CHURCHES' Child Protection ADVISORY SERVICE

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# PRESS RELEASE

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**NEW RESEARCH BY CCPAS SHOWS CHILDREN STILL NOT SAFE IN UK CHURCHES, DESPITE HOYTE SENTENCE TODAY**

The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) today published *Safeguarding Children in the Church,* keynote new research showing that children are still not as safe as they should or could be in UK churches.

On the day that Jason Hoyte is sentenced to nine years in prison on 14 counts of indecent assault and 2 of engaging in sexual activity with a child, CCPAS reveals four shocking new statistics:

- Fewer than 50% of employees paid to work with children in church settings are asked to complete application forms or are formally interviewed - contrary to government recommendations in force since 1993.
- Only half of such workers are required to provide written references before being taken on.
- Only 56% of churches insist that their children's workers undergo safeguarding training on appointment.
- In some church denominations and groups, as many as 40% such of workers had no named supervisor.

David Pearson, Executive Director of CCPAS, commented: "The sentence handed out to Jason Hoyte, who was allowed to prey on children in church

settings in south east London, is very welcome.

"However, this conviction must not lull churches into a false sense of security. Whilst some progress has undoubtedly been made over the past few years, *Safeguarding Children in the Church* shows that many of the most basic safeguarding measures are still being ignored or overlooked. This means that the many people who pose a real danger to the children in our churches will find it all too easy to strike again.

Pastor Bob Pull, Communities Consultant for CCPAS, said "Churches and other places of worship need to look beyond their buildings and be aware that some individuals can gain access to children under the cloak of their apparent faith. Good sense child safeguarding policies and procedures, together with child safeguarding training (which CCPAS provides), are key measures that can minimise risk, making worshiping communities safer for all.

"I therefore urge all places of worship not to be complacent and to look afresh at how they are managing and implementing the all-important protection of the children in their care".

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

CCPAS is an independent Christian charity providing professional child protection advice and support across church denominations and organisations throughout the UK.

CCPAS was established in 1977. It assists churches, organisations, social services and other child care agencies as well as individual children and families by:

- helping churches and other organisations adopt safe practice in order to protect children from abuse – and youth workers from the possibility of false allegations
- advising on individual cases, giving ongoing help to leaders and others.
- training across the UK and providing "in-house" training and other resources
- acting as external consultants to denominational/organisational child protection advisors
- counselling individual adults or children about past or present abuse.

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