

Telford Buddhist Priory

Managing those who Pose a Risk at the Priory

This document is about managing those who pose a risk, due to being a sex offender or paedophile, when attending activities at the Priory.

From time to time a member of the sangha, or, for example, someone wishing to become a monk, may disclose to you that they have a sexual interest in children. It is also possible that, for example, probation services may ask if a sex offender who has served his sentence may attend meditation classes.

A person with a sexual interest in children needs to be regarded in the same way as someone with an addiction. It is a mistake to think that they can be cured or prevented from offending simply through the kindness of Buddhists. They need the protection of clear boundaries and they need professional help.

The recommendations below follow UK best practice, but may be helpful for OBC Temples in other countries too.

Whether or not such a person has ever committed a crime or been convicted, your Chief Priest or Safeguarding officer should

- check with police and social services whether, in attending your activities, the person is breaching any probation agreements made with them
- inform social services if you believe children are at risk from them elsewhere; eg if you know they have a job working with children.
- agree with them a contract setting out the terms on which they may engage in your activities. If they refuse this, or do not keep to the agreement, or you lack the resources to manage your relations with them, you are entitled to exclude them – for the sake of child protection.

Confidentiality

Legally, you may share information about this person only with those who need to know in order to ensure the safety of children, and those with legal or otherwise key responsibility; eg your Chief Priest, trustees and safeguarding officer, and anyone else it has been agreed will particularly care for this person or act as their minder on your premises or at your activities. If you do share information, you may not share the details; simply the fact that they may be a risk to children.

Nobody else necessarily has a “right” to know, including parents of children; proper implementation of **your Child Protection Policy and Code of behaviour** will ensure that children are as safe from this person as from the many other people with an *undisclosed* sexual interest in children.

Behaviour Contract – Suggested Content

This is a list of possible clauses you might include in a contract. It is **not** exhaustive. These are just examples of what may need to be taken into account in the particular circumstances of the individual and the OBC temple concerned.

Agreed Boundaries

- *I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children.*
- *I will attend meetings and activities as agreed with the Chief Priest and Safeguarding officer of the Buddhist Temple.*
- *I will sit where directed at activities (e.g. ceremony hall activities, social gatherings) and will not place myself near children.*
- *I will not enter certain parts of the building as agreed with the Chief Priest and Safeguarding officer, nor any area where activities for children are in progress*
- *I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children in the home*

- *I accept that "x" and "y" will sit with me during activities (e.g. ceremony hall activities, social gatherings) and accompany me when I need to use other facilities such as the toilet. They will know I am a sex offender/someone with a sexual interest in children.*
- *I accept there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order that they can protect the children for whom they care*
- *I accept that contact will need to be made with my probation officer, who will meet with the Chief Priest and Safeguarding officer as and when necessary*
- *I accept that "z" will provide me with pastoral care.*
- *I understand that any other concerns about me will be taken seriously and reported.*

Care and Support

It is important to be clear and realistic. As well as outlining the boundaries you expect this person to keep, it is also helpful to outline the types of care and support you are able to offer, or to be clear that you are **not** able to offer support outside your temple's normal activities. For example:

'X' and 'Y' have agreed to provide you with care and support; as part of that undertaking, they and the Priory agree to:

- *Support you in finding employment which will not bring you into contact with children*
- *Support you in seeking any specialist help e.g. attendance on sex offender treatment programmes, drug or alcohol or psychiatric rehabilitation or counselling appointments.*
- *Liaise with previous places of worship you have attended, with the prison chaplaincy team, or any other organisation you have worked with prior to joining us.*
- *Work closely with any statutory authorities with responsibility for you, such as your probation officer, police or children's social services*
- *Where appropriate, ask for risk assessment in order to determine how best we can meet your needs while protecting children*
- *Attempt to meet practical needs*
- *Support you in joining a support programme.*
- *Provide care and support to those you live with.*
- *Be there for you and to support you.*

Or

- *We regret that the Telford Buddhist Priory does not have the resources to provide you with care or support outside its normal activities.*
- *You are welcome to attend [specify class/activity].*
- *We have agreed you will not attend [specify activity].*
- *We expect you to participate in treatment and support groups, as appropriate, supported by your probation officer/social worker etc.*
- *Telford Buddhist priory will review this contract every 3 months.*
- *Telford Buddhist priory reserves the right to refuse entry to you if we feel the terms of this contract are being breached, or that we no longer have the resources to manage this relationship with you, or that children are at risk.*
- *In such circumstances the Chief Priest and Safeguarding officer may choose to inform statutory agencies (e.g. police, probation, social services), and any other relevant organisations.*

Name of the person concerned

Name of Telford Buddhist Prior

Name of Telford Buddhist Priory Safeguarding officer

Signatures of all three

Date

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Telford Buddhist Priory Safeguarding Children policy and safeguarding Children code of conduct documents.

Adoption and Review

Version 5.0 of this document was adopted by the trustees of the Priory on 22 January 2025. It is reviewed by the trustees annually and updated as required.

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