

# Practice guide



## Contracts and agreements

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Writing and managing a contract with;

- A person who has a conviction/convictions of violence or sexual harm to children or adults
- A person who has been accused of a violent or sexual offence
- A person whose behaviour is of concern and they have ignored advice

### Stage 1 – calling a meeting

The person of concern needs to be invited to attend a meeting with a small group of people who may have professional expertise (police, social worker, prison officer, probation). If this is not possible, the attendees need to be people who are interested in supporting but also monitoring the person of concern. If the person is on the Sex Offenders or Violent and Sex Offenders Register, the police liaison officer can be invited to the meeting.

### Stage 2 – church activities

A list needs to be made of all the activities which take place in the church building and are the responsibility of the church. This will be all the mid-week groups as well as the Sunday Services, but not the meetings which are leased by outside organisations or freely given to other organisations.

### Stage 3 – risk assessment

Go through all the meetings and state which the person can attend (such as a concert), cannot attend at all (tea and toddlers or a social group for adults with disabilities), or can attend with supervision (worship).

### Stage 4 – the contract

State which groups the person cannot attend and should not be in the building. State which groups the person can attend and what the supervision arrangements are.

The contract must be signed by the person and all attendees.

## Stage 5 – review meeting

The next meeting is arranged and there is discussion about how the terms of the contract have been adhered to, whether there have been any breaches (if so any statutory authorities must be informed) and whether the terms of the contract need to be changed.

Some examples;

***A. Jack** has been released from prison for a number of sexual offences against teenagers and young adults. He is on the sex offenders register. Whilst in prison he became friendly with the chaplain and now professes a faith.*

The church has one service on a Sunday morning with a large all age congregation. In the week, there is a youth club, a ladies bible group, a job club using computers for searching for jobs and a number of home groups.

The contract stipulates that Jack must not be on the premises during the youth club night and the ladies bible group. He is permitted to attend a specific home group where there are no under 18's or young adults in the group/household.

He can attend morning worship as long as he sits in a particular place at the back of the church and this will be within sight of one of the group members. He knows that if he leaves the service to use the toilets, he will be accompanied to the facilities. During coffee one of the group will sit with him and ensure he does not initiate contact with any under 18's or young adults.

The police are going to speak to the job club leader about the computers used for the job searches to ensure that unsuitable websites cannot be accessed.

At the review meeting, one member shared that Jack had formed a relationship with a 25 year old young woman who is regarded as being vulnerable. The police are to be contacted to be informed of this information.

***B. Joanna** was a nursery worker. Four months into her contract she was dismissed from her post. A three year old had made an allegation about inappropriate touching but the matter did not proceed due to the age of the child and potential unreliability of the verbal evidence. However, the nursery found that she had breached their protocol about the toilet routines and had frequently been taking children into the toilets alone, even*

*those who were capable of using the toilet independently. Joanna has asked to work in the crèche at church and gave this information on her self- declaration form. She says she is passionate about working with children and wants a chance to prove her skills.*

A contract meeting was arranged and decided that she cannot work with any of the children's groups and cannot attend any home group where there are children in the household. She is also barred from agreeing to babysit if asked and from joining social media as a friend with any under 18's.

Joanna feels aggrieved about these rules but was reminded that nobody has a right to be a children's worker and that appointments have to be made on the grounds of suitability. As she was dismissed from the nursery, it is likely that this would be raised as a blemish on any DBS check.

The contract group meet with Joanna every six months and are trying to support her in pursuing new areas of interest and employment.

**C. Bill** *is an eighty year old widower. Complaints have been made at church from a number of older women about him hugging them enthusiastically without being asked and kissing them on their mouths. This has caused a*

*couple of the women great distress. Bill has been told about this on a number of occasions but he has said that the women like it and 'it's all political correctness'*

A small group is formed and Bill is advised that he will be accompanied as soon as he enters church, during the 'passing of the peace' and until he leaves the building. The person with him will ensure that he does not approach any women whilst in the building. The group decides that until he can prove he is acting appropriately, he is banned from attending the midweek lunch. After a three month period, the review will look at the contract again.

Bill refuses to sign the contract at the first meeting, so his refusal is recorded.

**D. Carl/Carly** *is on probation for a violent offence when he/she was home carer. He/She was seen by the householder, stealing money from a wallet and when challenged, hit out at the resident and was dismissed from his/her post.*

At the contract meeting, it was decided to allow him/her to attend church services and a home group where the leader is one of the contract group. He/she was permitted to attend the luncheon club as a helper in the kitchen.

However was told that he/she is not permitted to attend the group where young adults with learning disabilities meet to socialise and play games. Carl/Carly has no interest in attending the play group or children's groups and that is recorded in the group minutes.

Carl/Carly was seen having coffee with a woman who is disabled. The pastoral worker said that Carl/Carly had offered to do some cleaning for her and that they had met in the supermarket, with Carl/Carly saying she recognised her from the church luncheon club. The police were informed about this and the liaison officer went to speak to him/her to give a warning. This made the group feel that Carl/Carly's cooperation with the terms of the contract was more superficial than first believed and so the contract was reviewed to prevent him/her being on church premises at any time other than for Sunday worship and would be accompanied throughout.

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