

POLICY DOCUMENT:

TITLE: SAFEGUARDING POLICY

POLICY TITLE: Safeguarding Policy

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Summary of changes: Full review and re-format.

Scope: This policy is applicable to all employees, volunteers, visitors and users of the building. Employees and volunteers are collectively referred to as 'workers' in this document.

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1. QUICK SAFEGUARDING GUIDE

Our Commitment

CCBS is committed to creating a safe environment where children, young people and adults at risk are valued, respected and protected from harm.

Everyone involved in the life and ministry of the church shares responsibility for safeguarding.

If you have any concern about the welfare or safety of a child, young person or adult at risk, you must act on it.

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern

If you are concerned that a child, young person or adult at risk may be experiencing abuse, neglect or harm:

Step 1

Report the concern immediately to a member of the CCBS Safeguarding Team.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Ali Mansfield - 07753 865848

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs): Richard Steele - 07720 52 52 91; Susan Ash - 07913 844 672; Tom Amos - 07910 050 122; Anita Lahanmi - 07946 47 37 60

Step 2

If no safeguarding lead is available, seek advice from: **ThirtyOne:Eight : 0303 003 111**

Step 3

Where advised, or where there is a safeguarding duty to do so, concerns should be referred to Children's Services, Adult Services or other appropriate statutory agencies.

Hertfordshire Social Services: Children - 0300 1234 043, Adults - 0300 1234 042

Emergency Situations

If someone is at immediate risk of serious harm or a crime is in progress:

Call Police / Emergency Services on 999 immediately.

Then inform the Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

Remember

Recognise • Respond • Record • Report

It is always better to report a concern that turns out to be unfounded than to fail to report a concern that may place someone at risk. You are never expected to investigate. Your responsibility is to pass concerns on promptly and appropriately.

Visiting Speakers and Guests

If anyone approaches you during your visit with a safeguarding concern, disclosure, allegation or welfare concern, do not attempt to deal with it independently. Please report it immediately to the CCBS Safeguarding Team before leaving the venue. If this is not possible, contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible after the event.

2.ORGANISATIONAL DETAILS

Organisation Name: The Community Church, Bishop's Stortford

Address: Charis Centre, Water Lane, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2JZ

Phone: 01279 461231

Email: office@thecommunitychurch.org.uk

KEY CONTACTS

Lead Elder: Alistair Stroud

07918 627922 - al@thecommunitychurch.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Alison Mansfield

07753 865646 - safeguarding@thecommunitychurch.org.uk

OTHER INFORMATION

Affiliation: Evangelical Alliance

Charity Number: 1166939

Insurance Company: Ansvar Insurance

Safeguarding Advisory Body: Thirtyone:Eight

3. SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

As a Leadership team, we are committed to providing a safe and caring environment for children, young people, and adults. We recognise that they can be affected by physical, sexual, and emotional abuse (which can include spiritual abuse), as well as neglect.

We support the principles of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Human Rights, which state that everyone is entitled to equal rights and freedoms without discrimination of any kind, including race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

We also support the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that children should be able to develop their full potential free from hunger, neglect, abuse, and exploitation. Children have the right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect, negligent treatment, or sexual abuse while in the care of parents, guardians, or others responsible for them.

In line with statutory guidance, the Leadership team has adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy. We are committed to working constructively with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

This policy and its practice guidelines are based on safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:Eight. The Leadership team will:

- Follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, alongside the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide ongoing safeguarding training for all workers and regularly review operational guidelines.
- Ensure the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation, and remain welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Team in protecting children and adults with care and support needs.

[See Appendix A for our Leadership Safeguarding Statement.](#)

4. PREVENTION

5.1 UNDERSTANDING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse of children and adults can take many forms, including physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect. Abuse may happen through direct harm or a failure to protect someone from harm. It can occur within families, organisations, or community settings, and is often carried out by someone known to or trusted by the child or adult.

To help safeguard everyone in our places of worship and organisations, we follow the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly Article 19, which states that children must be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and maltreatment.

We also support the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including Article 5, which states that no one should be subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Further guidance is included within this policy, including:

- *Definitions and signs of abuse relating to children* ([Appendix B](#))
- *Definitions and signs of abuse relating to adults* ([Appendix C](#))
- *Guidance on responding to disclosures of abuse from children or adults* ([Appendix G](#))

5.2 SAFER RECRUITMENT

All workers will be safely recruited following 'Safer Recruitment' guidance. This includes:

- Role descriptions and person specifications
- Application and self-declaration forms
- Interview by trained personnel (safer recruitment)
- Safeguarding discussion at interview
- References
- DBS checks
- Verification of qualifications
- Induction and Training
- Probation period
- Access to safeguarding policy and reporting procedures

5.3 TRAINING

The Leadership team is committed to providing ongoing safeguarding training and development for all workers, helping to create a culture of awareness and protection for everyone.

All workers will receive safeguarding induction training and complete recognised safeguarding training regularly. Standard and enhanced DBS checks will be renewed annually, using the DBS Online Update Service. Basic DBS checks will be renewed every two years.

Workers holding a valid external safeguarding training certificate may be exempt from CCBS training if the training is current, relevant to their role at CCBS.

5.4 CODE OF CONDUCT

The Leadership team has developed and implemented codes of conduct for all roles, particularly for those working with children, young people, and adults at risk of harm. These guidelines help ensure that everyone serves in a safe, respectful, and appropriate way. The Leadership team is also committed to supporting all workers by providing appropriate guidance, supervision, and ongoing support in their roles.

5. WORKING PRACTICES

6.1 SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

The Leadership team is committed to creating and maintaining a safe environment for everyone involved in the life of the church. We will take reasonable steps to ensure that church activities, programmes, and premises are safe, welcoming, and suitable for children, young people, adults at risk, workers, and visitors. This includes carrying out appropriate risk assessments, promoting safe working practices, and ensuring that all workers understand their safeguarding responsibilities. We are committed to fostering a culture of respect, accountability, and care, where concerns can be raised openly and responded to appropriately.

We believe that clear communication is essential in promoting effective safeguarding. When working in partnership with other organisations or visiting ministries, we will ensure there is a shared understanding of safeguarding responsibilities, appropriate boundaries, reporting procedures, and expectations for safe practice.

6.2 PREMISES HIRE

Any organisation using church premises must have a safeguarding policy that meets the standards of ThirtyOne:Eight if:

- Church activities are taking place at the same time; or
- Their activities involve children, young people, or adults with care and support needs.

6.3 VISITING SPEAKERS

When inviting visiting speakers, ministers, or ministry teams to lead services, prayer, or ministry times, the Leadership team will ensure that safeguarding expectations are clearly communicated in advance.

Visiting speakers and ministry teams must agree to follow the church's safeguarding procedures, codes of conduct, and guidance for prayer and ministry interactions, particularly when working with children, young people, or adults at risk.

Visiting speakers may be asked to provide references, evidence of safeguarding training, or confirmation that relevant safeguarding checks have been completed through their home church or organisation.

6.4 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

We recognise that organisations and community groups may have different approaches, cultures, beliefs, and practices relating to safeguarding. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk, we are committed to working only with partners who share appropriate safeguarding standards and practices.

Before entering into any partnership, we will take reasonable steps to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are understood and agreed. This may include:

- Reviewing the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures
- Confirming that safeguarding training and safer recruitment practices are in place
- Checking that appropriate DBS or equivalent checks are completed where required
- Identifying a named safeguarding lead or responsible person
- Agreeing clear reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns or incidents
- Completing a safeguarding partnership or hire agreement where appropriate

The Leadership team may review partnership arrangements to ensure safeguarding standards continue to be maintained.

6. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

6.1 IMMEDIATE ACTION

Volunteers and workers must never carry out their own investigation into any safeguarding concern, allegation, or suspicion of abuse or neglect.

Any concerns should be reported as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or one of their deputies at:

Email: safeguarding@thecommunitychurch.org.uk

Phone: 07753 865646 (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has been appointed by the Leadership team to respond to safeguarding concerns, manage the reporting process, and refer matters to the appropriate statutory authorities where necessary.

Key Principles

- Do not delay in reporting
- Do not discuss with others outside the Safeguarding Team
- Record concerns accurately and securely
- Share information on a need-to-know basis

If someone is in immediate danger contact police on 999.

6.2 IF THE DSL IS UNAVAILABLE

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputies (DDSL) are unavailable, or if the suspicions in any involve both the DSL and DDSL's, contact:

ThirtyOne:Eight : 0303 003 1111

Alternatively contact:

Social Services

Hertfordshire Children's Social Care - 0300 1234 043 (24hrs)

Hertfordshire Adult Social Services - 0300 1234 042 (24hrs)

Police

Police Protection Team - 01707 354 000 (dial 101 if within Hertfordshire)

6.3 MANAGING DIFFERENT CONCERNS

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL who receives a report/notification of a concern may need to inform other individuals or agencies depending on the nature of the concern. This may include:

- The DSL or other Deputy DSLs
- The Trustee or Leadership member responsible for safeguarding, who may need to contact the church's insurance provider or report a serious incident to the Charity Commission.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), if the concern involves a worker or volunteer working with anyone under 18 years old.
- Statutory agencies such as Social Services or the Police where appropriate.

Where possible, the DSL and Deputy DSLs (DDSLs) will keep each other informed of safeguarding disclosures or concerns. If one of them is implicated in the concern, the Trustee overseeing safeguarding will be informed instead.

Safeguarding concerns must be treated confidentially and only shared with those who need to know. Concerns must not be discussed more widely, including with Elders or other church members, unless appropriate as part of the safeguarding process.

Any individual has the right to make a direct referral to statutory safeguarding agencies or seek advice from ThirtyOne:Eight. However, it is hoped that concerns will normally be raised through the church's safeguarding procedures. If a person believes that a safeguarding concern has not been responded to appropriately, or disagrees with a decision about referral, they should contact an outside agency directly.

CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse

If a child has a physical injury, signs of neglect, or concerns of emotional abuse, the DSL/DDSLs will follow this process:

- Seek advice from ThirtyOne:Eight if unsure whether a referral is needed, and keep a written record of any guidance received.
- Contact Children's Social Services or ThirtyOne:Eight immediately if there is concern about deliberate harm, a child's safety, or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Seek urgent medical attention if needed, and inform medical professionals of any safeguarding concerns.
- Not inform parents or carers before speaking with Children's Social Services, unless advised that it is appropriate to do so.
- For lower-level concerns (such as poor parenting), encourage parents or carers to seek support, unless doing so would place the child at risk of harm.
- Where appropriate, offer to support or accompany parents or carers in accessing help. If concerns remain and no action is taken, contact Children's Social Services for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

If there are allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the DSL/DDSLs will follow this process:

- Seek advice from ThirtyOne:Eight if there is any uncertainty about whether to contact the Police or Children's Social Services, and follow their guidance.
- Keep a written record of any advice received from ThirtyOne:Eight, which will be confirmed in writing by ThirtyOne:Eight.
- Unless ThirtyOne:Eight advise not to do so - Contact the Police Child Protection Team or Children's Social Services Duty Social Worker immediately.
- Not speak to the parent, carer, or anyone else about the concern.

CONCERNS ABOUT AN ADULT

This includes concerns about abuse or harm such as physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory abuse, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, and domestic abuse.

Where possible, the adult's consent will be sought before sharing information or making a referral. However, concerns may be shared without consent if the person lacks mental capacity under the Mental Capacity Act, or if there is a serious risk to the adult or others.

If there is a concern, the DSL/DDSLs will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team, who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate safeguarding concerns
- Seek advice from ThirtyOne:Eight if unsure about the appropriate action
- Contact the Emergency Services immediately if the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury, and inform them of any safeguarding concerns

CONCERNS RELATING TO SPIRITUAL ABUSE

This includes concerns where a person may be controlled, manipulated, coerced, or harmed through the misuse of spiritual authority or religious belief.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, the DSL/DDSLs will:

- Listen to the concern and ensure it is taken seriously and treated as a safeguarding matter
- Record the concern in line with safeguarding procedures
- Ensure the person is offered appropriate pastoral care and signposted to support services such as counselling, where appropriate and safe
- Seek advice from ThirtyOne:Eight to help assess the nature and seriousness of the concern and agree next steps
- Consider, in consultation with ThirtyOne:Eight, whether a referral to statutory agencies (such as Adult Social Care, Children's Social Services, or the Police) is required, depending on the level of risk or harm

Where appropriate, consent will be sought before sharing information. However, information may be shared without consent where there is risk of significant harm, where it involves a child or where an adult lacks capacity in line with the Mental Capacity Act.

6.4 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST WORKERS

CHILDREN

If a concern or allegation is made against a worker (paid or volunteer) who works with children or young people:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL will:

- Contact ThirtyOne:Eight for **advice** if needed
- Liaise with Children's Social Care regarding possible **suspension**
- Follow their guidance regarding suspension
- Refer the matter to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**
- Refer to the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** if required

Any DBS referral will be informed by LADO advice where applicable.

ADULTS AT RISK

If a concern or allegation is made against a worker who works with adults at risk:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL will:

- Contact ThirtyOne:Eight for **advice** if needed
- Liaise with **Adult Social Care**
- Follow their guidance regarding suspension
- Make a **DBS referral** if advised

Adult Social Care has legal responsibility for investigating concerns under the Care Act 2014.

7.PASTORAL CARE

7.1 SUPPORTING THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE

We are committed to supporting anyone affected by abuse.

Support may include:

- Pastoral Care
- Home Group Support
- Professional Counselling (internal or external)

Support will be provided:

- In partnership with statutory agencies where appropriate
- In line with the church's [Pastoral Care Policy](#)

7.2 MANAGING RISK

Where an individual is:

- Known to have abused others
- Under investigation
- Considered a safeguarding risk

The Leadership and Safeguarding Team will:

- Seek advice from ThirtyOne:Eight
- Carry out a **risk assessment**
- Work with external agencies where appropriate
- Put **clear safeguarding controls in place**

This may include:

- A written agreement ('Safeguarding Contract')
- Defined behavioural boundaries
- Supervision requirements

Serious Risk Situations

If an individual:

- Poses a significant risk **and**
- Refuses to follow safeguarding measures

The church may:

- Restrict or prohibit attendance at certain activities
- Exclude them from settings involving children or adults at risk

8.POLICY GOVERNANCE

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

This policy:

- Is approved by Leadership (Elders and Trustees)
- Is reviewed at least every two years

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

The Leadership (Elders and Trustees) of this place of worship recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people (under 18s), and adults at risk of harm. We are committed to creating a safe, healthy church culture that protects people from harm, coercion, and control.

This church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of everyone who attends or participates in its activities.

A.1 Our commitments

To:

- Treat all children, young people, and adults with respect, value, and dignity and ensure they are listened to
- Work to prevent and respond to physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial, spiritual, and discriminatory abuse, as well as neglect
- Recognise and respond appropriately to forced marriage and modern slavery
- Encourage and support people to speak up if they feel unsafe or are experiencing harm
- Ensure safe recruitment and selection of all workers and volunteers
- Ensure everyone is trained in agreed safeguarding procedures and codes of conduct
- Provide training, supervision, and ongoing support for all workers
- Support anyone in the church affected by abuse
- Work in partnership with safeguarding agencies and follow statutory guidance
- Adopt the safeguarding standards developed by ThirtyOne:Eight
- Keep safeguarding practice under regular review in line with legislation
- Fulfil the requirements of the charity commission and our insurance provider with regard to safeguarding

A.2 Legal and safeguarding framework

We recognise that:

- Children's Social Services lead investigations where a child is at risk of harm
- Adult Social Care leads investigations where an adult with care and support needs is at risk
- The Police must be contacted where a criminal offence is suspected
- Safeguarding concerns abroad will be reported to local authorities and appropriate UK agencies, where applicable
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

We also commit to complying with UK safeguarding legislation, relevant disability legislation, and the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A.3 Safeguarding responsibility

All workers are expected to follow this policy and its procedures. The Leadership will support the DSL, DDSL and others with assigned Safeguarding responsibilities.

A.4 Reporting concerns

If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads:

- Ali Mansfield – Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Richard Steele – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Susan Ash – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Tom Amos – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Anita Lahanmi – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

A full copy of the safeguarding policy and procedures is available from the church office.

Elders:

Al Stroud	Al Stroud
Jane Stroud	Jane Stroud
Derek Talbot	Derek Talbot
Kwasi Appiah	Kwasi Appiah
Bernita Appiah	Bernita Appiah
Tom Amos	Tom Amos
Noel Amos	Noel Amos
Susan Ash	Susan Ash

Trustees:

Jody Salmon	Jody Salmon
Nick Smith	Nicky Smith
David Ovonlen	David Ovonlen

APPENDIX B - ABUSE (CHILDREN)

In England, the following four types of abuse are named in legislation relating to children and adults:

B.1 Physical Abuse

The deliberate use of physical force by one person against another to cause harm, including: assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication and restraint.

B.2 Emotional/Psychological Abuse

Any persistent emotional ill-treatment that is likely to cause severe and long-lasting adverse effects on someone's emotional development. Including: conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate, frequently causing someone to feel frightened, humiliation, threats of harm or abandonment, coercion, intimidation, isolation, harassment and bullying (including cyber bullying).

B.3 Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical or emotional needs which is likely to have a serious negative impact on their health or development. Including: ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs; failure to provide access to appropriate health, care, support or educational services; not meeting basic needs such as food, warmth and shelter.

B.4 Sexual Abuse

Any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding. Including: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, rape, sexual harassment, indecent exposure, sexual assault, sexual photography and inappropriate looking, touching or sexual teasing.

Signs of Abuse

The signs of child abuse aren't always obvious. The signs will vary depending on the type of abuse happening, and there are many. Common signs to look out for include:

Physical Abuse

- Frequent, repeated or unexplained bruises, marks or injuries
- Injuries to areas such as the torso, back, ears or behind knees.
- Injuries to someone with reduced mobility due to age (babies) or disability.
- *Be aware of how bruises and injuries appear on the skin tones of the children that you work with.*

Emotional Abuse

- Changes in behaviour and personality, especially if these are unexplained - for example becoming uncharacteristically aggressive, quiet or upset
- Being withdrawn, having few or no friends
- Being anxious or worried about things
- Difficult relationships with parents/carers. You might also see unusual behaviour in an adult caregiver that makes you concerned for the safety of a child
- Indicators may include withdrawal, distress, significant weight loss or gain, changes in behaviour around certain individuals, sudden speech difficulties, substance misuse, self-harm, or eating disorders

Neglect

- Changes in physical appearance, poor personal hygiene
- Unexplained weight loss or hunger
- Inadequate clothing
- Untreated injuries or medical conditions
- Absence from regular clubs and groups
- Self-soothing behaviours that are not age appropriate e.g. thumb-sucking or hair-twisting
- Inadequate protection or supervision

Sexual Abuse

- Using sexualised language you wouldn't expect a child of their age to know
- Reluctance to be alone with a specific individual
- Receiving unexplained gifts or money or referring to secrets they cannot discuss
- Physical injuries such as bruising, pain, difficulty walking or sitting, torn or stained clothing

APPENDIX C - ABUSE (ADULTS)

This guidance relates to the safeguarding of adults under the Care Act 2014.

Safeguarding duties apply where an adult:

- has care and support needs;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- is unable to protect themselves because of those needs.

Safeguarding arrangements should promote the adult's wellbeing, wishes, and independence. Any actions taken should consider what safety and wellbeing mean for that individual.

Our safeguarding procedures also apply to adults who may not meet all of the Care Act criteria but who are experiencing, or are at significant risk of, abuse or harm.

Some adults might be more at risk than others. The following factors could increase the risk of abuse:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty, especially if creates dependency on or needing help from others
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Severe illness
- Alcohol or illegal substance dependency

The following section outlines common types of abuse and neglect. It is intended as a guide and is not an exhaustive list.

C.1 - Physical Abuse

Is to inflict pain or physical injury, which is either caused deliberately, or through lack of care. Examples include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, burning, hair pulling, misuse, or using inappropriate restraint or sanctions and the misuse of medication.

C.2 - Emotional/Psychological Abuse

Is acts or behaviour which causes mental distress or anguish or negates the wishes of the adult. It is also behaviour that has a harmful effect on the adult's emotional health and development - or any other form of mental cruelty. This includes verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying, blaming, the use of threats of harm or abandonment, being deprived of social or any other form of contact, or being prevented from receiving services or support.

C.3 - Neglect

Are the repeated deprivation of help that an adult-needs which, if withdrawn, will cause them to suffer. This includes failing to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the adult, or to others.

C.4 - Sexual Abuse

Is the involvement in sexual activities to which the person has not consented, or does not truly comprehend and so cannot give informed consent. It may occur where the other party is in a position of trust, power or authority and uses it to override or overcome lack of consent or to which they felt pressurised into consenting such as rape, or sexual assault, being made to watch pornography would also be within this definition.

C.5 - Financial or Material Abuse

Is the inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions including theft, fraud, exploitation, applying pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

C.6 - Domestic Abuse

Includes physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse for those in family or close relationships as well as so called 'honour' based violence.

C.7 - Modern Slavery

Includes slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. Discriminatory abuse is the inappropriate treatment of an adult because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality, or disability.

C.8 - Discriminatory Abuse

Including harassment, slurs and unfair treatment based on race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

C.9 - Organisational Abuse

Includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice, or ill treatment.

C.10 - Self-Neglect

Includes a wide range of behaviour neglecting to one's personal hygiene, health or surrounding and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Signs of Possible Abuse in Adults

Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries such as bruises, burns, fractures, cuts, recurring injuries, or injuries inconsistent with the explanation given.
- Bruising of different ages or in unusual areas not normally associated with accidental injury.
- Signs of under- or over-medication, untreated medical issues, unexplained weight loss, hair loss, or changes in appetite.
- Fearful behaviour, flinching at physical contact, remaining overly covered, or appearing frightened or subdued around particular individuals.

Domestic Abuse

- Unexplained injuries, repeated "accidents," or visible fear within a relationship.
- Evidence of controlling, coercive, threatening, violent, or abusive behaviour, including psychological, physical, sexual, emotional, or financial abuse.
- So-called 'honour'-based abuse or Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Domestic abuse may affect adults and young people aged 16 and over.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexually explicit behaviour or language that is unusual for the person.
- Torn, stained, or bloody underwear, unexplained difficulty walking or sitting, sexually transmitted infections, or pregnancy where the person lacks capacity to consent.
- Self-harm, emotional distress, mood changes, disturbed sleep, or withdrawal.
- Direct or indirect disclosures, hints, or allegations of sexual abuse.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse

- Withdrawal, anxiety, agitation, tearfulness, fearfulness, low self-esteem, helplessness, confusion, or sudden changes in mood or behaviour.
- Intimidation, excessive dependence, passivity, or fear of expressing wishes or making choices.

- Persistent tiredness, sleep disturbance, loss of appetite, paranoia, or implausible explanations for behaviour or injuries.

Financial or Material Abuse

- Unexplained loss of money, possessions, financial documents, or sudden inability to pay bills.
- Disparity between a person's financial circumstances and their living conditions.
- Unexplained withdrawals, unusual property transfers, misuse of Power of Attorney, or failure to account for spending on a person's behalf.

Modern Slavery

- Poor physical appearance, malnourishment, inappropriate clothing, or signs of neglect.
- Restricted freedom, monitored movement, isolation, or travelling at unusual hours linked to work.
- Few personal belongings or identification documents.
- Fear of authorities, reluctance to seek help, or signs of intimidation.

Discriminatory Abuse

- Inappropriate comments, harassment, exclusion, or lack of respect related to disability, race, religion, gender, sexuality, age, or other protected characteristics.
- Poor or unequal care and support.
- Withdrawal, anger, low self-esteem, or negative comments about personal identity.

Organisational Abuse

- Low self-esteem, withdrawal, anger, or negative self-perception (e.g. expressing shame about gender or sexuality).
- Lack of confidence in complaints procedures or reluctance to raise concerns.
- Evidence of poor or neglectful professional practice within a service.

Neglect and Acts of Omission

- Deterioration in health or wellbeing despite apparent care.
- Poor living conditions, inadequate clothing, lack of basic care or support.
- Missed or withheld medication or medical treatment.

Self-Neglect

- Poor personal hygiene, appearing unkempt, dirty, or malnourished.
- Sudden or ongoing weight loss, dehydration, constant hunger, or food-related risk behaviours (e.g. hoarding or gorging).
- Hoarding inside or outside the home.
- Inappropriate clothing for weather conditions.
- Unsafe or unmaintained living environment (e.g. lack of heating, lighting, dirt, or strong urine/faecal odours).
- Signs of depression or severe deterioration in self-care.

APPENDIX D - SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual abuse is recognised in safeguarding practice as a form of emotional and psychological abuse that can occur within faith-based settings. It involves the misuse of religious belief, authority, or pastoral power to control, coerce, manipulate, or harm others. It is most often associated with leadership, pastoral, or authority relationships where there is an imbalance of power.

In line with best practice literature, spiritual abuse may include coercive and controlling behaviours such as manipulation, exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, requirements for secrecy or silence, pressure to conform, and the use of religious texts or teaching to control behaviour. It may also involve demands for unquestioning obedience, claims of special or “divine” authority, isolation as a form of discipline, or the promotion of superiority, exclusivity, or elitism within a group.

Spiritual abuse is consistent with broader safeguarding frameworks, including the **Care Act 2014**, which recognises psychological and emotional abuse and coercive control as forms of harm requiring safeguarding response. It also aligns with the **Serious Crime Act 2015** and **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**, which recognise controlling or coercive behaviour within relationships as abusive, particularly where there is an imbalance of power.

Spiritual abuse can affect anyone, regardless of age or background, and is not limited to children or adults with care and support needs. It may occur in both formal and informal faith contexts and should always be taken seriously where concerns arise.

This definition is informed by academic research, including Oakley and Kinmond (2013/2018), who describe spiritual abuse as a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context with potentially significant emotional and psychological impact.

“Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse. It is characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it.

This abuse may include manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, requirements for secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts and teaching, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a ‘divine’ position, isolation as a means of punishment and superiority and elitism.”

(Oakley, L., Kinmond, K., Humphreys, J (2018) “Spiritual Abuse in Christian Faith Settings: Definition, Policy, Practice and Guidance”, The Journal of Adult Protection 20/3-4, pp.144-54, doi.org/10.1108/JAP-03-2018-0005)

APPENDIX E - EMERGING AND EVOLVING FORMS OF HARM AND ABUSE

E.1 - Cuckooing

Cuckooing, sometimes called *forced home invasion*, occurs when criminals take over the home of a vulnerable person to use it for criminal activity, such as drug dealing. People with learning disabilities, mental or physical health conditions, financial difficulties, or substance misuse issues may be particularly vulnerable.

Possible indicators include the resident being seen less often, unfamiliar visitors or vehicles, increased activity at the property, curtains remaining closed during the day, and increased litter, including takeaway packaging or drug-related items. Any concerns should be reported through safeguarding procedures.

E.2 - Catfishing

Catfishing is the creation of a false online identity to deceive, manipulate, exploit, or defraud another person. It can affect people of any age and is often linked to fraud, sexual exploitation, emotional abuse, or other criminal activity.

Although catfishing itself is not always a criminal offence, the associated behaviour may be. Safeguarding concerns should be reported where there is evidence of exploitation, abuse, or coercion.

E.3 - Sextortion

Sextortion is a form of online blackmail in which an offender threatens to share sexual images, videos, or personal information unless the victim provides money, further images, or complies with other demands.

Anyone can be targeted, although young people and young adults are particularly at risk. Victims may experience significant distress, anxiety, shame, or fear. Any concerns should be taken seriously and reported promptly.

E.4 - Mate Crime

Mate crime occurs when a person befriends someone, often an individual with a learning disability or other vulnerability, with the intention of exploiting, abusing, or harming them.

It may involve financial, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse and should be treated as a safeguarding concern and, where appropriate, reported to the police.

E.5 - Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, violent, or abusive behaviour between people who are personally connected. It can include physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse.

Indicators may include fearfulness, isolation, controlling relationships, restricted access to money, monitoring of communications, threats, intimidation, or unexplained injuries. Domestic abuse can affect adults and young people aged 16 and over and should always be taken seriously.

Where children are living in a household affected by domestic abuse, they should be regarded as potential victims in their own right. Under the **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**, children who see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse are recognised as victims of domestic abuse. Exposure to domestic abuse may constitute emotional abuse and can place children at risk of significant harm.

If there is concern that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, physical, emotional, or other significant harm as a result of domestic abuse, a referral should be made to Children's Social Care in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Parental consent is not required where seeking consent would place a child or another person at increased risk, prejudice a safeguarding investigation, or where there is otherwise a legal basis for sharing information to protect a child. Information should be shared in line with safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance, and the principle that the welfare of the child is paramount.

Concerns about domestic abuse involving children should always be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and referred to Children's Social Care where appropriate.

E.6 - Fabricated or Induced Illness

Fabricated or Induced Illness is a form of child abuse in which a parent or carer exaggerates, fabricates, or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in a child.

Possible indicators include symptoms that are only reported or observed by the parent or carer, discrepancies between reported and observed health needs, or restrictions on the child's activities that appear disproportionate to any diagnosed condition. Concerns should be recorded and reported through safeguarding procedures and not raised directly with the parent or carer.

E.7 - Child Criminal and Sexual Exploitation

Child criminal and sexual exploitation occurs when a child is manipulated, coerced, or deceived into criminal or sexual activity for the benefit of another person or group.

Indicators may include unexplained money or gifts, multiple mobile phones, frequent calls or messages, going missing, travelling outside the local area, secrecy, changes in behaviour, or unexplained injuries. Any concerns should be reported immediately.

E.8 - Honour Based Abuse

Honour-based abuse is a form of abuse carried out to protect or defend perceived family, community, cultural, or religious honour. It may include coercion, threats, violence, forced marriage, sexual abuse, imprisonment, or murder.

Victims are most commonly women and girls, although men and boys can also be affected. Honour-based abuse should always be treated as a safeguarding concern.

E.9 - Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief

Child abuse linked to faith or belief occurs when a child is harmed because of beliefs relating to witchcraft, spirit possession, the evil eye, or other supernatural causes.

Abuse may include accusations, isolation, physical assault, emotional abuse, neglect, or harmful rituals. Indicators can include a child expressing beliefs that they are evil, cursed, or responsible for misfortune. Concerns should always be reported and should never be dismissed as a cultural or religious practice.

APPENDIX F - ACEs AND TRAUMA

F.1 - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic events that occur during childhood, such as abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, parental separation, mental illness, or substance misuse within the family. ACEs can affect a child's physical health, mental wellbeing, relationships, education, and ability to cope with life's challenges. The impact can continue into adulthood, particularly where multiple ACEs are experienced.

Safeguarding practitioners should be aware of the potential impact of ACEs and respond with understanding and appropriate support. Importantly, ACEs do not determine a person's future. Positive relationships, supportive communities, and access to help can build resilience and significantly reduce their long-term impact.

F.2 - Trauma

Trauma occurs when a distressing event overwhelms a person's ability to cope and continues to affect their wellbeing after the event has ended. Experiences such as abuse, neglect, violence, or significant loss can be traumatic, although people may respond differently to similar experiences.

Trauma can affect a person's emotions, physical health, behaviour, and relationships. Signs may include anxiety, fear, anger, withdrawal, hypervigilance, sleep difficulties, low mood, substance misuse, self-harm, difficulties concentrating, or strong reactions to reminders of past events.

Safeguarding leads should adopt a trauma-informed approach by listening carefully, avoiding unnecessary questioning, and recognising that certain situations, places, sounds, smells, or repeated retelling of events may retraumatise a person. Concerns should be taken seriously, and individuals should be supported in a way that promotes safety, dignity, and choice.

Those supporting victims and survivors should also be aware of the risk of vicarious trauma. Regular supervision, appropriate support, and attention to personal wellbeing are important for anyone undertaking safeguarding responsibilities.

APPENDIX G - RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES

G.1 - Responding to a Disclosure from a Child

DO:

- Listen carefully and give the child your full attention.
- Stay calm and reassuring.
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Allow the child to speak in their own words and at their own pace.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Explain that you may need to share the information with people who can help keep them safe.
- Ask only open questions necessary to clarify what the child is saying (e.g. "Can you tell me more about that?").
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible using the child's own words where possible.
- Report the concern promptly in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

SAY:

- "Thank you for telling me."
- "You've done the right thing by telling me."
- "I believe you."
- "This is not something you have to deal with on your own."
- "I will need to share this with people who can help keep you safe."
- "What happened is not your fault." (*where appropriate*)

DO NOT:

- Interrupt, rush, or pressure the child.
- Ask leading questions or suggest answers.
- Investigate or seek detailed evidence.
- Express shock, anger, disbelief, or judgement.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Promise confidentiality or secrecy.
- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Ask the child to repeat their account unnecessarily.

ENVIRONMENT:

- Remain visible to others where possible while maintaining privacy.
- Ensure the child feels safe and comfortable.
- Avoid being completely isolated from other adults.
- If appropriate, allow the child to choose whether another trusted adult is present.

G.2 Responding to a Disclosure from an Adult

DO:

- Listen carefully and give the person your full attention.
- Stay calm and respectful.
- Take what is being shared seriously.
- Allow the person to speak at their own pace.
- Acknowledge the courage it may have taken to speak about their experience.
- Clarify only enough information to understand whether there is a safeguarding concern.
- Explain what will happen next and who may need to be informed.
- Consider the person's wishes, views, and desired outcomes wherever possible.
- Record the disclosure accurately and report it in line with safeguarding procedures.

SAY:

- "Thank you for telling me."
- "I'm sorry this has happened to you."
- "I take what you are saying seriously."
- "I will explain what support and safeguarding options are available."
- "I may need to share this information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or other agencies if there are safeguarding concerns, but I will explain this to you."

DO NOT:

- Interrupt, rush, or pressure the person.
- Ask leading questions or investigate the matter yourself.
- Express shock, disbelief, or judgement.
- Make promises you cannot keep.
- Promise confidentiality or secrecy.
- Press for details that are not necessary to understand the concern.
- Take responsibility for deciding whether the abuse has occurred.

ENVIRONMENT:

- Speak in a place that is as private and comfortable as possible.
- Avoid complete isolation where this would place either party at risk.
- Ensure others know that the meeting or conversation is taking place.
- Consider the person's communication, mobility, cultural, language, or accessibility needs.

APPENDIX H - ADULTS AND MENTAL (IN)CAPACITY

We recognise that we are not qualified to make decisions about people's capacity or competence, therefore we must exercise caution working with adults to ensure that we do not go beyond our appropriate remit. The following guidelines seek to provide a framework within which the church operates.

H.1 - Guidelines for Adult Safeguarding

Empowerment: We support and encourage adults to make their own choices and give informed consent to any safeguarding measures.

Prevention: We take action before harm occurs.

Proportionality: We only get involved as much as we are needed, and any action taken is the least intrusive response appropriate to the situation.

Protection: We act to support and protect those in greatest need.

Partnership: We work with other local agencies to prevent, detect and report neglect and abuse.

Accountability: We are accountable and transparent in our safeguarding work.

Adults at Risk:

The Care Act 2014 states that adult safeguarding duties apply in respect of anyone aged 18 or over who meets **all three** of the following conditions:

- Has care and support needs (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting those needs);
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- Is unable to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs.

H.2 - MENTAL (IN)CAPACITY

Mental capacity refers to a person's ability to make a specific decision for themselves. This includes being able to understand relevant information, retain it long enough to make a decision, weigh up the available options, and communicate their decision. The ability to make decisions may vary depending on the individual and the specific decision being considered.

Understanding mental capacity is important in safeguarding adults, as it can affect a person's ability to protect themselves from abuse or neglect and to make informed decisions about reporting concerns or accepting support. Wherever possible, adults should be supported to make their own decisions. However, where there are concerns that a person may lack capacity, this should be highlighted to the relevant statutory agencies. **Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, assessments of capacity are carried out by appropriately**

qualified professionals, who consider both whether the person can make the decision in question and whether any inability to do so is caused by an impairment or disturbance of the mind or brain.

APPENDIX I - RECORDING, REPORTING AND LOGGING

I.1 - Recording a Concern

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child or adult, report it as soon as possible to a member of the Safeguarding Team and complete a Safeguarding Concern Form.

Please contact one of the following:

- **Ali Mansfield** – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- **Susan Ash** – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- **Richard Steele** – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- **Tom Amos** – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- **Anita Lahanmi** – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Record the concern promptly, accurately, and factually, using the person's own words where possible. Do not investigate the concern yourself.

If you believe a child or adult is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention, call 999 immediately. The concern should then be reported to the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible.

If no member of the Safeguarding Team is available, contact the **ThirtyOne:Eight Safeguarding Helpline** on **0845 120 4550** for advice.

Where advised by ThirtyOne:Eight, the police, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a referral should be made to Children's or Adult Social Care as appropriate.

After making a report, do not discuss the concern with others unless they have a legitimate safeguarding role. Continue to act normally and supportively towards the child, adult, or family, and do not ask further questions or attempt to investigate the concern unless directed to do so by the DSL, DDSL, police, or social care.

I.2 - Record Retention

Safeguarding records must be:

- Accurate
- Secure
- Stored separately from general records

Records should be retained for 75 years.

This reflects:

- The potential for disclosures many years later
- Guidance from safeguarding advisors and insurers

I.3 - Logging Low-Level Concerns

All staff and volunteers should record low-level safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people as soon as possible and share them with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).

A low-level concern is any incident, observation, behaviour, or conversation that does not meet the threshold for a safeguarding referral but causes concern about the welfare of a child or young person, or may become significant when considered alongside other information.

Records may include:

- Unusual incidents or observations.
- Concerning behaviour or changes in behaviour.
- Comments, disclosures, or conversations that raise concern.
- Repeated injuries, bruising, or other patterns that may require monitoring.
- Situations that raise safeguarding questions but do not require immediate referral.

Records should:

- Be made promptly.
- Be factual, accurate, and objective.
- Include dates, times, and relevant details.
- Be stored securely in accordance with the organisation's data protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Be shared only with those who have a legitimate safeguarding need to know.

Why Recording Matters

Recording low-level concerns helps to:

- Identify patterns of behaviour or emerging risks over time.
- Provide context if concerns or allegations arise in the future.
- Support effective safeguarding decision-making.
- Protect children, young people, staff, and volunteers.

Access to Records

Safeguarding records are confidential and should only be accessed by authorised individuals.

Individuals, or parents/carers where appropriate, may have rights to access personal information held about them. Any request for access to safeguarding records should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and handled in accordance with data protection legislation and safeguarding guidance.

Information must not be shared where doing so could place a person at risk of harm or compromise a safeguarding investigation.

I.4 - Accident Reporting

All accidents, however minor, must be recorded in an accident book.

For children and young people:

- Parents/carers should be asked to review and sign the record

For adults at risk:

- Signing will depend on capacity and support needs

If a parent/carer is not present:

- A written update should be provided as soon as possible

APPENDIX J - TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING A CONCERN

PART 1A: REPORT OF CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD/ADULT'S SAFETY AND WELFARE.

(For use by any staff/volunteers/church members. Form can be handwritten or using our online form via our website.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdQR8dvL7-ias1652z5yg24XMPrsssztuSMmnHSvZB1pm9ng/viewform?usp=sharing&ouid=100262878155190905447>)

In emergency situations or where a crime is being committed, call 999.

<i>Child/Adults name: (subject of concern):</i>	<i>Date of birth/age:</i> <i>Child/Adult:</i>	<i>Address:</i>
<i>Date & time of incident:</i>	<i>Date & time (of writing):</i>	
<i>Your Name:</i>		
<i>Role/Job title:</i>		
<i>Signature:</i>		
<i>Other members of subject's household:</i>		
<i>Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. (please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember - the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)</i>		
<i>How did the concern come to light?</i>		

<i>What is the child/adult saying about what has happened?</i>	
<i>Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc.</i>	
<i>Date and time of discussion with Safeguarding Team.</i>	

PART 1B: RECORD OF CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD/ADULT'S SAFETY AND WELFARE.

(For use by Safeguarding team when concern has been made verbally either in person or on phone. Please send digital form to the person to complete as well if possible.)

In emergency situations or where a crime is being committed, call 999.

<i>Child/Adults name: (subject of concern):</i>	<i>Date of birth/age:</i> <i>Child/Adult:</i>	<i>Address:</i>
<i>Date & time of incident:</i>	<i>Date & time (of writing):</i>	
<i>Concern raised by:</i> <i>How do they know subject of concern:</i>		
<i>Other members of subject's household:</i>		
<i>Record the following factually: Nature of concern, e.g. disclosure, change in behaviour, demeanour, appearance, injury, witnesses etc. (please include as much detail in this section as possible. Remember - the quality of your information will inform the level of intervention initiated. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)</i>		
<i>How did the concern come to light?</i>		
<i>What is the child/adult saying about what has happened?</i>		
<i>Any other relevant information. Previous concerns etc.</i>		
<i>Member of safeguarding</i>		

<i>team completing form:</i>	
<i>Date and time of discussion with Safeguarding Officer.</i>	

PART 2: RECORD OF ACTIONS FOLLOWING A REPORT ABOUT A CHILD/ADULT'S SAFETY AND WELFARE

(For use by Safeguarding Team.)

<i>Reference No:</i>			
<i>Information received by Safeguarding Team</i>	<i>Date+Time:</i>	<i>Received by:</i>	<i>From Whom:</i>
<i>Any advice sought, if applicable</i>	<i>Date:</i>	<i>Time Completed:</i>	<i>Source of advice: name/organisation</i>
	<i>Advice received:</i> <i>Advice received about informing parents or in the case of adults, seeing consent/capacity:</i>		
<i>Initial Assessment of concern following advice</i>			
Action taken with reasons recorded (e.g. Referral completed, monitoring advice given to appropriate staff, CAF etc)	<i>Date:</i>	<i>Time completed:</i>	<i>By Whom:</i>
	<i>Referral</i>		<i>To Whom</i>
	<i>Signposting to other community resources</i>		
	<i>Pastoral Care and other support from church</i>		
	<i>Ongoing Monitoring</i>		
<i>Parent/Carer Informed? (If yes, complete)</i>	<i>Who spoken to:</i>	<i>Date:</i> <i>Time:</i>	<i>By Whom:</i>
<i>Any other relevant information</i>			
<i>Name of</i>		<i>Signature:</i>	

<i>Safeguarding Team</i>			
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LOG OF ACTIONS:

S.No	Date:	Outcome: (if known)	Service currently involved:	Ongoing support offered by this church with date:

Correspondence / Documents

Serial	Date	Mode	From	To	Summary of key points

APPENDIX K - REPORTING PROCESS

THRESHOLDS FOR REPORTING (For Safeguarding Teams)

England – Children:

For children the threshold is low. If you suspect a child is at risk, it's important to report your concerns to Safeguarding Team or the appropriate authorities. Again, if the child is in imminent danger or risk of significant harm, the police should be contacted on 999.

England – Adults:

The thresholds for reporting in England are either:

- Where you see or recognise any type of harm and abuse and you believe the person is at risk of or is experiencing 'significant harm'.
- The adult has care and support needs, you believe them to be unable to protect themselves and is at risk of neglect or abuse.

In both situations, the local authority should be informed of your concern.

Step by Step Guide - thinking through whether the situation you're concerned about merits a referral even in the absence of an adult's consent to report.

Step 1: Are you concerned about someone's safety or well-being? *If so*, proceed to step 2.

Step 2: Is it safe to contact the victim to discuss the allegation? There are some situations where contacting the victim may increase risk to them. Victims of domestic abuse, modern slavery, and human trafficking may face an increase in risk if you contact them directly. Is there a safer way to do this?

If it is safe: Contact the adult at risk of discuss the situation, appraise their safety and explore their views on reporting to the police. Proceed to Step 3.

If it is not safe: Report the suspected crime to the police, record and share you information about the level of risk. If you suspect imminent danger, call 999. If not, call 101.

Step 3: Does the adult consent to a report being made to the police?

If so: Provide support to the adult to make the report. ND. This could include calling the police with the adult or making a report yourself or agreeing for someone else to make the report.

If not: Proceed to Step 4.

Step 4: Do you believe the person has mental capacity to consent to reporting to the police?

If so: Ensure there are no reasons why you should report a suspected crime to the police

without the consent of the adult at risk. Proceed to Step 5.

If not: If a person lacks capacity to consent, the alleged crime should be reported to the police in their best interests. In this instance you must record the evidence based rationale for the decision noting you can only take action contrary to the person's wishes where there is significant risk of harm. This evidence may be required at a later date.

Step 5: Consider when it is right to share information with the police without consent. If you thought the victim or anyone else is at risk of further harm which could be life threatening. The principles of UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 provide the legislative framework to support the sharing of information sharing where it is necessary and proportionate:

1. When it is necessary for the prevention or detection of a crime. Lean towards reporting alleged crime to the police unless you have a good reason for not doing so. Victims sometimes withhold consent because they fear retribution, are under duress, or because they are victims of coercion and control, which in itself is crime.

2. When it is necessary to protect life.

Remember: cases of domestic abuse, modern slavery and trafficking, and severe neglect can pose a risk to life.

3. For reasons of substantial public interest, including safeguarding adults with care and support needs and/or children from harm. Such as:

- a. When the alleged perpetrator is a person in a position of trust with children or adults or poses a risk to other vulnerable adults.

- b. You reasonably believe the alleged perpetrator poses a substantial risk to the public.

- c. You suspect ill-treatment or wilful neglect, by a care provider.

Step 6: If there are no reasons why it is necessary and proportionate to share information about an adult without their consent, then you must respect their rights and provide any support or monitoring they agree to.

Remember! If you are unsure: contact 31:8 and share concern anonymously, seek legal advice or speak to your safeguarding lead.

Remember! Record your decisions and reasoning for sharing information without consent.

APPENDIX L - SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

L.1 - POSITIONS OF TRUST

All adults working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs hold a position of trust.

Workers must maintain clear and appropriate boundaries and must never use their role to:

- Intimidate, manipulate, bully or coerce another person.
- Develop inappropriate emotional or sexual relationships.
- Gain personal benefit or advantage.
- Exploit access to information or influence.

Any sexual activity or sexualised relationship between an adult worker and a child under 18 is unacceptable and must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Workers should avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted or compromise their position of trust.

L.2 - GIFTS, REWARDS AND FAVOURITISM

- Gifts should be given openly, appropriately, and never in a way that could be perceived as favouritism, bribery, or grooming.
- Any gifts given to children, young people, or adults at risk should be consistent with the aims of the activity and, where appropriate, agreed with ministry leaders and parents/carers.
- Small tokens of appreciation from children, young people, adults at risk, or their families may be accepted. However, workers should not accept gifts of significant value or gifts given regularly that could create an expectation of special treatment.
- Selection for activities, responsibilities, or privileges should always be fair, transparent, and based on clear criteria.

L.3 - SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES FOR GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

When leading groups or activities:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Ensure appropriate supervision and staffing levels.
- Ensure workers know how to summon additional help if needed.
- Respect privacy and personal boundaries.
- Avoid rough, sexually suggestive, or inappropriate games and comments.

- Never leave children unsupervised or place anyone under 16 in sole charge of children.
- Restrict access to activities to authorised workers and participants.
- Maintain awareness of who is present in the building during activities.

L.4 - ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS

These ratios are minimum requirements and may be increased following a risk assessment.

- 0-4 years: 1:3
- 4-7 years: 1:6
- 7-11 years: 1:8
- 11-18 years: 1:10

Additional Requirements:

- A minimum of 2 adults must be present at all activities involving under 18's regardless of number of children unless separately risk assessed e.g. mentoring programme.
- Ratios must be reviewed for higher-risk activities
- DSL/DDSL must approve variations
- Residential events must include gender-appropriate supervision
- Under 18s cannot be counted as adults when calculating ratios, they are always to be included in the count of children.

L.5 - WORKING WITH DISABLED CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Children, young people and adults at risk with disabilities may require additional support with communication, mobility, personal care, behaviour, or participation.

Support should be planned in consultation with the individual and, where appropriate, their parents or carers. Reasonable adjustments should be made to promote inclusion while ensuring the safety of all involved.

Appropriate boundaries should be maintained at all times, and personal care arrangements should be agreed in advance wherever possible.

L.6 - INTIMATE CARE (ONLY CHILDREN UP TO THE AGE OF 5)

Intimate care should only be provided where necessary and in accordance with the organisation's Intimate Care procedures (*Code of Conduct - Superstars*)

Workers should respect the dignity, privacy, and wishes of the individual while following agreed care plans and safeguarding guidance. Wherever possible, intimate care arrangements should be discussed and agreed in advance with the individual and/or their parent or carer.

L.7 - CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

Workers should seek to de-escalate situations through calm communication and appropriate support.

Where behaviour becomes disruptive, individuals should be asked to stop and given clear warnings about the consequences of continued behaviour.

If there is an immediate risk of harm to the individual or others, reasonable force may be used as a last resort to prevent injury or serious damage to property. Any use of physical intervention must be proportionate, recorded, and reported to the DSL/DDSL as soon as possible. ([See Appendix M - Use of Reasonable Force](#))

Parents or carers should be informed where a child has been physically restrained.

L.8 - UNEXPECTED ATTENDANCE AT ACTIVITIES

Individuals who arrive without prior registration should be welcomed appropriately while reasonable steps are taken to establish their identity, emergency contact details, and any relevant support needs.

Particular care should be taken where children attend without a parent or carer being aware of their whereabouts.

L.9 - PARENTS REMAINING IN CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Parents and carers may observe activities where appropriate but should not participate in leadership or supervision unless they have completed the organisation's safer recruitment process.

Consideration should be given to the needs of individual children, including disabled children who may require additional parental support.

L.10 - DROP IN ACTIVITIES

Drop-in environments require additional safeguards.

Organisations must:

- Control access to the building
- Ensure adequate supervision
- Maintain awareness of who is present
- Inform Safeguarding Team of new activities

L.11 - DAY TRIPS AND OUTINGS (see L.14 for residentials)

All trips require:

- Parental consent
- Risk assessment
- Clear planning

On the day:

- Carry emergency contacts
- Take a mobile phone
- Conduct regular headcounts

DSL/DDSL must be consulted during planning.

L.12 - HOME VISITS

Workers and leaders may need to make occasional home visits. (Our Mentoring Policy may apply to regular visits.)

Guidelines for visiting:

- Home visits should, wherever possible, be planned and recorded in advance.
- Agree proposed visit with ministry lead.
- In the case of children and young people never go into a home if no parent or carer is present unless the child would be at risk of significant harm if you do not do so.
- In the case of children and young people, if the parent/carers is absent when the call is made, leave some means of identification and explanation for the visit that can be given to them.

L.13 - BABY SITTING

CCBS does not run a baby-sitting service.

L.14 - SLEEPOVERS

CCBS does not organise sleepovers.

L.15 - TRANSPORTATION

Routine transport is the responsibility of parents/carers, and church workers should only transport children, as part of their duties, when this has been specifically authorised as part of a church activity or in exceptional circumstances.

Workers should not use transport arrangements as an opportunity for regular one-to-one mentoring, pastoral support, or counselling conversations with children or young people.

CCBS encourages parents and carers to make their own transport arrangements for children and young people attending church activities. Workers and volunteers should not normally provide transport for children or young people.

Where transport is organised by CCBS (for example, residentials, trips, or other approved activities) a reputable coach hire company will be contracted.

Group Travel

- Arrangements for group travel will be agreed with the DSL/DDSL in advance.
- If travelling in multiple vehicles, passenger groups should remain consistent for both outward and return journeys where possible.
- Regular register checks/headcounts should be taken to ensure everyone is accounted for.
- No child or young person should be left alone at a collection or drop-off point. Leaders must ensure that children are collected by a parent, carer, or another agreed responsible adult.
- Similar considerations should be applied to adults at risk, depending on their individual needs and circumstances.

Parent-Carer Transport Arrangements

Transport arrangements made privately between parents or carers are not the responsibility of CCBS and fall outside these procedures.

L.16 - SWIMMING TRIPS

- Arrangements for swimming trips will be agreed with the DSL/DDSL in advance.
- Lifeguard present
- Adequate supervision (Inc increased ratios)
- Male and female workers attend for mixed sex group
- Safe changing arrangements (Single sex changing, two leaders per changing room - same gender as children)
- Written consent from parents
- Appropriate first aid and medical equipment

L.17 - RESIDENTIALS

Residentials:

- Full risk assessment
- Safeguarding and risk assessment checks for venues
- Clear supervision structures
- Written consent and medical information from parents

- Appropriate first aid and medical equipment

DSL/DDSL must be involved in planning.

L.18 - PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

Data Protection Act legislation, organisations must be careful if they want to take photographs or film footage of people, and how images are used. This does not mean that photographs should not be taken or that filming is prohibited, but there are certain protocols that must be followed to comply with data protection legislation as well as to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe. There may also be privacy concerns for non-vulnerable adults which should be respected.

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded.

In addition to this:

- It must be made clear why the image(s) or film is being used, what it will be used for and who might want to look at the pictures.
- Obtain written and specific consent from parents or carers before using photographs of children where individuals can be identified.
- Images must only be stored on approved church systems and devices and should not be retained on personal devices.

Photography and filming in a public place will be subject to national guidelines.

L.19 - TOBACCO, VAPES, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

Smoking, vaping, alcohol, and drugs (other than drugs used for medical purposes and provided by a parent/carer) are not permitted at children's activities.

Workers who become aware of any substance misuse should respond appropriately, record concerns, and seek guidance from the DSL/DDSL.

Illegal drug use or possession on church premises will be treated as a safeguarding and potentially criminal matter and may require police involvement.

Adults who wish to smoke or vape must do so outside of the church building and away from the church entrance when events including children are taking place.

Alcohol may be consumed on the premises by adults at pre-arranged events such as party hires but all hirers and consumers of alcohol must be aware of protecting children and adults at risk of harm.

L.20 - GANGS AND GANG CRIME

Workers should be aware (through safeguarding training) of the risks associated with gang involvement, including criminal exploitation, violence, drug activity, and weapon carrying.

Indicators may include changes in behaviour, unexplained money or possessions, association with known gang members, fear of rival groups, or carrying weapons.

Any concerns about gang involvement should be reported to the DSL/DDSL and managed in line with safeguarding procedures.

The best way workers can help prevent children, young people and adults getting involved in a gang is by talking openly about gangs, finding out what people think about gangs and warning them of the dangers of becoming involved.

APPENDIX M - USE OF REASONABLE FORCE

This guidance sets out the limited circumstances in which reasonable force may be used to prevent harm during children's and youth activities.

Physical intervention should only be used when absolutely necessary and must always be proportionate, reasonable, and in the best interests of the child and those around them.

Corporal punishment is prohibited and must never be used.

When Reasonable Force May Be Used

Reasonable force may be used to prevent a child from:

- Injuring themselves or others.
- Causing serious damage to property.
- Committing a criminal offence.
- Engaging in behaviour that places themselves or others at immediate risk of harm.

Principles

There is no legal definition of "reasonable force". Whether force is reasonable depends on the circumstances, including:

- The age, size, understanding, and needs of the child.
- The seriousness and immediacy of the risk.
- Whether a less restrictive intervention could be used.
- The amount of force applied and the length of time it is used.

Any physical intervention must:

- Use the minimum force necessary.
- Last only for as long as required to reduce the risk.
- Never be used as a punishment.
- Never be used out of anger, frustration, or to secure compliance with instructions.
- Respect the dignity and welfare of the child.

Examples of Appropriate Physical Intervention

Examples may include:

- Separating children who are fighting.
- Preventing a child from harming themselves or another person.
- Preventing a child from running into immediate danger.
- Guiding or leading a child away from a dangerous situation.
- Blocking a child's path to prevent injury or serious harm.

Physical intervention may involve holding, guiding, leading by the arm, or positioning oneself between individuals where necessary to reduce risk.

Interventions that deliberately inflict pain, restrict breathing, involve excessive force, or could reasonably be considered degrading, humiliating, or indecent must never be used.

Seeking Assistance

Where possible, workers should seek support from another worker before intervening. If a worker believes intervention would place them or others at significant risk, they should prioritise moving others to safety and seek assistance, including contacting emergency services where necessary.

Recording and Reporting

Any use of reasonable force must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours after the incident.

A written record should be completed promptly and include:

- The date, time, and location of the incident.
- The names of those involved.
- The names of any witnesses.
- The reason physical intervention was necessary.
- What happened before, during, and after the incident.
- The type and duration of the intervention used.
- Any injuries sustained.
- Any follow-up actions taken.

The written record should be stored securely in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Parents or carers should normally be informed as soon as possible, unless doing so would place the child or another person at increased risk of harm. In such circumstances, advice should be sought from the DSL/DDSL, statutory agencies, or the police.

Any complaint or allegation arising from the use of physical intervention will be managed in accordance with the organisation's complaints procedures and may be referred to statutory agencies where appropriate.

APPENDIX N - OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

N.1 - First Aid

An appropriately stocked First Aid kit must be available at activities.

Emergency contact details and relevant medical information should be readily accessible for all residential activities.

N.2 - Accident Reporting

All accidents, injuries and significant incidents should be recorded as soon as possible.

Accident records should include:

- The date, time and location.
- The nature of the injury or incident.
- Action taken.
- Names of those involved.
- Any witnesses.

Parents or carers should be informed of accidents involving children and young people as soon as reasonably practicable.

Serious incidents should be reported to the DSL and managed in accordance with safeguarding and health and safety procedures.

RIDDOR incidents will be managed in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

N.3 - Registers and Attendance Records (Non-residential)

Attendance registers should be maintained for children's (Pre-Secondary) activities where parents are not present.

Registration information should include:

- Parent or carer contact details.
- Emergency contact information.
- Relevant medical conditions.
- Allergies and dietary requirements.
- Consent information where applicable.

Information should be reviewed and updated regularly.

For youth activities (Secondary Aged Children) where parents are not present:

- Attendance registers are taken.
- Emergency contacts and medical information are taken for visitors.
- Ad-hoc events (e.g. offsite trips and onsite parties) require a parent sign-up which includes emergency contact and medical information.

N.4 - Risk Assessments

All activities must comply with the CCBS Risk Assessment Policy.

N.5 - Food Hygiene

Where food or drink is provided, reasonable steps must be taken to ensure food safety.

This includes:

- Following good hygiene practices.
- Safe storage and preparation of food.
- Awareness of allergies and dietary requirements.
- Appropriate supervision during snacks and meals.
- Access to fresh drinking water.

Hot drinks without lids should not be carried through activity areas or placed within reach of young children.

Food provided at events should be clearly labelled where allergens may be present.

N.6 - Health and Safety

Buildings and equipment used by CCBS must be maintained in a safe condition and comply with relevant health and safety requirements.

This includes:

- Fire safety measures.
- Appropriate maintenance checks.
- Electrical safety testing where required.
- Safe access and evacuation arrangements.

Any hazards should be reported immediately.

APPENDIX O - ONLINE SAFETY

Introduction

Technology is an integral part of everyday life and ministry. While digital communication offers many opportunities for connection, learning and community, it also creates safeguarding risks that must be managed carefully.

This policy outlines the roles, responsibilities and procedures for the safe, responsible and appropriate use of digital technologies within CCBS. It applies to all workers, volunteers, children, young people and adults involved in church activities.

For the purposes of the Online Safety Policy policy:

- **Children** refers to those who have not yet started secondary school. They are usually part of CCBS Supergang.
- **Young people** refers to those under the age of 18 who have reached secondary school age. They are usually part of CCBS Youth.

Where online ministry activities are undertaken (e.g. Zoom meetings, livestreams or online groups), additional guidance contained within ministry-specific risk assessments must also be followed.

Why We Have This Policy

The internet, mobile devices and social media are now part of daily life. While they offer many benefits, they also create potential safeguarding risks including:

- Cyberbullying
- Online grooming
- Sexual exploitation
- Sextortion
- Exposure to harmful or inappropriate content
- Radicalisation
- Online fraud and scams
- Harassment and coercive behaviour

This policy seeks to:

- Promote the safe and responsible use of technology.
- Protect children, young people and adults at risk from harm.
- Establish clear expectations for workers and volunteers.
- Support parents and carers in promoting online safety.
- Provide procedures for responding to concerns.
- Protect workers and volunteers from misunderstandings or false allegations.

Our Commitment to Online Safety

CCBS is committed to helping children and young people use technology safely and responsibly.

We will:

- Promote online safety awareness and education.
- Encourage healthy and respectful online behaviour.
- Provide clear guidance for workers and volunteers.
- Ensure children and young people know where to seek help if they experience online harm.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to concerns.

We recognise that no organisation can eliminate all online risks, but we will take reasonable steps to minimise risk and respond effectively when concerns arise.

O.1 - Communication with Young People

Jovo Communication Platform

CCBS uses Jovo as its primary communication platform for young people.

Jovo is designed specifically for churches and youth groups and allows communication through monitored group chats without private messaging.

The following safeguards apply:

- Groups may only be created by the Youth and Young Adults Ministry Lead.
- Membership is restricted to CCBS young people, parents/carers, approved leaders and members of the Safeguarding Team.
- Parents/carers will be informed when a young person joins Jovo and invited to join the platform themselves.
- At least two approved adult leaders, including one safeguarding-trained adult, must be present in every group.
- Members of the Safeguarding Team will have oversight and access to all groups.
- Communication should remain appropriate, respectful and relevant to church activities

Email Communication

Email should not normally be used for pastoral communication with children or young people.

Where email communication with children or young people is necessary:

- Parental consent must be obtained.

- Parents/carers will be copied into communications unless there is a specific safeguarding reason for confidentiality.
- Messages must be professional, clear and relevant to church activities.
- Communications should be accessible for oversight by ministry leaders or safeguarding leads.
- These emails will be retained for a minimum of one year.

Mobile Phone Communication (Whatsapp, Text Messaging)

With the exception of mentoring and football, which are covered by specific guidance, one-to-one communication with children or young people is discouraged and limited to responding to unsolicited communication from a young person.

Communication should normally take place through approved group platforms such as Jovo.

Any communication that raises safeguarding concerns must be saved and reported to the Safeguarding Team.

Social Media

Social media must not be used for private communication between workers and children or young people.

Workers and volunteers:

- Must not add or accept children or young people under 18 on personal social media accounts.
- Must not communicate privately with children or young people through social media messaging.
- Must ensure personal social media accounts are private.
- Must avoid posting content that could undermine professional boundaries or bring the church into disrepute.

Church-approved social media accounts may be used for communication and publicity where:

- They are approved by church leadership.
- At least two approved adult administrators oversee the account one of whom must be a member of the Safeguarding team.
- Communications remain transparent and appropriate.

Social media must never be used to bypass the safeguards outlined in this policy.

Online Meetings and Digital Ministry

Any online activity involving children or young people must be planned, risk assessed and approved by the relevant Ministry Lead.

Where possible:

- Two approved adults should be present.
- Parents/carers should be informed in advance.
- Approved platforms and church accounts must be used.
- Meetings must be conducted in an open and observable manner.
- Private one-to-one online meetings should be avoided unless authorised by the Ministry Lead and agreed with parents/carers.

Additional guidance for online ministry can be found in ministry-specific risk assessments.

O.2 - Acceptable Use of Technology

All users of church technology and online platforms are expected to use them safely, responsibly and respectfully.

Users must not:

- Access pornographic, violent, extremist, racist or otherwise harmful content.
- Share, upload or distribute offensive, abusive or illegal material.
- Harass, bully, intimidate or threaten others.
- Disclose personal information about themselves or others.
- Attempt to gain unauthorised access to accounts or systems.
- Breach copyright laws.
- Use church technology for unlawful activities.
- Download or distribute material that may place others at risk.

Any misuse may result in restricted access, disciplinary action, referral to safeguarding leads, parents/carers, police or other statutory agencies where appropriate.

O.3 - Filtering, Monitoring and Security

CCBS will take reasonable steps to protect users and equipment through:

- Appropriate filtering and security measures.
- Anti-virus and malware protection.
- Password-protected systems where personal information is stored.
- Secure storage of church data.

Workers should immediately report any concerns regarding inappropriate content, security breaches or online safety incidents.

O.4 - Messaging Apps and Social Media Groups

CCBS may use messaging platforms such as WhatsApp, Messenger or similar services to support ministry teams, church groups and church communications.

General Principles

All communication within church-related messaging groups should reflect Christian values and maintain appropriate standards of conduct, respect and safeguarding.

Members of church-related groups are expected to:

- Use groups for their intended purpose and follow any guidelines set by the group administrator.
- Communicate respectfully and appropriately at all times.
- Avoid sharing content that is offensive, discriminatory, abusive, sexually explicit, defamatory, or otherwise inappropriate.
- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of others and not share personal information without permission.
- Avoid posting material that could bring individuals, ministries or CCBS into disrepute.
- Report any safeguarding concerns arising from online communications in accordance with the church safeguarding policy.

Ministry and Team Groups

Where official ministry groups are established (for example Worship Team, Children's Ministry, Youth Team or Welcome Team), members should:

- Use the group primarily for ministry-related communication.
- Avoid excessive posting of unrelated material.
- Follow any additional guidance provided by the group administrator or Ministry Lead.

Small Groups and Church Community Groups

Where church-connected small groups or community groups use messaging platforms:

- Group administrators should make expectations for behaviour clear.
- Discussions should be conducted respectfully and in a way that supports the wellbeing of group members.
- Content shared within the group should be appropriate to the purpose of the group and consistent with the values of CCBS.
- Any safeguarding concerns that arise through group communications must be reported in line with the church safeguarding procedures.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in removal from a group and, where appropriate, further action under the church's safeguarding, volunteer or disciplinary procedures.

O.5 - Responding to Online Safety Concerns

Any concern relating to online safety must be reported immediately using the church safeguarding procedures.

Concerns may include:

- Cyberbullying
- Online grooming
- Sexual exploitation
- Sextortion
- Inappropriate communications
- Radicalisation
- Exposure to harmful content
- Sharing of indecent images
- Online harassment

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL will assess concerns and determine whether referral to police, children's services, CEOP, the Internet Watch Foundation or other agencies is required.

O.6 - Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies

Workers should exercise caution when using artificial intelligence (AI), chatbots or other emerging technologies.

Personal information, safeguarding concerns or identifiable details relating to children, young people or adults at risk must not be entered into publicly accessible AI systems.

Any use of AI within church activities should be appropriate, transparent and consistent with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

O.7 - Data Protection and Storage

CCBS will store personal information securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

This includes:

- Restricting access to those with a legitimate need to know.
- Using password-protected systems where appropriate.
- Storing safeguarding records securely.
- Avoiding storage of sensitive information on personal devices unless specifically authorised and adequately protected.
- Retaining and disposing of information in accordance with church data retention procedures.

Any loss, theft or unauthorised disclosure of personal information must be reported immediately to the appropriate church leader and safeguarding lead.

O.8 - Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- Restriction or removal of access to church systems.
- Suspension from ministry or volunteering roles.
- Disciplinary action.
- Referral to safeguarding agencies, statutory authorities or police where appropriate.

APPENDIX P - MENTORING AND DISCIPLESHIP RELATIONSHIPS

Purpose

CCBS recognises the value of mentoring and discipleship relationships in supporting spiritual growth, wellbeing and healthy Christian community. Such relationships can provide encouragement, guidance, accountability and support.

Because mentoring relationships involve trust, influence and often one-to-one contact, they must be conducted in a way that protects both the young person and the mentor. This appendix sets out the safeguarding expectations for all mentoring and discipleship relationships involving children and young people under the age of 18.

Approval and Accountability

All mentoring relationships involving a person under the age of 18 must:

- Be approved by the relevant Ministry Lead.
- Be known to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL where appropriate.
- Have a clear purpose and agreed expectations.
- Be subject to appropriate oversight and review.

A record of approved mentoring relationships will be maintained by the relevant Ministry Lead.

Suitability of Mentors

Anyone acting as a mentor to a child or young person under 18 must:

- Be safely recruited in accordance with the church's Safer Recruitment Policy.
- Hold an appropriate DBS check where required.
- Complete safeguarding training required by CCBS.
- Understand and follow the church's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Be accountable to a Ministry Lead.

Mentoring is not a substitute for professional counselling, therapy or specialist support services.

Parental Knowledge and Consent

Written parental or guardian consent must be obtained before a mentoring relationship begins with anyone under the age of 18.

Parents or guardians should be informed of:

- The purpose of the mentoring relationship.

- Who the mentor is.
- Where meetings will take place.
- How communication will occur.
- Who to contact if they have any concerns.

Meeting Arrangements

Mentoring meetings should take place:

- In public or observable settings.
- In locations where other responsible adults are present.
- At reasonable times of day.
- In a manner that is open and transparent.

Examples may include:

- Church premises during normal activities.
- Cafés or public meeting spaces.
- Walking meetings in public places.

Meetings should not normally take place in a mentor's home or a young person's home. Any exceptional arrangement must be approved in advance by the Ministry Lead and be known to parents or guardians. A record of all such meetings shall be maintained by each ministry lead in a manner and location agreed with the DSL, This record shall be retained as a safeguarding document]

Where practical, another responsible adult should be aware that a meeting is taking place.

Professional Boundaries

Mentors must maintain healthy and appropriate boundaries at all times.

Mentors must not:

- Develop relationships that are emotionally, romantically or sexually inappropriate.
- Create situations that could be perceived as secretive.
- Offer excessive gifts or preferential treatment.
- Become the sole source of support for a young person.
- Encourage dependency.
- Use their position of trust for personal benefit.

Particular care should be taken when mentoring involves an adult and a young person of a different gender. Ministry Leads should consider any additional safeguards that may be appropriate in these situations.

Communication

Communication should be transparent, accountable and appropriate.

Where possible:

- Arrangements should be made through approved church communication channels.
- Parents should be aware of communication arrangements.
- Communication should be limited to mentoring, discipleship and practical matters.
- Communication should not take place late at night except in exceptional circumstances.

Mentors should avoid excessive or overly personal communication with young people.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Mentors should create a safe environment where young people feel able to talk openly.

However, mentors must make clear from the outset that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

If a young person discloses information that indicates they or another person may be at risk of harm, the mentor must share this information in accordance with the church's safeguarding procedures.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy DSL.

Transport

Transport to and from mentoring sessions remains the responsibility of parents or guardians.

Mentors should not routinely transport children or young people as part of a mentoring relationship.

In exceptional circumstances where transport is unavoidable, this must be:

- Approved in advance by the Ministry Lead.
- Consistent with the church's transportation guidance.
- Known to parents or guardians.

Recording and Review

The Ministry Lead will maintain a record of mentoring arrangements and periodically review them to ensure they remain appropriate, beneficial and compliant with safeguarding requirements. These will be retained in line with Safeguarding Guidance (currently 75 years).

The record of arrangements will include:

- start and end dates
- names of mentors and mentee
- dates and times of meet ups
- a summary of discussion

Any concerns regarding boundaries, conduct or safeguarding must be reported and recorded in accordance with church procedures.

Ending a Mentoring Relationship

Mentoring relationships should be reviewed regularly and brought to an appropriate conclusion when:

- The agreed purpose has been achieved.
- The young person no longer wishes to continue.
- Parents or guardians withdraw consent.
- Safeguarding concerns arise.
- The Ministry Lead determines that the arrangement is no longer appropriate.

The ending of a mentoring relationship should be handled sensitively and communicated clearly to all parties involved.

APPENDIX R - EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SAFER RECRUITMENT STATEMENT

The Community Church Bishops Stortford (CCBS) is a Christian organisation committed to treating all people with dignity, respect and fairness. We are opposed to unlawful discrimination and seek to create an environment in which everyone is valued and respected.

In providing services and activities, CCBS will not discriminate unlawfully on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, as protected under the Equality Act 2010.

We are committed to ensuring that all who engage with our church, ministries and services are treated fairly and equitably.

Recruitment and Selection

CCBS seeks to recruit staff and volunteers based on their suitability for the role, considering their skills, experience, qualifications, character and commitment to the values and purposes of the organisation.

As a Christian organisation, some roles may require the postholder to be a committed Christian in order to promote or represent the Christian faith and ethos of the church. Where this applies, it will be clearly stated in the role description and recruitment materials. Such requirements will be applied in accordance with the occupational requirement provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Criminal Records and DBS Checks

As an organisation that works with children, young people and adults at risk, CCBS is committed to safer recruitment practices and complies fully with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice.

Where a DBS check is required, this will only be requested where it is lawful, relevant and proportionate to the role. Applicants will be informed if a DBS check is required as part of the recruitment process.

CCBS is committed to treating all applicants fairly and will not discriminate unfairly against any person on the basis of a criminal record or information disclosed through a DBS check.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent someone from working or volunteering with CCBS. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account:

- The nature and circumstances of any offence.
- Its relevance to the role.
- The time that has elapsed since the offence occurred.

- Any evidence of rehabilitation.
- The safety and wellbeing of children, young people and adults at risk.

Applicants will be given the opportunity to discuss any information revealed through a DBS check before any final decision is made.

CCBS complies with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and will only request information about convictions and cautions where legally entitled to do so.

All information relating to criminal records will be handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation.

APPENDIX S - KEY LEGISLATION

Human Rights Act 1998 (based on the European Convention of Human Rights)

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

Safeguarding Children Laws and Guidance

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (updated 2026)

Children Act 1989 and 2004

Keeping Children Safe in Education (updated annually)

Trustee Act 2000

Safeguarding Adults Laws and Guidance

The Care Act 2014

The Mental Capacity Act 2005

Vulnerable Groups Laws

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Equal Opportunities Laws

Equality Act 2010

Rehabilitation of Offenders Laws

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Position of Trust Laws

‘Position of trust’ offences within ss.16-19 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 now include situations where certain activities take place in a sport or religion (as amended by the Police, Crime, Sentencing & Courts Act, 2022)

APPENDIX T - SAFEGUARDING RESOURCES

Safeguarding is a priority here

We are committed to creating safer places by following statutory guidelines on good working practice.



Your safeguarding team:

Safeguarding lead

Alison Mansfield 07753 865646



Deputy Safeguarding leads



Richard Steele 07720 525291



Susan Ash 07913 844672

Tom Amos 07910 050122



Anita Lahanmi 07946 473760

A copy of our safeguarding policy is available upon request.

In an emergency, or for independent advice call thirtyone:eight on:

0303 003 11 11



With safeguarding support from:

thirtyone:eight

Creating safer places. Together.

Thirtyone:eight is an independent Christian safeguarding charity.
Charity No: 1004490. Scottish Charity No: SC040578. Company No: 2646487

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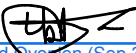
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