

5. The Responsible Person

5.1 Introduction

At Rushmere Baptist Church, one Church Member will be appointed to be the Responsible Person. He or she will be the central point of contact for any child protection concerns raised within the Church. This person will, wherever possible, have had experience of child protection matters in his or her professional life, but will not necessarily be an expert. He or she will be fully conversant with the Rushmere Baptist Church *Safe to Grow* Policy and will know where to go to find advice when needed.

If we are unable to appoint a Church Member from within our Church, we will consider appointing another member of the congregation or approaching other local churches to find a person with suitable experience.

5.2 The Role of the Responsible Person

The Responsible Person will be one of the people to whom youth workers and other adults turn if they have any concerns about a young person or about the behaviour of a Church worker. He or she will help them to consider the best response to the situation and may wish to turn to other sources of advice before taking any action. Any referrals to Social Services will normally be through this person.

5.3 Person Specification for Appointment

The Responsible Person will demonstrate the following qualities:

- maturity
- ability to keep confidences
- emotional stability
- an interest in and/or knowledge of child protection
- confidence to deal with a situation when it arises
- ability to seek advice and consult agencies
- ability to make an independent decision in the young person's interest
- willingness to undergo training.

5.4 The Appointment

The procedure for the appointment of the Responsible Person will be as follows:

1. A suitable person will be identified by the diaconate, in consultation with the Youth Co-ordinator.
2. He or she will be interviewed by the Minister and Youth Co-ordinator. This interview will involve some discussion of the Church's and the candidate's expectations.
3. Two character references will be sought. If the person has had experience of child protection matters in his or her professional life, one reference will ideally be obtained from someone who knows him or her from this context.
4. The candidate will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau (see information given in Appendix 3) and to sign a Criminal Records Declaration (Appendix 4) pending the receipt of the Disclosure from the CAS.
5. A limited term of appointment will be agreed. This will initially be for three years, but will be renewable after this period. (A review meeting will be held by the Minister and Youth Co-ordinator before the end of the period.)
6. The Church Meeting will confirm the appointment.