

BACKGROUND

The wider church has a history of child abuse made worse because the church often sought to, at least, turn a blind eye to, at worst, cover up systemic child abuse

The church has a clear and unequivocal duty to protect children and the vulnerable whenever it can

Consistent with God's gracious forgiveness, granted to any who seek it through following Jesus, there is the possibility that persons who have abused children will wish to be part of a worshipping community; part of the church, whilst clearly persons of concern.

This policy seeks to ensure that protection of children takes primacy when dealing with a Person of Concern.

Insurers may require that specific provisions be made, and agreements entered into with any Person of Concern, for insurance to have effect.

POLICY

In every church it is the responsibility of the Board¹ to decide whether to allow a Person of Concern to join their worshipping community or not.

The outcome of a decision to permit a Person of Concern to be a part of any church must include:

1. Entry into an "Agreement with Person of Concern" – see sample attached
2. Clear board minutes recording:
 - a. The existence of discussions with the Person of Concern
 - b. Any recommendation that the Church permits the Person of Concern to attend the church
 - c. The decision to permit the Person of Concern to attend the church
 - d. The agreed monitoring of the Person of Concern protocol
 - e. The agreed reporting of the Person of Concern protocol
 - f. Approval of the "Agreement with Person of Concern" – signed by all parties
3. Constant and consistent monitoring of the Person of Concern
4. Regular consistent reporting of the monitoring of the Person of Concern and, in particular, including any breaches of the agreement by the person.
5. Clear board minutes recording:
 - a. All reporting
 - b. Any breaches of the agreement
 - c. All decisions arising from breaches of the agreement
 - d. All reports made to any authority about the Person of Concern

¹ Board, Elders, Leadership Team – whoever it is that have the power to manage the affairs of the church constitute the Board in this context