

THE ESSEX RINGING COURSE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY 2011

Introduction

The teaching of young people to ring is of paramount importance to the future of bellringing and as such we have actively encouraged those under the age of 18 to participate as both students and helpers on the Essex Ringing Course.

In connection with this, the course organisers, tutors, helpers and students alike all have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children attending the Course and to protect them from potential abuse in whatever form. This policy has been drawn up to provide a practical and realistic set of best practice guidelines to ensure compliance with these responsibilities.

For the avoidance of doubt, references to children throughout this policy are to people under the age of 18.

Parental Consent

Parental consent is required for all children attending the Course. A copy of this policy will be sent to all applicants before the Course commences.

Child Protection Officers

The Essex Association of Change Ringers has an appointed Child Protection Officer to act as the main responsible person under this Child Protection Policy and to whom all instances giving rise to concern, by either adults or children, should be reported.

The Child Protection Officer may wish to meet with all the under 18s at the beginning of the Course and will be the main point of contact for any issues or concerns that the children may have whilst on the Course.

In the unlikely event of an allegation of potential abuse, the Child Protection Officer will ensure the necessary procedures are followed and any appropriate action taken.

The Child Protection Officer for the Association and the Course is Mr Stephen Nash, mobile number **07790 653338**.

Responsibilities of Tutors

All tutors are required to sign a copy of this document confirming their acceptance of this policy and that there are no circumstances which would make it inappropriate for them to act as a tutor on the Course.

Every course tutor has produced a satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) certificate to the Course Convenor and Child Protection Officer.

The tutors should convey the contents of this policy, and in particular the guidelines set out below, to all students and helpers in their Group at the beginning of the Course. In practice, this will be at the "Getting to Know Your Group" session. This

applies whether or not there are under 18s in the particular Group.

Practical Guidelines

The following guidelines should be adopted by all people on the Course. For the most part they represent the application of common sense. They are intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive and should be read in that light.

1. Avoid being alone with a child whilst on the Course. Always ensure there are at least two adults present, preferably one male and one female. This applies at all times throughout the Course but particular care should be taken in the following situations:
 - when teaching on a one-to-one basis
 - when travelling to or from towers in a car.
2. Avoid inappropriate physical contact. There may be occasions where physical contact is unavoidable, for example where someone is having difficulty handling a bell. In these cases, ensure that such contact is kept to a minimum and always bear in mind that actions and gestures can be easily misconstrued.
3. Do not strike or threaten a child in any way.
4. Do not shout at a child or use inappropriate language – words can be misconstrued as easily as actions.
5. Offer constructive advice rather than being over-critical about ringing abilities.
6. Report any incidents or concerns to the Child Protection Officer. This must be done immediately. If you cannot find him, then call Marian Wood on **07791 551827** or the Course Organiser, Mary Bone, on **07989 076713**.

A copy of these guidelines will be prominently displayed in the main gathering rooms at the school.

Conclusion

The safety and wellbeing of children attending the Course is something that the organising committee takes extremely seriously. Accordingly, this policy is something to which we attach the utmost importance. Provided everyone adheres to the guidelines above and in particular uses common sense in dealing with any situation that they find themselves in, then we believe that children and adults alike can be afforded the protection they deserve.

Mary Bone
Course Management Convenor
December 2011