an asthmatic, diabetic or a child suffering from anaphylactic shock with his/her own medication.

**HIV:** HIV is a reality in South Africa. All wounds should be treated as if the wounded or helper are infected with HIV, i.e. no wounds should be touched unless gloves are worn and ALL wounds must be covered immediately.

- The cleaning and washing of wounds should always be done with running water and not in containers of water. Where running tap water is not available, containers should be used to pour water over the area to be cleansed.
- Blood that splashes on the face (mucous membranes of eyes, nose or mouth) should be flushed with running water for at least three minutes.
- Skin exposed accidentally to blood should be cleaned promptly with water and disinfectant.
- If blood has contaminated a surface, that surface should be cleaned with fresh, clean bleach solution and the person responsible for this should wear latex gloves. Other body fluids and excretions that could be stained or contaminated with blood (for instance tears, saliva, mucus, phlegm, urine, vomit, faeces and pus) should be cleaned up in similar fashion.

- Children should be instructed to never touch blood or open wounds. They should be taught to call for the assistance of an adult.

In the event of possible contact with HIV infected blood, the person should be referred to the local clinic, GP or local Hospital to receive appropriate treatment.

### **3.4 Fire Emergency:**

- Familiarize yourself with all the exit signs. Familiarise yourself with the exit route from the building your particular group is meeting in.
- In the case of a fire, raise the alarm (shout, inform as many leaders as possible – there is no actual alarm in the classrooms or church building) as quickly as possible and follow the exit signs in the church and centre to a safe exit, making sure that you do not leave any of the children in your care behind. Gather in the parking lot of the church. Leaders are responsible for checking that everyone from their small group is on the parking lot. Take your register with you if it is safe and possible to do so.
- The Fire Emergency Number for George is: 044 801 6311.
- There are fire extinguishers in strategic places throughout the premises. Please familiarise yourself with their locations.
- Your primary responsibility is to get the children in your care to safety.

### **3.5 Extra guidelines for conduct and behaviour**

#### ***3.5.1 Leaders under 18***

- Christ Church George is keen to support young people (assistant leaders: Grade 8-12) to learn about ministry through involvement with children's work in the church. They will not be placed in a role that will require a protection register or police check. They will, however, be asked to fill out the application form. Assistant leaders will be supported at all times in their roles by adult leaders.

#### ***3.5.2 Guidelines on communication for youth leaders***

The context for all communication with members is that parents are responsible for their children rather than the youth leaders. At least 2 weeks' notice will be given before an outing or event, especially when it is off site. Where a leader meets up one to one, or in a smaller group, parental consent will also be requested. In the event of any pastoral concerns a leader may have about an individual member, a leader will always take the issue to the ministry leader first. All communication in this policy is assumed to be between leaders and members only (Please see Appendix 4 for more information on communication with our teenagers).

With regards to children up until the age of 13, communication will only be to the parents. The leaders may in no circumstance communicate to the children via what's app, social media or e-mail. Appendix 4 gives details with teenagers between the age of 13/14-18.

### **3.5.3 Managing toileting for pre-school ministries.**

We do not provide nappy changes for children in our care.

**Crèche:** If a child requires a nappy change in crèche, leaders are to contact the parent via text message on the number provided on the register, or by finding them in the congregation to come and provide the necessary care.

#### **Children under 3:**

- The approach to managing toileting in children under 3 years will be consistent with that of crèche.
- Leaders will not provide intimate care to these children.
- Children who are not fully toilet trained should therefore attend ministries with a nappy / pull up.
- If a toilet trained child needs to go, the parent will be contacted (via text message) or located within church to come and provide the necessary care.

#### **Children over 3:**

- Any help with toileting these children should be provided with the knowledge and agreement of the child's parents/ carers.
- Children must be given as much privacy as possible.
- Children should be encouraged to go into the toilet cubicle alone.
- Leaders should avoid doing things for the child that they can do themselves.

### **3.5.4 Behaviour management in Children's Ministry.**

#### **General principles:**

- Discipline is a team issue.
- Each member of the team has a part to play.
- Agree roles and responsibilities.
- Be consistent, loving and predictable (the same behaviour produces the same consequences).
- When disciplining a child over poor behaviour, do not do so in a way that humiliates and do not do so one to one behind closed doors.
- Never use physical discipline.
- Discipline is a planning issue.
- Be aware that a poor lesson can result in poor behaviour, because the children are bored and frustrated. It does not follow that poor behaviour is always caused by a poor lesson.
- We work in a context of continual conversation with parents. We want to be speaking to parents about their children, irrespective of their child's behaviour. This acknowledges that

we only teach because they have commissioned us to teach their children the Bible for an hour a week.

- Poor discipline prevents others from hearing God speak. That should be motivation enough to act.
- Seek to encourage with positive affirmation both the whole class and individuals, publicly and privately, whenever possible.
- Offer the child a way out by them changing their behaviour.
- Model forgiveness.
- Bullying will not be tolerated in any form.

### ***3.5.5 Specific Group Management for small groups***

(Copyright: MBM/ Sandy Galea)

#### ***Leaders lead***

- Leaders are not there primarily to be liked by the children nor to be their friend. Leaders lead!
- Leaders need to be firm and clear in their expectations.
- Leaders should not physically discipline any child (no corporal punishment).
- Establish one rule: respect (respect leaders, respect other children, respect property...).
- Leaders must not show favouritism.

#### ***Managing children under five***

- Keep your instructions and expectations clear and simple (don't grab toys off of others. These toys are for everyone to share).
- Redirect their attention when upset or frustrated (e.g. leader reads a book, give them another toy, completes a puzzle with them, plays playdough with them...).
- Preschool age group: warn once, if behaviour persists act:
  1. Remove the equipment from the child
  2. Remove the child from the activity (e.g. take the child to an area of the room not being used and tell them to remain there no more than three or four minutes)
  3. Remove the privilege of a future activity (sit out of next game, miss out on craft...)
  4. If tantrums occur, move furniture/equipment away from the child so they don't hurt themselves and move other children away from the child. Don't talk to the child, simply keep an eye on them (for safety reasons) but ignore their behaviour until the tantrum subsides.

#### ***Managing School Age Children***

- Never send a child back to their parents, rather contact the main leader. The main leader of that ministry is the only one who is to call parents to come and collect children.
- Keep your instructions/expectations clear and simple (don't push in line or you'll miss out).
- Warn once, if behaviour persists, act:
  1. Remove the equipment from the child (e.g. confiscate toy...)

2. Remove the child from the activity (e.g. sit out of activity for 5 minutes...)
3. Remove the privilege of a future activity from the child (e.g. sit out of next game, miss out on craft...)
4. Send to sit in another room under supervision of another leader (i.e. Gr. R boy supervised to next room to sit near Gr. 2-3 leader, remain near that leader for five minutes, back to group, apologise and re-join group).
5. If behaviour persists, call Children's Worker, Esther Visser, to deal with child.
6. Give appropriate consequence for varying degrees of misbehaviour (i.e. appropriate action must be taken):
  - Minor behaviour = minor consequence (Behaviour: whispering to child beside them. Action: leader stops and looks at child, when behaviour stops, continue with lesson).
  - Medium behaviour = medium consequence (Behaviour: constantly calling out or disrupting activity. Action: told to sit to one side, if persists, told to sit at back of group, if persists, supervised to different group for five minutes, asked to apologise before coming back into group).
  - Major behaviour = major consequence (Behaviour: violently attack another child or adult. Action: removed from group immediately, Children's Worker sent for, parents called, child sent home or excluded from program for one session).

### ***3.5.6 Recognising and responding appropriately to abuse***

#### **Definitions of child abuse:**

Defining child abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Often the abuser is known to, or in a trusted relationship with the child. Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect.

**Please see appendix 2 for full definitions of each kind of abuse.**

**Recognising abuse.** The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered. Frequency of observation is a key indicator.

#### ***Physical signs of abuse***

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse.

### ***Indicators of possible sexual abuse***

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play (in the S.A. context, we must have awareness of those who will have far greater sexual knowledge from needing to share bedroom space with adults).
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia.

### ***Emotional signs of abuse***

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy. Also, depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

### ***3.5.7 Table showing Age appropriate behavioural signals of abuse***

Ages	Behavioural Signs
Ages 3 and below	Crying Clinging Change in sleeping and eating habits Regressive behaviour
Ages 3 to 5 years	Separation fears Clinging Tantrums or irritability Sleep disturbance Regressive behaviours Withdrawal Increased fear

Ages 6 to 11 years	Regressive behaviours Externalising behaviours Denial, avoidance, social isolation, withdrawal Difficulty concentrating, focusing Fear, depression, anxiety Physical complaints Self-blame, guilt School refusal
Adolescent (12 to 17 years)	Responses similar to adults Depressive features Sleep and appetite change Fear, withdrawal Physical complaints Moodiness, irritability Anger, resentment School refusal, decreasing performance Concentration difficulties Anxiety, dissociation PTSD Substance abuse

### ***3.5.8 Responding to a child who wants to disclose abuse to you.***

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may help:

#### ***General Points***

- Listen, listen, listen.
- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound).
- Keep calm.
- Look at the child directly.
- Be honest.
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality.
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse.
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell.
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

### ***Helpful things you may say or show***

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says).
- Thank you for telling me.
- It's not your fault.
- I will help you.

### ***Don't say/do***

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Don't interrogate the child.
- Never make false promises.
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else".

### ***Concluding***

- Again, reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance.
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Contact the Child Protection Officer for advice.
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.

### ***3.5.9 Procedure for reporting a disclosure of abuse.***

No church worker/ leader may carry out their own investigation into any allegation or suspicion of abuse.

1. Ideally within one hour of the disclosure, make notes. Write down exactly what the person said and when they said it, what they said in reply and what was happening just beforehand (e.g. A description of the activity). Dates and times of these events and when the notes were made must also be recorded. All handwritten notes must be retained, even if subsequently typed.
2. Report all concerns as soon as possible to the Child Protection Officer. If unavailable, or the allegation relates to the officer him/herself, report to the rector. Do not discuss any aspect of the disclosure with anyone other than those named above.
3. The church council will support the Child Protection Officer and the Rector in their role, and accept the need for confidentiality, and that sharing of information will strictly be on a need to know basis.
4. The accused must be suspended from all ministry with children for the duration of investigations.



5. If the allegation involves a crime as described by South African law, the Child Protection Officer will report immediately in one of the following ways:

Child abuse must be reported to a social worker, at a child welfare office or at a police station. To report child abuse to Metro Police, you can call their hotline on 0800 323 1310. Please be sure to contact your nearest South African Police Service (SAPS) station as well.

You can also seek help at the following organisations:

Childline South Africa (24-hour toll-free helpline)

Telephone:

0800 055 555

Childline Western Cape

Telephone:

021 762 8198 / 021 461 1114

6. If the abuse is physical and needs attention, the Child Protection Officer will seek medical attention.
7. The church will respect the courts finding in the matter. Anyone found guilty will be permanently disallowed from serving within a ministry involving children. Anyone found innocent shall serve in an alternative ministry for six months, and then, after prayerful consideration, may approach leadership to return to children's ministry.
8. If the allegation does not involve a crime, the Child Protection officer and the Rector will separately interview the parties. They will decide whether the Child Protection Policy has been breached, whether the behaviour is unacceptable or whether the allegation is unfounded. They will decide, with church leadership on the appropriate course of discipline.
9. The Child Protection Officer must furnish details of the accused to the Child Protection Register of South Africa.
10. All communication regarding disclosures of abuse must be recorded and kept on file. It is paramount that the details are kept, even if the accusations are found to be false.
11. In the extreme case that the Child Protection Officer is personally involved in a child abuse accusation, the Rector will liaise with the Children's Worker in managing the reporting process.

### ***3.5.10 Supporting those affected by abuse***

The Christ Church George leadership is committed to offering pastoral care and support to all those who have been affected by abuse.

### ***3.5.11 Managing those who pose a risk***

- Due to the addictive and persistent nature of abusive behaviour, the Leadership recognises that those attending the church who are known to pose a risk, (having committed, or been

accused of sexual or other crimes against children, young people or vulnerable adults), will need robust measures put in place to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded.

- The Rector and the Child Protection Officer will be responsible for establishing a Covenant of Care Group for any individual concerned. Such a group will consist of the individual, the rector of the congregation, 2-3 senior elders and will be run in conjunction with any authorities that the individual is known to.
- The work of the group will include producing a written contract setting out boundaries for the movements and behaviour of the individual within the context of the church. The individual will be expected to sign and abide by this contract. Any such contract will be reviewed at least every six months.
- If the individual fails to abide by the boundaries set out within this contract, the Child Protection Officer will contact the Police for advice.

## CONCLUSIONS

Christ Church George, in the interest of the safety of our children and of Christ's name in our community, will always err on the side of caution. We seek your co-operation with this. All our actions are required to be beyond reproach in all matters, particularly in matters relating to the safety of our children.

Our aim is to create a safe environment in every case for children in our care. Our aim is to combine good leadership with a safe environment and safe practices. The more our leaders are equipped in this area, the closer we will be to achieving a safe ministry.

Lastly, if you have any thoughts or concerns about this document please feel free to contact the Children's Worker or the Child Protection Officer.

Similarly, if you are worried that your conduct has contravened, or could be construed to have contravened these guidelines, always err on the side of overcommunicating with your Children's Worker. While Christ Church George may be compelled to take action it is better to be honest and forthcoming. Remember that we have a merciful saviour: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.' (1 John. 1:9). May this all be to the glory our faithful, just and forgiving Lord Jesus!

## **APPENDIX**

### **Appendix 1 – Children’s Act Articles**

#### **Children’s Act 38 of 2005, Articles 123, 124, 126**

123. Consequences of entry of name in Part B of Register.—(1) No person whose name appears in Part B of the Register may— (a) manage or operate, or participate or assist in managing or operating, an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre, a cluster foster care scheme, a school, club or association providing services to children; (b) work with or have access to children at an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre, a school, club or association providing services to children, or in implementing a cluster foster care scheme, either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity; (c) be permitted to become the foster parent or adoptive parent of a child; (d) work in any unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection; (e) be employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where that person works with or has access to children; (f) be employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where that person works with or has access to children; or (g) work in any other form of employment or activity as may be prescribed. (2) No person managing or operating or who participates or assists in managing or operating an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre or a school may allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to work with or have access to children at the centre, facility, shelter or school, either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity. (3) No designated child protection organisation may allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to work with or have access to children on its behalf, either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity. (4) The South African Police Service may not allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to work in a unit of the Service tasked with child protection. (5) The head of a state department may not allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to be employed in a position where that person works with or has access to children. (6) The municipal council of a municipality may not allow a person whose name appears in Part B of the Register to be employed in a position where that person works with or has access to children.

124. Disclosure of entry of name in Part B of Register.—(1) If the name of a person is entered in Part B of the Register and that person— (a) works with or has access to children at an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre or a school either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity, that person must disclose that fact to the person who manages or operates the institution, centre, facility, shelter or school; (b) works with or has access to children on behalf of a designated child protection organisation either as an employee, volunteer or in any other capacity, that person must disclose that fact to the organisation; (c) works in a unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection, that person must disclose that fact to the South African Police Service; (d) is employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, that person must disclose that fact to the head of the state department in which he or she is employed; or (e) is employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, that person must disclose that fact to the municipal council of the municipality concerned. (2) A person contemplated in subsection (1) who fails to disclose the fact that his or her name is entered in Part B of the Register is guilty of misconduct and his or her services may be terminated as a result thereof.

126. Establishment of information in Part B of Register.—(1) Before a person is allowed— (a) to work with or have access to children at an institution providing welfare services to children, including a child and youth care centre, a partial care facility, a shelter or drop-in centre or school, the person managing or operating the institution, centre, facility, shelter or school must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; (b) to work with or have access to children on behalf of a designated child protection organisation, the organisation must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; (c) to work in a unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection, the Service must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; (d) to be employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, the head of the state department in which he or she is to be employed must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register; or (e) to be employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children, the municipal council of that municipality must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the Register. (2) Within 12 months of the commencement of this chapter— (a) the person managing or operating an institution, centre, facility, shelter or school contemplated in subsection (1) (a) must establish whether the name of any

person who works with or has access to children at the institution, centre, facility, shelter or school appears in Part B of the Register; (b) a designated child protection organisation contemplated in subsection (1) (b) must establish whether the name of any person who works with or has access to children on behalf of the organisation appears in Part B of the Register; (c) the South African Police Service must establish whether the name of any person who works in a unit of the South African Police Service tasked with child protection appears in Part B of the Register; (d) the head of every state department must establish whether the name of any person employed in terms of the Public Service Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children appears in Part B of the Register; and (e) the municipal council of every municipality must establish whether the name of any person employed in terms of the Municipal Systems Act in a position where he or she works with or has access to children appears in Part B of the Register. (3) Anyone has the right, upon presentation of sufficient proof of his or her identity, to establish whether or not his or her name appears in Part B of the Register, and if so, the reasons why his or her name was entered in the Register. (4) Inquiries in terms of subsection (1), (2) or (3) must be directed in writing to the Director-General on a confidential basis. (5) In the event of an inquiry made to the Director-General in terms of— (a) subsection (1), the Director-General must respond in writing within 21 working days by indicating whether the person's name appears in Part B of the Register or not; (b) subsection (2), the Director-General must respond in writing within six months by indicating whether the person's name appears in Part B of the Register or not; and (c) subsection (3), the Director-General must respond in writing within 21 working days by indicating whether the person's name appears in Part B of the Register, and if so, the reasons why his or her name was entered in the Register

Children's Amendment Act of 2007, Articles 110

### **Reporting of abused or neglected child and children in need of care and protection:**

110. (1) Any correctional official, dentist, homeopath, immigration official, labour inspector, legal practitioner, medical practitioner, midwife, minister of religion, nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, psychologist, religious leader, social service professional, social worker, speech therapist, teacher, traditional health practitioner, traditional leader or member of staff or volunteer worker at a partial care facility, drop-in centre or child and youth care centre who on reasonable grounds concludes that a child has been abused in a manner causing physical injury, sexually abused or deliberately neglected, must report that conclusion in the prescribed form to a designated child protection organisation, the provincial department of social development or a police official.

(2) Any person who on reasonable grounds believes that a child is in need of care and protection may report that belief to the provincial department of social development, a designated child protection organisation or a police official.

(3) A person referred to in subsection (1) or (2)—

must substantiate that conclusion or belief to the provincial department of social development, a designated child protection organisation or police official; and

who makes a report in good faith is not liable to civil action on the basis of the report.

(4) A police official to whom a report has been made in terms of subsection (1) or (2) or who becomes aware of a child in need of care and protection must—

ensure the safety and well-being of the child concerned if the child's safety or well-being is at risk; and

within 24 hours notify the provincial department of social development or a designated child protection organisation of the report and any steps that have been taken with regard to

(5) The provincial department of social development or designated child protection organisation to whom a report has been made in terms of subsection (1), (2) or (4), must—

ensure the safety and well-being of the child concerned, if the child's safety or well-being is at risk;

make an initial assessment of the report;

unless the report is frivolous or obviously unfounded, investigate the truthfulness of the report or cause it to be investigated;

if the report is substantiated by such investigation, without delay initiate proceedings in terms of this Act for the protection of the child;

and

(e) submit such particulars as may be prescribed to the Director-General for inclusion in Part A of the National Child Protection Register.

(6) (a) A designated child protection organisation to whom a report has been made in terms of subsection (1), (2) or (4) must report the matter to the 15 relevant provincial department of social development.

(b) The provincial head of social development must monitor the progress of all matters reported to it in terms of paragraph (a).

(7) The provincial department of social development or designated child protection organisation which has conducted an investigation as contemplated in subsection (5) may—  
take measures to assist the child, including counselling, mediation, prevention and early intervention services, family reconstruction and rehabilitation, behaviour modification, problem solving and referral to another suitably qualified person or organisation; 25

if he or she is satisfied that it is in the best interest of the child not to be removed from his or her home or place where he or she resides, but that the removal of the alleged offender from such home or place would secure the safety and well-being of the child, request a police official in the prescribed manner to take the steps referred to in section 30,153; or

deal with the child in the manner contemplated in sections 151, 152 or 155.

(8) The provincial department of social development or designated child protection organisation which has conducted an investigation as contemplated in subsection (5) must report the possible commission of an offence to a police official.”;

(b) by the substitution for subsection (3) of section 134 of the following subsection:

“(3) A child who obtains condoms, contraceptives or contraceptive 40 advice in terms of this Act is entitled to confidentiality in this respect, subject to section [105] 110,”; and

(c) by the insertion after section 134 of the following Part:



## **Appendix 2 – Definition in child abuse**

### **Definitions of child abuse and neglect relating to young People (The London Child Protection Procedures 4<sup>th</sup> Edition 2014)**

#### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

#### **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person;
- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic violence and abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger;
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

In addition; Sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 (and has more than a 2 year gap) is classified as rape (Part 4 Sexual offenders Act, 2009).

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse, maternal mental ill health or learning difficulties or a cluster of such issues. Where there is domestic abuse and violence towards a carer, the needs of the child may be neglected.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional, social and educational needs.

Included in the four categories of child abuse and neglect above, are a number of factors relating to the behaviour of the parents and carers which have significant impact on children:

***Domestic violence.*** Children can be affected by seeing, hearing and living with domestic violence and abuse as well as being caught up in any incidents directly, whether to protect someone or as a target.

**Controlling behaviour** in the adults in the family: This is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

**Coercive behaviour:** Is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

## **Appendix 3 – Communication with teens**

### ***How to Disciple Safely***

In the context of Teen Ministry at Christ Church George

*You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous, and blameless we were among you who believed. For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting, and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.*

*1 Thessalonians 2:10-12*

*This document does not replace the ‘Christ Church George Child Protection Policy’ in any part. It applies only in the specific context outlined and should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy and Handbook.*

### **Introduction**

This document, ‘How to Disciple Safely’ is a guide written for the specific context of Teen Ministry at Christ Church George. It comes from a **gospel conviction** that all Christians, and those in Christian leadership especially, enjoy the responsibility of sharing the news of Jesus with others in a way that is holy, righteous and blameless – worthy of the God we proclaim.

This guide is NOT written to discourage discipling or create a culture of fear. Rather, it is written to recognise the threat that sin, which resides in leaders and teens alike, poses to the reputation of the Gospel that we proclaim. This guide should in fact encourage leaders to meet and disciple teens in a way that is safe and beyond reproach, so that leaders can get down to the work of sharing Jesus!

### **Who may disciple?**

In short: Youth Leaders and rector.

All Christians are called to imitate Christ in discipling others, and *all* church members and Youth Leaders are encouraged to disciple the teens of the church informally.

However, because of the vulnerability of teens as young people as well as their legal status as minors, Christ Church George has deemed it wise to restrict formal discipleship (viz. meeting a teen in the context of Youth ministry at Christ Church George, as a Youth Leader) to Youth Leaders ONLY.

If you are uncertain at all about whether you are considered a Youth Leader please speak with the Youth Worker.

### **Communicating Safely**

In all communication, leaders are encouraged to be above reproach and exercise wisdom to protect both themselves and the members from accusation or incrimination of any kind.

The context for all communication with members is that parents are responsible for their teens rather than the youth leaders.

Leaders are reminded to bring any concerns or issues directly to the Youth Worker.

**General Guidelines:**

- All online communications are to be limited to the same gender. In other words, girls should only be contacted by female leaders and boys should only be contacted by male leaders on a one to one basis. In a group basis, male can contact female and other way around.
- Communication should take place primarily on text-based communication, preferably WhatsApp. Exceptions may be made for teens who do not use WhatsApp in which case an equivalent may be used e.g. Facebook Messenger/Telegram/SMS.
- Leaders may not delete these messages but are encouraged to archive them or keep them stored in a similar way.
- Leaders may not communicate using ‘disappearing message’ platforms. E.g. Snapchat
- To prevent relationships being misunderstood by a member or an outsider; leaders should not engage in excessive texts, e-mails or Facebook messages to one individual.
- Leaders should not communicate with teens after 9pm in general. Exceptions may be made when communicating logistics during an evening event.
- In circumstances where leaders are texted or contacted by members after 9pm, the leader will not reply until the following morning except in cases of emergency.

	Youth (13-18)
Text-based Messaging (Platforms like WhatsApp, SMS, Facebook Messenger, email and similar)	<p>Same gender only. Ideally WhatsApp, but other equivalent platforms may be used where a teenager does not use WhatsApp. Leaders may not delete messages or conversations but are encouraged to archive their chat. Leader should avoid excessive and intimate messaging and must alert the ministry leader if a teenager is attempting to initiate this level of messaging. Leaders should not message teenagers later than 9pm except to communicate logistical details. Leaders may NEVER contact a teenager under an anonymous online identity. Not used for serious and/or pastoral conversations.</p>
Phone Calls (Mobile or Landline)	<p>To be avoided except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To communicate urgent logistical details</li> <li>• In the event of a serious AND urgent pastoral situation. In this instance the leader needs to contact the ministry leader to explain why the call was necessary and must take a record of the call and the matter discussed.</li> </ul>
Social Media (Instagram/Facebook/Twitter/ TikTok)	<p>Leaders may allow teenagers to add/follow them on Social Media in the understanding that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their conduct on Social Media is in-line with their confession that Jesus is Lord.</li> <li>• The Ministry team leader is given equivalent access that teens have.</li> </ul> <p>If a leader’s online conduct is not reflective of their commitment to the Gospel the Youth Worker will ask the leader to step down from ministry and remove all access granted to teenagers.</p>
Disappearing chat functions (e.g. Snapchat)	Leaders may NEVER communicate with teenagers on this kind of platform.
Dating Apps	Leaders may NEVER communicate or connect with teenagers on these platforms.

## Meeting Safely

*The guidelines for meeting safely are specific to Youth Leaders in the context of Youth Ministry. Outside of this context see 'general guidelines applicable to all leaders' in the Christ Church George Child Protection policy and handbook.*

Before a Youth Leader begins meeting with a teen they should discuss it with the Youth Worker and be given the go-ahead to meet with the teen. The Youth Leader must also get consent from the parent/guardian of that teen.

### Specific Guidelines applicable to Youth Leaders

- Leaders should never meet with any teen of the opposite gender.
- Leaders should communicate with the Youth worker and take extra caution if they or the person they are meeting with expresses that they experience homosexual attraction. However, this does NOT exclude a leader from meeting with this teen.
- Leader should only ever meet teens with the consent of their parents.
- Leaders should only ever meet teens in a public space e.g. coffee shop, beach, park OR at the teen's home OR at the Church Buildings
- Leaders should never meet a teen at their home unless there are other family members around and they have been invited to by the family.
- If meeting a Teen at their home, a Leader should never meet them in a room with a closed door.
- Leaders should never meet a teen at the church building unless there are other people around and they meet with the door open.
- One on one meetings should never take place at a Leader's home.
- Leaders need to be able to report to the Youth Worker when and where they met a teen/s if necessary. So, leaders should consider:
  - Keeping a diary/record of meetings (when & where)
  - Allowing Google to record your location.
  - Some other system which will allow them to recall the details of a meeting.

### Note on Serious Pastoral Issues

Remember you cannot promise a teen confidentiality. As far as possible keep a teen's disclosures to you in confidence – but remember that in the case of serious pastoral issues you need to escalate it to the necessary authority. In the case of any form of abuse that is to the Child Protection Office (see the Christ Church George's Child Protection Policy) and in the case of other serious issues that is to your Youth Worker.

### Transporting Safely

- Leaders shouldn't transport teenagers to and from meeting places unless they have permission from the teen's parents/guardians expressed in a '**General Transport Indemnity Form**'.
- Leaders should only ever transport the teen/s directly to or from the meeting venue - no detours or 'parking off'.
- Sitting in a parked car does not constitute a public meeting place.
- Teens must be transported according to the South African law, i.e. they must be strapped in properly, preferably in the back seat. Drivers must have legal licenses and keep to the speed limits.