

# Bullying and Safeguarding

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Should bullying be included  
in Church safeguarding policies?

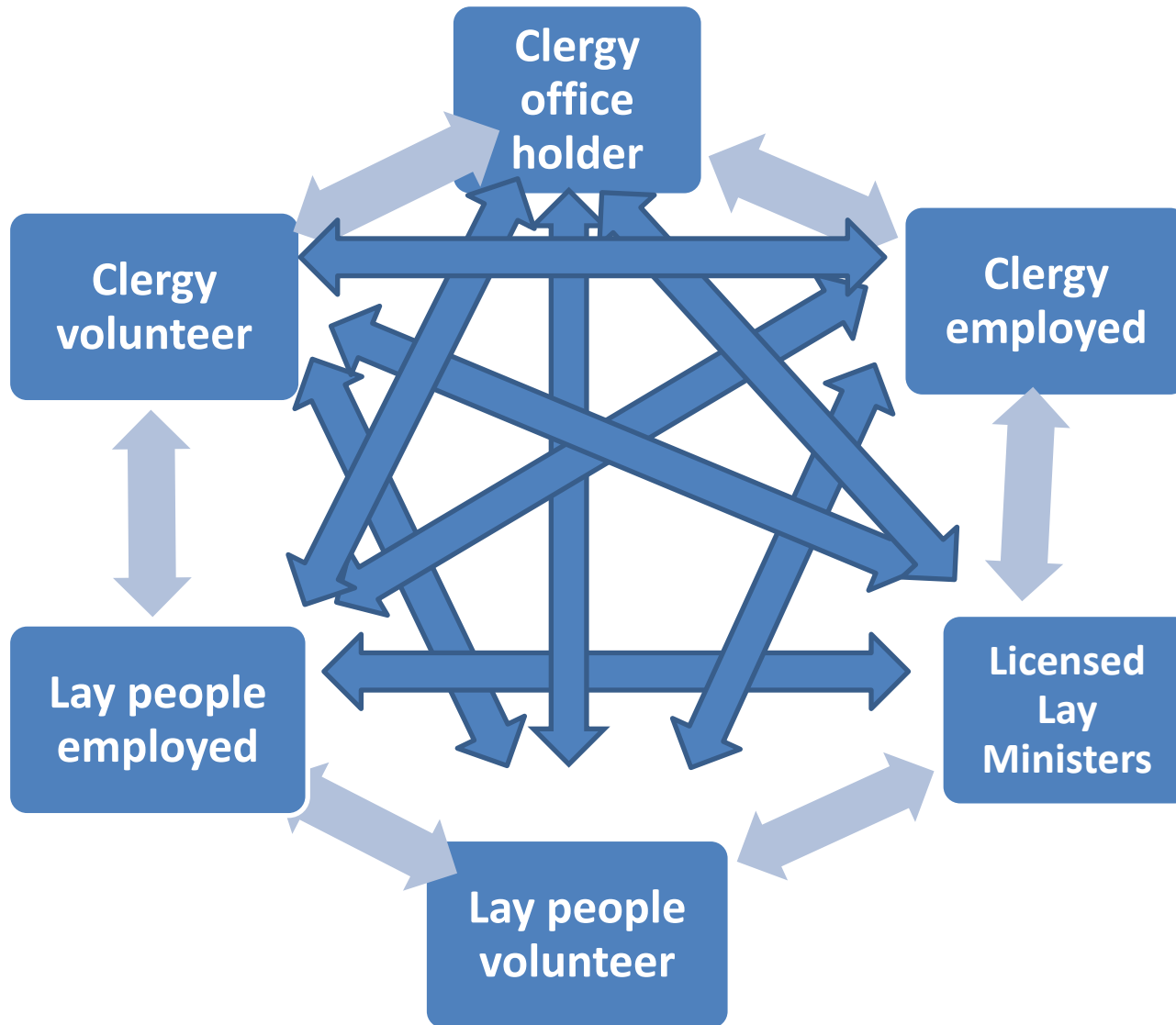
# Safeguarding/Bullying

- Church of England (Anglican)
- Methodist Church: England, Scotland and Wales
- Baptist Union of Great Britain
- Roman Catholic church in England and Wales

# Targets/Perpetrators of bullying or Sexual abuse

- Clergy:
  - many 'office holders' with no contract of employment, therefore no employment rights or responsibilities
  - Employed
  - 'volunteers' ie unpaid
- Lay people:
  - Licensed lay ministers
  - Employed
  - Volunteers

# Bullying can be between all people in a church in any direction



# SAFEGUARDING

- Focus has traditionally been on the sexual abuse of children
- 2014 Care Act: new responsibilities for the Church and statutory agencies re care and protection of vulnerable adults
- I have argued that NO abuse is acceptable within the religious community whether directed towards children or adults (ALL adults not only those who are deemed vulnerable)

# CONSEQUENCES OF ABUSE

## Bullying

- Human costs: short and long term
  - Long term impact on mental and physical health
  - High levels of burnout and emotional exhaustion
  - PTSD/PDSD
  - Suicide
- Organisational costs
  - Reputational damage
  - Decreased commitment and increased absence
  - Targets and others leave the Church

## Sexual abuse

- Human costs: short and long term
  - Long term impact on mental and physical health
  - Alcohol/substance abuse
  - PTSD
  - Suicide
- Organisational costs
  - Reputational damage
  - Decreased commitment and increased absence
  - Targets and others leave the church

# CONSEQUENCES OF ABUSE

Vachon et al (2015) Assessment of the Harmful Psychiatric and Behavioral Effects of Different Forms of Child Maltreatment. *JAMA Psychiatry*

- Child maltreatment: physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect
- Different forms of maltreatment have equivalent psychiatric and behavioural effects





# Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales

- Catholic Bishops Conference for England & Wales
- 5 Metropolitan Archdioceses:
  - Birmingham
  - Cardiff
  - Liverpool
  - Southwark
  - Westminster
- 17 Dioceses
- **Dioceses NOT autonomous, must conform to national strategies and policies.**

# Methodist Church

- Circuits: groups of churches served by a team of ministers
- 36 geographical Districts in England, Wales and Scotland
- **Methodist Conference is the body that agrees policy for the Methodist Church.**
- Consists of representatives, clergy and lay, from all districts
- President of Methodist Conference an annual appointment (clergy - minister)
- Vice President an annual appointment (lay)

# Baptist Church

- Baptist Union of Great Britain: 2000 churches in 13 regional associations: England & Wales
- "Local churches are at the heart of what it means to be Baptist and **all Baptist churches are free to make their own decisions under God**"
- NB Not all Baptist churches belong to the Baptist Union. Many completely independent

# Overview

- C of E: Dioceses autonomous. No authority from national church, Archbishops nor Worldwide Anglican Communion to have policies in place
- Roman Catholic Church: Dioceses NOT autonomous, must conform to national strategies of Catholic Bishops Council of England & Wales, advised by NCSC and CSAS
- Methodist : All policies agreed by Methodist Conference and must be implemented locally
- Baptist : All Baptists churches 'free to make own decisions under God'.

# Safeguarding, Church of England and Methodist Church

- Until 2015 The Church of England and the Methodist Church shared 1 full time safeguarding adviser.
- From January 2015 Methodist and Anglicans have separate Safeguarding teams based in London
- *"There is a growing understanding that protecting children, young people and [vulnerable] adults is at the core of our faith. Safeguarding is about creating churches that are a safe space for everyone; a space where children can flourish and adults can live up to their potential. It is about enabling everyone to come to Jesus without stumbling blocks of abuse, ignorance, fear, compassion fatigue or the failure to recognise the experiences that so many carry within our communities."*
- *Elizabeth Hall, Former Safeguarding Advisor, C of E and Methodist Church in Britain*

# Safeguarding, Church of England

- From January 2015 TEAM concerned with safeguarding.
- Number of very high profile cases of child sexual abuse by clergy including 'historic' cases where abuse was known to church hierarchy but they did nothing even though the sexual abuse of a child is criminal.
- Historic case review
- Goddard Inquiry

# Safeguarding, Church of England

- *Promoting a Safe Church (2006)*
- *Responding to Domestic Abuse (2006)*
- *Dignity at Work (2008)*
- *Protecting all God's Children (2010)*
- *Responding Well to those who have been sexually abused (2011)*
- *(2015) Safer Recruitment, Responding to serious safeguarding concerns related to church officers, Risk Assessment for individuals who pose a risk, Safeguarding in Religious Communities, Records Practice Guidance; Learning and Development Framework*
- *(2016) Responding well to spiritual abuse; Complaints, Whistleblowing and Escalation; Electronic Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Manual*

# Safeguarding: RC church in England and Wales

- Two reports: Lord Nolan, 2001 and Baroness Cumberlege, 2007 many changes have taken place.
- Catholic Bishops Conference for England & Wales and Council of Religious set up:
- National Catholic Safeguarding Commission (NCSC) : set strategy & policy for reform in safeguarding practice. 15 member board meets quarterly.
- Catholic Safeguarding Advisory Service(CSAS) implements national policies via training and development



# Safeguarding: RC church in England and Wales

- the Catholic Church worldwide has suffered enormous reputational damage from the very large number of sexual abuse cases in the public domain
- *Spotlight*: Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, USA
- Rearguard action
- Bullying: not even on the agenda EXCEPT in Catholic schools where there are 'robust' policies

# Safeguarding: Baptist Church

- *Safe to Grow* (6th Edition 2011) - Safeguarding children and young people in the local church
- *Safe to Belong* (2015) - Safeguarding adults at risk
- No historic cases review

# Safeguarding: Baptist Church

Safe to Belong (2015) - Safeguarding adults at risk

## Types of abuse:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual

## Emotional abuse

- Mocking, coercing, threatening or controlling behaviour;
- Bullying, intimidation, harassment or humiliation;
- The lack of privacy or choice, denial of dignity, deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation;
- Making someone feel worthless, a lack of love or affection, or ignoring the person.

# Safeguarding: Methodist Church

Until January 2015 worked together with Church of England.

*Safeguarding Adults (2010)*

"Forms and signs of harm":

- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Spiritual and ritual abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Forced marriage

# Safeguarding: Methodist Church

- 2015 Report to Methodist Conference on past cases review: *Courage Cost and Hope*
- District Safeguarding Officers appointed
- Working ecumenically
- Safeguarding team now 4 FT equivalent posts
- Safeguarding Committee meets 2 x per year
- Safeguarding training programme: *Creating Safer Space*
- Appointment of "Wellbeing Advisor"
- 2015 *Positive Working Together*

# CONCLUSIONS

Should bullying be included  
in Church safeguarding policies?

- All Churches have been forced to take the issue of safeguarding seriously
- Some churches are too focused on sexual abuse by clergy to be at the place where they can think about their response to other types of abuse. So a work in progress.
- The example of the Methodist Church in promoting "Positive Working Together" within their safeguarding remit suggests that this is the best way forward.

# Thank you for listening!

Please contact me if you want any clarification or have any suggestions positive or negative about future work

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