
Drugs and Alcohol Use Policy Statement

This is the Drugs and Alcohol Policy Statement of Christ Church Parochial Church Council (PCC) and covers:

Christ Church
Christchurch Road
Virginia Water
Surrey
GU25 4PT

Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults

Christ Church fully endorses *“In Safe Hands: A Guide to Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults”* (July 2011) provided by the Diocese of Guildford. This handbook gives further information and guidance on the issues covered by this Policy Statement and should be read in conjunction with it.

Policy Statement & Purpose

The church aims to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and vulnerable adults, and requires all clergy and lay people to maintain the highest professional standards in their work and relationships with them.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that the following information cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered in this section, or which may contravene the guidance given. It is expected in these circumstances that adults will always advise their Incumbent and/or Parish Safeguarding Representative of the justification for any such action taken, or seek advice from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Approved:

Christ Church PCC

Effective:

10 June 2014

Drugs and Alcohol Use and Children and Young People

The possession or use of illegal/unauthorised drugs during church activities is unacceptable and will be dealt with firmly, promptly and fairly. Also, the use of legal drugs such as medicines will be managed appropriately.

Information about acceptable behaviour with regards to drugs and alcohol will be provided to children and young people when behavioural guidelines are being drawn up for church events and/or activities. This will include possible responses to drug/alcohol related incidents, that parents and carers will be informed of any such incident/s and that, in certain circumstances, the police may also be informed.

An incident is likely to involve suspicions, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving unauthorised drugs and/or alcohol. This may include:

- drugs/alcohol found on church premises/during church activities
- a child or young person is found in possession of drugs or alcohol
- a child or young person is found to be a recognised source of supply of drugs on church premises/during church activities
- a child or young person is thought to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- a child or young person discloses that they are misusing drugs/alcohol

Dealing with Medical Emergencies

In any incident involving drugs and/or alcohol, the church will place the utmost priority on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning medical help before addressing further issues. If the Group Leader is in doubt he/she will should seek medical assistance immediately. Unless they are unconscious, a child or young person may be intoxicated but no medical emergency may exist, and arrangements will be made with a parent/carer for the child or young person to be collected or escorted home.

Confiscation and Disposal of Illegal Drugs

The Group Leader will take temporary possession of any substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of protecting the child or young person from harm and to prevent an offence being committed in relation to that drug. The substances will be stored securely and arrangements

made for its disposal without delay. An adult witness will be present when confiscations occur and a record should be kept of their details. The Police may also need to be informed.

The Group Leader will not attempt to analyse or taste unknown or confiscated substances. If requested, the police can advise on analysis, formal identification and disposal of illegal drugs.

Confiscation of Other Unauthorised Drugs

Parents and carers will always be informed of any incident where unauthorised drugs such as alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (such as lighter fuel, glue or aerosols), and medicines have been confiscated, and given the opportunity to collect anything that has been confiscated.

Investigation and Evaluation

The Group Leader will judge the nature and seriousness of each incident and this may involve informing and consulting others as necessary e.g. the Police. Factors that will be taken in consideration include:

- is the drug legal or illegal?
- is this a first or subsequent incident?
- what quantity of the drug was involved?
- does the child or young person admit or deny allegations?

Options available to the Group Leader when responding to the needs of those involved in a drugs related incident will include:

- re-emphasis on behavioural guidelines
- drug education
- closer supervision
- referral to an external agency (in liaison with parent/carer)
- removal from the event/activity
- permanent exclusion

Confidentiality

The Group Leader and other leaders/helpers cannot and will not promise total confidentiality to a child or young person who is involved in a drug-related incident or discloses drug use. Advice will be sought from the Parish Safeguarding Representative and/or Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser in such cases.

Incident Recording

The Group Leader will make a full record of every drugs related incident on a specific incident log form. This will be stored securely.

In any incident involving drugs, the Group Leader will inform the child or young person's parent/carer and explain how the incident was managed and agree a way forward.

Use of Alcohol at Church Events

Alcohol will not be sold at Church events as the Church premises are not licenced for such sales.

Alcohol will not be made available to a person who is or appears to be under the age of 18 years. The exception to this is where the young person is aged 16 or 17 and is accompanied by an adult and is having a table meal. The only alcohol they will be allowed to consume is wine, beer or cider. A person under the age of 18 can work as a waiter/waitress and deliver drinks to the table.

Proof of identity will be sought if a person appears to be under 18. At youth groups and activity events with young people neither youth leaders nor young people will be allowed to consume alcohol, as leaders should be aware that they are role models for young people at all times.

NOTES RELATING TO THIS POLICY

This Policy is derived from the Section 2D, pages 38 to 40, of the Handbook ***“In Safe Hands: A Guide to Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults”*** provided by the Diocese of Guildford (July 2011). The content has been modified only to:

- re-phrase policy suggestions in the Handbook to become actual policy statements
- modify sections as noted below to reflect local circumstances
- exclude sections as noted below that are not applicable to a Policy Statement

Details of modifications

- Irrelevant references to the Church holding a licence to sell alcohol within the section “Use of Alcohol at Church Events” (Handbook page 40) have been removed.

Details of exclusions

- None