



# SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

**JULY 2024**

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## INTRODUCTION

### DETAILS OF ALTRINCHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

#### **Hale Road Building:**

Altrincham Baptist Church

Hale Road

Altrincham

WA14 2EW

Tel No: 0161 941 3052

Email: [info@altrinchambaptist.org](mailto:info@altrinchambaptist.org)

#### **Pownall Road Building:**

The Hub

Pownall Road

Altrincham

WA14 2SZ

Tel No 0161 941 2018

Email: [info@ourhub.org](mailto:info@ourhub.org)

Membership of Denomination: Baptist Union

Charity Number: 1130343

Insurance: Public Liability Insurance with Baptist Insurance Co plc

Policy number: 31/BPG/9130082

Altrincham Baptist Church (ABC) is a community of people who want to follow Jesus and help others to be his disciples. Sunday morning gatherings are held in our Hale Road building, as well as online via YouTube, and during these gatherings, children and young people take part in age-specific activities held in both Hale Road and Pownall Road ('The Hub', our community centre) buildings.

The Hub Community Centre is a partnership between Trafford Borough Council and ABC offering a range of social activities and events for people from both the church and the local community of all ages: children, young people, adults, families and retired. It hosts a café and provides many community activities for families, children and older people. The Hub also hosts activities in partnership with local authorities and other organisations.

Workers in faith gatherings comprise employees and volunteers drawn from within the ABC fellowship. Workers in the Hub Community Centre activities comprise employees, volunteers from the ABC fellowship and volunteers from the wider community.

In this document the term “church” or “ABC” is used to cover all activities whether they be faith gatherings or community pursuits.

Altrincham Baptist Church, as a registered charity, has safeguarding responsibility for all activities of the ABC fellowship and those activities of the Hub community sponsored by ABC. Activities sponsored by other organisations, hiring our premises, are required to manage their own safeguarding arrangements.

This document is divided into four sections:

- 1) Safeguarding Policy Statement**
- 2) Safeguarding Procedures** – these sections provide a clear outline of the reporting procedures
- 3) Best Practice Guidelines** – these guidelines provide detailed information on key areas of safeguarding
- 4) Useful Contacts**

## **DEFINITIONS OF TERMS**

For the purpose of this guide, the term ‘child’ refers to anyone under the age of 18 years.

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, so for our policy we are using the following simple definition taken from Thirtyone:eight:

*‘Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation’.*

## SECTION 1 – SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

### SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT FOR ALTRINCHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

#### Our vision

The vision statement of Altrincham Baptist Church is “Be a disciple. Make disciples. Reveal the Kingdom of God”.

At ABC we recognise that all Christian vision is based on The Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). We are called to love the Lord with all our heart, soul mind and strength and love others as we love ourselves. Our faith also compels us to reach out beyond ourselves to make disciples – others who would follow Jesus; to reach out to the lost, the broken, the hurting and to bring them the love and care of Jesus.

In fulfilling this vision, we

- Welcome children and adults at risk into the life of our community,
- Run activities for children and adults at risk,
- Make our premises available to organisations working with children and adults at risk. (See 3.3.12 Hiring of Premises).
- Welcome all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, neuro-diversity, education, class, economic status or political outlook.

#### Our safeguarding responsibilities

The church leadership recognises its responsibilities in safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk. We recognise safeguarding must underpin and cut across all church activity. As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safeguarding of all associated with the church and will pray for them regularly. In pursuit of this, we commit ourselves to this policy and to the development of sound procedures to ensure we implement our policy well.

- **Prevention and reporting of abuse**

It is the duty of each member of the ABC fellowship and each Hub volunteer worker to help prevent the abuse of children and adults at risk, and the duty of each church member and volunteer to respond to concerns about the well-being of children and adults at risk. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures. The church will fully co-operate with any statutory investigation into any suspected abuse linked with the church.

- **Safer recruitment, support and supervision of workers**

The church will exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and adults at risk, whether paid workers or volunteers. All workers will undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where necessary (according to the requirements of the role) and will be provided with appropriate training (e.g. NWBA Level 2 or Level 3 Safeguarding), support and supervision to promote the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

- **Respecting children and adults at risk**

The church will adopt a code of behaviour (See SECTION 3, BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES) for all who are appointed to work with children and adults at risk so that all children and adults are shown the respect that is due to them.

- **Safer working practices**

The church is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children and adults and will adopt ways of working with them that promote their safety and well-being.

- **A safer community**

The church is committed to the prevention of all bullying. The church will seek to ensure that the behaviour of any individuals who may pose a particular risk to children, young people and adults in the church is managed appropriately.

### **Safeguarding contact points within our church**

The church has appointed the following individuals to form part of the church safeguarding team:

**RACHEL DOWNEY, Designated Person for Safeguarding Children aged 0-11 years and Young People aged 11-18**

**Phone number** 07796 763 952

**Email address** [racheldowney@altrinchambaptist.org](mailto:racheldowney@altrinchambaptist.org)

**DAVE BRADLEY, Designated Person for Safeguarding Adults**

**Phone number** 07713 644 725

**Email address** [david@davidbradley.me.uk](mailto:david@davidbradley.me.uk)

They will advise the church on any matters related to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and take the appropriate action when abuse is disclosed, discovered or suspected.

**VANESSA HORNER, Safeguarding Trustee**

**Phone number** 07929 967 166

**Email address** [vanessahorner@altrinchambaptist.org](mailto:vanessahorner@altrinchambaptist.org)

She will raise the profile of safeguarding within the church and oversee and monitor the implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedures on behalf of the church trustees.

The Lead Minister is also an important part of the Safeguarding Team and should be notified of any significant safeguarding issues or concerns, identified by the team, as and when they arise. Likewise, any safeguarding matters which the ministry staff team encounter will be passed to the appropriate Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) and the Safeguarding Trustee. Where possible, the Church Safeguarding Team will work together. However, each person in the church fellowship and Hub community has a responsibility to raise allegations of abuse with their group leader or designated Person for Safeguarding as soon as they are identified.

*(Further definitions of these roles can be found in Appendix 4 – Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities)*

### **Putting our policy into practice**

- A copy of the safeguarding policy statement will be available in the Hale Road and Pownall Road

offices and our church website.

- The Safeguarding poster with key contact details will be displayed prominently in both the Hale Road and Pownall Road buildings. (See appendix 4)
- Each worker with children and/or adults at risk will be given a full copy of the safeguarding policy and procedures and will be asked to sign to confirm that they will follow them.
- A full copy of the policy and procedures will be made available on request to any member of the church fellowship, or member of the Hub community.
- The policy and procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually, approved by the trustees and any necessary revisions adopted into the policy and implemented through our procedures.
- A report on the outcome of the annual safeguarding review will be given at the AGM.



## SECTION 2 - SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

### INTRODUCTION

ABC's safeguarding procedures set out how our safeguarding policy is implemented in all the gatherings, groups and meetings that are part of the life of our church fellowship and Hub community.

Each trustee, church leader and worker (paid or voluntary) needs to be familiar with these procedures.

Over the following pages you will find clear, specific information on how to recognise and report abuse and how to respond to concerns raised within ABC. It is vitally important that these procedures are well known and that all those working with children and/or adults at risk within ABC have the information and training needed to work with these procedures.

All workers (paid and voluntary) who work with children and/or adults at risk should attend a minimum of Level 2 NWBA safeguarding training before they are able to work without supervision. The Baptist Union of Great Britain publishes a 'Gateway to Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding' guide for new workers (paid and voluntary) that is available free of charge from the Baptist Union website [here](#). This document is designed to be an interim measure whilst a new member of staff or volunteer is waiting for a Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding course to take place.

## 2.1 PROCEDURE FOR RECOGNISING, RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING ABUSE

### 2.1.1 What to do if Abuse is Suspected or Disclosed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a range of settings, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. There are many ways in which people suffer abuse. For more information, including explanations of different forms of abuse, please see Appendix 1.

Everyone has their part to play in helping to safeguard children and adults at risk within the life of the church:

- If the behaviour of a child or adult at risk gives any cause for concern,
- If an allegation is made in any context about a child or adult at risk being harmed,
- If the behaviour of any individual towards children or adults at risk causes concern.

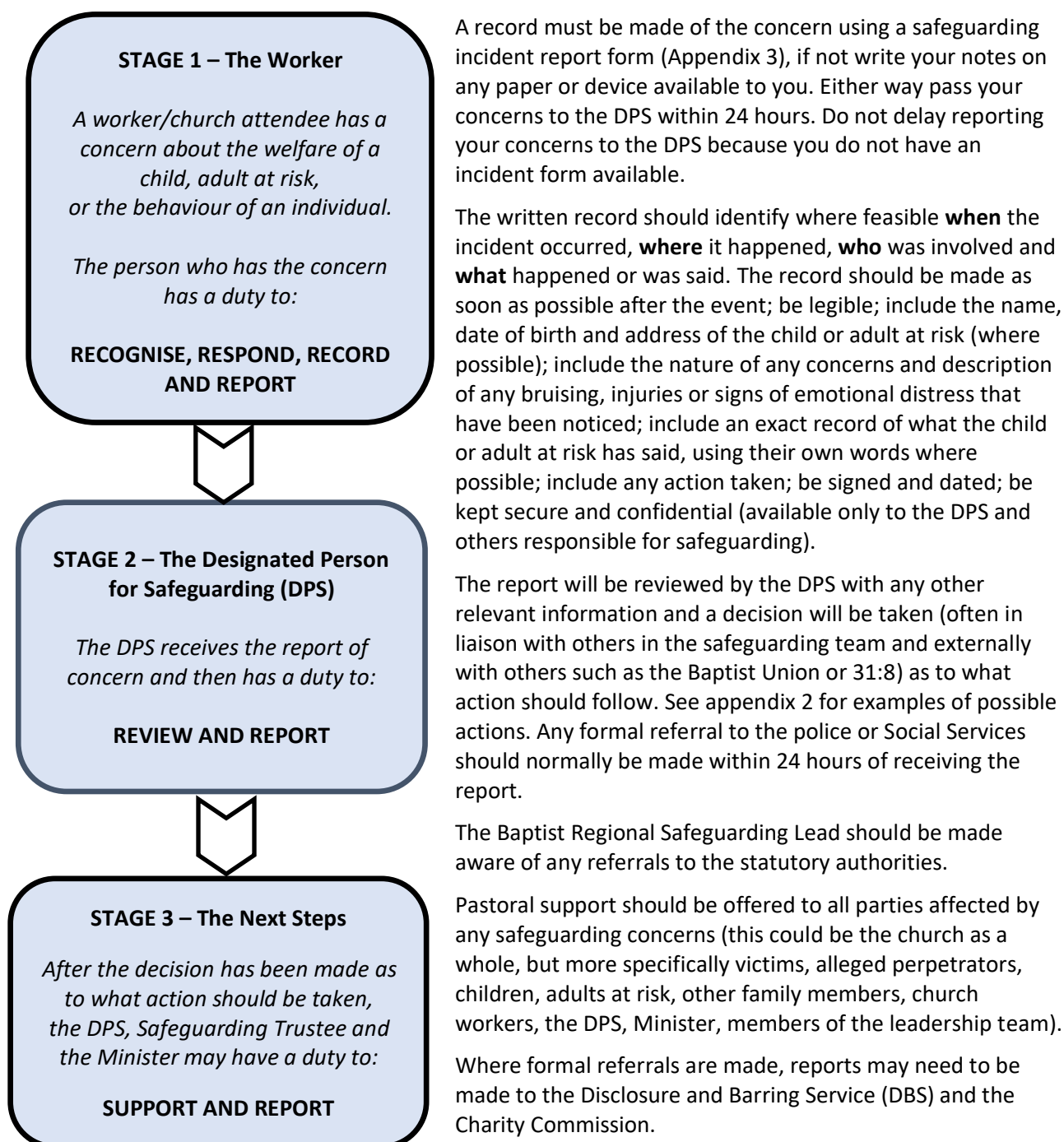
WHAT TO DO	WHAT NOT TO DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to and acknowledge what is being said.</li> <li>• Try to be reassuring &amp; remain calm.</li> <li>• Explain clearly what you will do and what will happen next.</li> <li>• Try to give them a timescale for when and how you / the DPS will contact them again.</li> <li>• Take action – don't ignore the situation.</li> <li>• Be supportive.</li> <li>• Tell them that:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– They were right to tell you;</li> <li>– You are taking what they have said seriously;</li> <li>– It was not their fault;</li> <li>– That you may need to pass this information on to the appropriate people;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be open and honest.</li> <li>• Give contact details for them to report any further details or ask any questions that may arise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not promise confidentiality.</li> <li>• Do not show shock, alarm, disbelief or disapproval.</li> <li>• Do not minimise what is being said.</li> <li>• Do not ask probing or leading questions or push for more information.</li> <li>• Do not offer false reassurance.</li> <li>• Do not delay in contacting the DPS.</li> <li>• Do not contact the alleged abuser.</li> <li>• Do not investigate the incident any further.</li> <li>• Never leave a child or adult at risk waiting to hear from someone without any idea of when or where that may be.</li> <li>• Do not pass on information to those who don't need to know, not even for prayer ministry.</li> </ul>

### 2.1.2 Responding to Concerns

When there are concerns that a child, young person or adult is being abused, the following process must be followed. More detailed information can be found in Appendix 2. The church worker (paid or voluntary) should:

- 1) **Recognise** that abuse may be taking place.
- 2) **Respond** to the concern.
- 3) **Record** all the information they have received.
- 4) **Report** the concern to the DPS who may, in turn, report it to the statutory authorities.

**If you think that anyone is in imminent danger of harm, a report should be made immediately to the police by calling 999.**



If the DPS is not available, or is implicated in the situation, any reports or concerns should be passed to another member of the church Safeguarding Team.

### 2.1.3 Responding to Concerns Raised about Adults at Risk

When a concern is raised about an adult it should be treated in the same way as a concern about a child.

The Care Act 2014 provides helpful guidance on these situations:

*“If the adult has the mental capacity to make informed decisions about their safety and they do not want any action to be taken, this does not preclude the sharing of information with relevant professional colleagues. This is to enable professionals to assess the risk of harm and to be confident that the adult is not being unduly influenced, coerced or intimidated and is aware of all the options. This will also enable professionals to check the safety and validity of decisions made. It is good practice to inform the adult that this action is being taken unless doing so would increase the risk of harm”.*

It is not your role to decide whether someone has mental capacity and is therefore able to make decisions that impact on their safety and well-being. Decisions on mental capacity are best made by professionals with the relevant background information to hand. Always share your concerns with the DPS even if you do not have the consent of the adult to do so – in this instance, make sure the DPS knows that the person concerned has not given consent for the information to be passed on.

The DPS will consider all the information to hand and decide whether it is appropriate for the information to be reported to the statutory authorities (see appendix 2 for further information). If there are any concerns about an adult's mental capacity, the DPS will contact the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team for advice.

### 2.1.4 Allegations Against Workers

If you see another worker acting in ways which concerns you or might be misconstrued, speak to the DPS about your concerns as soon as you can. This includes the actions or behaviours of those in leadership positions in the church.

Church workers should encourage an atmosphere of mutual accountability, holding each other to the highest standards of safeguarding practice. The following procedure should be followed:

- 1) When an allegation of abuse has been made do not approach the alleged perpetrator about it.
- 2) Follow the usual safeguarding procedure: **Recognise, Respond, Record, Report.**
- 3) Once the allegation has been reported to the DPS they can liaise with the relevant statutory authority and with the regional association Safeguarding Lead if they need further advice.
- 4) Whilst waiting for an outcome from the statutory authorities, the worker about whom concerns have been raised will be supervised as closely as possible, without raising suspicion.
- 5) Once the statutory authorities are involved, the church will follow their advice with regard to the next steps to take (for example suspension of worker, putting a contract in place).
- 6) A written record of all discussions with statutory authorities or other parties should be maintained by the Safeguarding Team and stored securely and confidentially, where only those directly involved in safeguarding (DPS, Safeguarding Trustee, Minister) can access them.
- 7) No information about the allegation will be shared with people in the church other than those

directly involved in safeguarding; not even for prayer purposes.

The suspension of a worker following an allegation is, by definition, a neutral act. Our priority as a church is to protect children and adults at risk from possible further abuse or from being influenced in any way by the alleged perpetrator. If the church is considering suspending a paid worker pending an investigation, then it is best to seek support from the Regional Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

It may be necessary, for the sake of the child / adult at risk or to satisfy the needs of an investigation, for the alleged perpetrator within the faith community to worship elsewhere. In such cases the DPS at the new church will be informed of the reasons for this happening.

### **When concerns are expressed about the Minister**

Any safeguarding concerns involving a Minister should always be reported immediately to the Regional Safeguarding Lead in addition to following the church's usual procedures. Do not tell the Minister that a concern has been raised about them.

### **When concerns are expressed about the church DPS / Safeguarding Trustee**

Any safeguarding concerns involving the DPS or Safeguarding Trustee should be raised with the Minister, they in turn should consult the Regional Safeguarding Lead. Do not tell the DPS / Safeguarding Trustee that a concern has been raised about them.

## **2.1.5 Abuse of Trust**

Relationships between children and adults at risk and their church workers can be described as 'relationships of trust'. The worker is someone in whom the child or adult at risk has placed a degree of trust. This may be because the worker has an educational role, is a provider of activities, or is even a significant adult friend. It is not acceptable for a church worker to form a romantic relationship with a child or adult at risk with whom they have a relationship of trust.

While by no means restricted to young helpers, those who are in their early adult years will need to be particularly aware of the need not to abuse their position of trust in their relationships with other young people who are not much younger than themselves.

[The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022](#) expanded the list of roles which are legally considered to be positions of trust to include anyone who is in a teaching, coaching, instructing, training or supervising role within sport or religion. This means that since May 2022 if an adult of any age is in a role where they are working directly with young people aged 16 and 17 and forms a romantic or sexual relationship with them, they could be charged with criminal offences. If any concerns emerge about a relationship forming between an adult helper and a young person then the DPS should be notified.

### 2.1.6 Allegations Made Against Children and Adults at Risk

Children and young people are by nature curious about sex. However, where a child is in a position of power, or has responsibility over another child (as in a babysitting arrangement) and abuses that trust through some sexual activity, then this is abusive. Where one child introduces another child to age-inappropriate sexual activity or forces themselves onto a child, this is abusive. This is sometimes referred to as Peer-on-Peer Abuse or Child on Child Abuse. Such situations will be taken as seriously as if an adult were involved, because the effects on the child victim can be as great.

When such an instance occurs, they will be investigated by the statutory authorities in the same way as if an adult were involved, although it is likely that the perpetrator may also be regarded as a victim in their own right, as they may have also been abused. It cannot be assumed that young people will grow out of this type of behaviour, as most adult sex offenders started abusing in their teens or even younger.

Allegations against adults at risk will be investigated by the statutory authorities. If the alleged perpetrator is unable to understand the significance of questions put to them or their replies, they can access support from an 'appropriate' adult whilst they are being questioned. This role can be filled by a range of people, such as a family member, carer, social worker, etc. In court, adults at risk may be allowed to be assisted by an intermediary or give evidence through a live link.

When an allegation is made against a child or adult at risk the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) Do not approach the person about whom the allegation has been made or their parents / carers.
- 2) Follow the church's safeguarding procedure: **Recognise, Respond, Record, Report.**
- 3) Seek advice from the DPS, who will speak to the police or social services about when to inform a parent. The DPS will also seek advice about what steps need to be taken to ensure the needs of both the victim and alleged perpetrator are met; this may include placing the child or adult at risk on a Safeguarding Contract or equivalent (see section 3.4: Safer Community / Working with Alleged or Known Offenders).
- 4) Make sure there is pastoral support in place for the child or adult at risk throughout the process involved.

### 2.1.7 Pastoral Care

#### Following an allegation / suspicion

When an allegation/suspicion arises in the church, a period of investigation will follow, which will be stressful for all involved. The church will ensure that one person is responsible for dealing with the authorities, another offers support to the victim/s and their family, and another gives pastoral care to the alleged perpetrator, without compromising the alleged victims or their families. It may be necessary to appoint other people to support the families involved.

Where a statutory investigation is under way, this support will be provided with the knowledge of the statutory authority involved.

Where the perpetrator accepts some responsibility, they will be encouraged to seek specialised interventions/treatment to reduce the risk of re-offending. This may only be appropriate once the investigation and legal processes have been completed.

## Supporting those who have experienced abuse

As a church, we are committed to caring for those who have experienced abuse and refer to the Baptist Union of Great Britain [Supporting Those who have Experienced Abuse](#) guide to ensure that we adhere to a model of best practice.

We recognise it is important that those who have experienced abuse:

- Are accepted for who they are, without being made to forgive or being put into a position of feeling guilty and responsible for what happened to them.
- Know that God loves them unconditionally, and that nothing can or will change this truth.
- Can be confident that those in the church community who know about the abuse are with them on their journey – no matter how long or difficult that journey may be.

However, we also recognise our professional limitations and therefore acknowledge the need to signpost individuals to specialist support. The DPS has a list of relevant local information and contacts, ready for anyone who may need it.

## 2.2 SAFER RECRUITMENT

As a church, we are committed to safer recruitment practices. When recruiting both paid and volunteer church workers, the following process will be applied:

- 1) We will develop a clear role profile, person specification and application form;
- 2) When advertising a role which involves working with children or adults at risk, we will make it clear that any appointment may be subject to a DBS check at the appropriate level;
- 3) All applicants will be asked to complete an application form and include the names of two referees;
- 4) Shortlisting of applicants will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager or group leader directly overseeing the role being recruited for;
- 5) Interviews will be carried out by at least two people, including the line manager or group leader;
- 6) Formal written references will be requested, ideally in the form of at least one professional and one personal reference. **References should not be sought from family members.**
- 7) A Self Disclosure Form and where appropriate, an enhanced DBS check must be completed satisfactorily before the appointed person starts in their role.

Note: Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000, it is an offence for anyone disqualified from working with children or adults at risk to knowingly apply, accept or offer to work with children or adults at risk. It is also a criminal offence to knowingly offer work with children or adults at risk to an individual who is so disqualified or to knowingly allow such an individual to continue to work with children or adults at risk.

### Additional checks for paid workers

In addition to the above checks which should be completed for both paid and volunteer church workers, an applicant's UK residency status and/ or right to work in the UK will be checked when recruiting for a paid role.

### References

Formal written references will be requested, ideally in the form of at least one professional and one personal reference. **References should not be sought from family members.**

### Appointment and Supervision

The church's safeguarding policy and procedures will be discussed with the applicant, and they will be required to sign their agreement to adhere to them. All workers will have a role description and clear lines of accountability to a leader and the leadership team.

Paid workers will also have an assigned supervisor with whom they will meet regularly to discuss work and address any issues or areas of concern. There will be a probationary period of six months in the role before any paid appointment is confirmed.

There will also be regular team meetings to review procedures, share concerns and identify other matters that may need clarification and guidance.

### **Training**

It is important that all workers understand our church's agreed safeguarding procedures and attend appropriate Excellence in Safeguarding training at least once every **four** years. Where a worker is successfully recruited but has not yet been able to attend the training, they should be given a copy of the Baptist Union of Great Britain's [Gateway to Level 2 Excellence in Safeguarding](#) booklet and asked to complete the relevant sections. Additional specialist training will also be arranged where needed, for example, in First Aid.

### **Young helpers under 18 years of age**

In law, young helpers under the age of 18 are children and cannot be treated as adult members of a team. Training and mentoring will be given to ensure that they are helped to develop and hone their skills, attitudes and experience. Young helpers must always be closely supervised by an adult leader and never given sole responsibility for a group of children. When considering ratios of staff to children, young helpers need to be counted as children, not leaders. The safeguarding procedures apply to a young helper just as they do to any other person. Parent / carer permission needs to be sought for young helpers to attend an event or help with a children's group just as you would for any other person under 18 years of age.

## **2.3 SAFER BEHAVIOUR**

The church has a code of behaviour for all those working with children and/or adults at risk so that everyone is shown the respect that is due to them:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Think about language and tone of voice that you are using when engaging with children, young people and adults at risk. Be aware of your body language and the effect you are having on the those you are working with. This applies to both in person and online interactions.
- Listen well to everyone. Be careful not to assume you know what a child or adult at risk is thinking or feeling. Listen to what is being spoken and how it is said. At the same time, observe the individual's body language to better understand what is being said.
- Be aware of any physical contact you may have with a child or adult at risk and record it when necessary. For instance, if you need to stop a fight, administer First Aid, give a hug to someone in distress, or protect yourself or others from danger.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or adult at risk, even in 'fun'.
- Do not scapegoat, belittle, ridicule or reject a child or adult at risk.
- Keep a record of any significant incidents or concerns on a Safeguarding Incident Form (see Appendix 3). Enter the names of all those present and anything of note which you observe, e.g. details of any fights broken up by the workers, allegations made, etc. All workers who witnessed the incident, overheard it or responded in any way should record the details and sign and date the form.



Specific considerations when working with children:

- Do not invade the privacy of children when they are using the toilet or showering.
- The level of assistance with personal care (e.g. toileting) must be appropriate and related to the age of the child, whilst also accepting that some children have special needs.
- Avoid rough games involving physical contact between a worker and a child.
- Avoid sexually provocative games.
- When it is necessary to discipline children, this should be done without using physical punishment. There may, however, on the rare occasion be circumstances where a child needs to be restrained in order to protect them or a third person.
- Only invite children and young people to your home or on trips in groups, never invite children on their own, and always make sure that another worker is present.
- Notify the DPS of any children's trips which take place in the name of the church. Parental permission for each child must always be sought.
- No person under 18 years of age should be left in sole charge of any children of any age. Nor should children or young people attending a group be left alone at any time.
- See section 3.3.9 Transport regarding transportation of children and young people.

No one should normally be left working alone with children, young people or adults at risk, but should instead work as part of a team. If there are insufficient leaders for groups:

- Internal doors should be left open.
- At least two people should be present before external doors are opened for an event.
- Consider whether you could combine groups together or rearrange planned activities.
- Reconsider whether you can run the group safely, carrying out a Risk Assessment to record your findings.

If workers do find themselves on their own with children or adults at risk, they should:

- Assess the risk of sending the child or adult at risk home.
- Phone another team member and let them know the situation.
- Train additional leaders as soon as possible.

If a child or adult at risk wants to talk on a one-to-one basis you should make sure that:

- You try to hold the conversation in a corner of a room where other people are present.
- You leave the door open if you are in a room on your own.
- Another team member knows where you are.
- You do not promise confidentiality.

Consideration should be given to how many workers should be involved with a group and whether they should be male or female workers, or both. See section 3.1.1 for recommended ratios. A couple or immediate family members should be considered to count as only one person when planning events or activities and the distribution of workers through different groups; for example, if a couple or immediate family members want to work together then a third person will need to be assigned to that group. Wherever possible couples or people who are related to each other should work with separate groups.

The only adults allowed to participate in children's and adult at risk activities are those safely appointed and appropriately trained. The leader of the activity should be aware of any other adults who are in the building or vicinity whilst the activity is running.



## SECTION 3 - BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The church is in an amazing position in society, with the opportunity to minister to individuals from the whole community, from the very young to the very old. These best practice guidelines are in place to help those working on behalf of the church to do it well, prioritising the safety and well-being of those they are working with. Whilst this section is divided into adults and children, some aspects of good practice will overlap.

### 3.1 – WORKING WITH CHILDREN

#### 3.1.1 Ratios

When working with children the following recommended minimum ratios of workers to children apply:

Age range	Recommended minimum ratio for INDOOR activities	Recommended minimum ratio for OUTDOOR activities
0 – 2 years	1:3 (minimum 2)	1:3 (minimum 2)
3 years	1:4 (minimum 2)	1:4 (minimum 2)
4 – 7 years	1:8 (minimum 2)	1:6 (minimum 2)
8 – 12 years	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 15 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 8 additional children
13 years and over	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children	2 adults for up to 20 children (preferably one of each gender) with an extra adult for every 10 additional children

This does not take into account special circumstances such as behavioural issues, developmental issues, disability and so on, which may mean an increase to the recommended ratios. In calculating the ratios of workers to children, young helpers who are under the age of 18 should be counted as one of the children, not one of the workers.

#### 3.1.2 Children with Additional Support Needs

Children and young people who have additional support needs can be at greater risk of abuse. They could require more help with personal care, such as washing, dressing, toileting, feeding, mobility, etc. Some children may have limited understanding and behave in a non-age-appropriate way. Please speak with the parents/carers of children/young people with additional support needs and find out from them how best to assist the child or young person. Older children will have their own views of how they can be best supported.

#### 3.1.3 Visiting Children or Young People at Home

It is unlikely that workers will need to make pastoral visits to children and their families at home on behalf of the church. If a situation occurs where it is needed then it should be done in pairs, and with the prior agreement of the Minister. As discussed previously, a married couple would normally count as one person.

### 3.1.4 Children with no adult supervision

When children turn up to and want to join in with church activities without the knowledge of their parents/carers, workers will:

- Welcome the child and try to establish their name, age, address and telephone number.
- Record their visit in a register.
- Ask the child if a parent/carer is aware of where they are. Where possible, phone and make contact.
- Without interrogating the child, find out as soon as possible whether they have any specific needs (e.g. medication) so that you can respond appropriately in an emergency.
- Give the child a consent form and explain it needs to be filled in and brought back next time.

### 3.1.5 Mentoring

If a worker is working with a young person as part of the recognised church mentoring programme:

- The parents of all young people involved in mentoring are required to sign a letter to say they are aware that the mentoring is happening and who it is with.
- Mentoring meetings should only be held in agreed places and should be in view of other people.
- A mentoring meeting should have an agreed start and end time and someone should be aware that a meeting is taking place and where it is being held.
- A basic record should be kept of dates of significant meetings and any text messages or emails.
- Appropriate boundaries should be put in place in regard to times and demand, i.e. not phoning or texting late at night, etc. A record should be kept of all communications with a young person by the mentor.
- A written record should be kept of issues/decisions discussed at meetings.

### 3.1.6 Peer Group Activities for Young People

All youth activities will be overseen by named adults who have been selected in accordance with safer recruitment procedures. It is accepted that groups aged 16+ may benefit from being led and run by peers. In this situation, adult leaders will contribute to programme planning and reviews and will always be present to oversee any peer-led activities taking place.

### 3.1.7 Physical Contact

- Keep everything public. A hug within a group context is very different from one behind closed doors.
- Touch should be related to the child's needs, not the workers.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker.
- Workers should avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Children are entitled to privacy to ensure their personal dignity.
- Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances such as when they need medical attention.
- When giving first aid (or applying sun cream, etc), workers should encourage the child to do what they can manage themselves but consider the child's best interests and give appropriate help where necessary.
- Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued.

- If a team member is unsure about whether the actions of another volunteer or worker constitutes a concern, they should raise this with the Designated Person for Safeguarding.

Whilst this section relates specifically to physical contact with children the same consideration should be given to interactions with adults in the church, especially those who might be considered Adults at Risk. Not everyone is comfortable with physical contact such as a hug and all those working and volunteering in the church should be mindful of this.

### 3.1.8 Digital Communication with Young People

#### Safe Communication

A worker's role description will set out the church's expectations about how they are to communicate with young people and how this will be monitored. For example should the worker be contacting children and young people directly or through parents; Are they allowed to email/text/ call a young person; How will this contact be recorded. It should also include the expectations of the church in relation to their use. On the general consent form, parents/carers sign to agree that the young person can receive such communications.

Young people also need to be aware of the protocols that workers follow in relation to electronic communications. It is important to remember that as well as the parent/carer, young people have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their contact details and should not be pressurised otherwise.

It is not appropriate to use these communication methods with children aged 11 years and younger. For more information on online safety, please refer to the Baptist Union of Great Britain **Cyber Safety Guide**, which can be found on their website as well as the [Guide to using Social Media to Communicate with Young People](#), which is also available on the BUGB website.

#### Email

Email should be limited to sharing generic information, for example, to remind young people about meetings. If email is being used, workers will ensure that they are accountable by copying each message, to an individual young person, to the church email address [info@altrinchambaptist.org](mailto:info@altrinchambaptist.org) or [info@ourhub.org](mailto:info@ourhub.org). It is important that workers use clear and unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, for example, avoiding inappropriate terms such as 'love' when ending an email.

#### Communicating using Instant Messaging (e.g. Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram)

Instant messaging should be kept to an absolute minimum. Workers should only use messaging systems which save a record of significant conversations. These records must be available for examination if requested. This applies to communication both with children, young people and with adults at risk. Instant messaging should not be the primary means of communication between workers and those they are supporting.

#### Mobile Phones

Workers need to be cautious and careful in using mobile phones to communicate with young people:

- Mobile phone use should primarily be for the purposes of information sharing.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on to the worker's supervisor.

- Workers should use clear language and should not use abbreviations like 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'.
- Workers should not use emojis, gifs or stickers in communicating with a young person or adult at risk.
- Ministry staff, Community Hub, Renew and CAP debt centre managers are issued with a mobile phone under a contract that provides itemised billing.
- Workers should not take photos of children, young people or adults at risk unless permission is sought in advance and should not store such photos on personal phones.
- Where the youth and children's work is primarily delivered by volunteers the church should nominate a mobile phone to be used for communication with youth leaders.

### **Social Media**

- Workers should have social media accounts that are used solely for children's / youth work communications and are totally separate from their own personal accounts. This is to ensure that all communication with children and young people is kept within the public domain.
- Workers should not send private messages to children on social media. Workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Workers should not accept 'friend' or 'following' requests from children on their personal accounts, nor seek to be 'friends' or a 'follower' of any child known to them in a church context.

### **Taking Videos and Photographs of Children**

Since the introduction of the Data Protection Act in 1998, churches must be very careful if they use still or moving images of clearly identifiable people. Previous legislation was reinforced through the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018. There are several issues to be aware of:

- Permission must be obtained, via the consent form, of all children who will appear in a photograph or video before the photograph is taken or footage recorded.
- It must be made clear why that person's image is being used, what you will be using it for, and who might want to look at the pictures.
- If images are being taken at an event attended by large crowds, such as a sports event, this is regarded as a public area and permission from a crowd is not necessary.
- Children and young people under the age of 18 should not be identified by surname or other personal details, including email, postal address or telephone number.
- When using photographs of children and young people, it is preferable to use group pictures.

### **Consideration of safeguarding when live streaming church services and events**

See section 3.2.7 Live Streaming Services.

Where children and young people are participating in services or events, we will ensure that appropriate parent or guardian consent is in place. Where children and young people are unable to be shown on camera consideration will be given to how else they can participate in the service.

## **3.2 WORKING WITH ADULTS AT RISK**

### **3.2.1 Premises**

The church buildings will be made as accessible as possible to all people. Any restrictions to access, visibility, audibility, toilet facilities, lighting or heating will be addressed wherever possible, and where necessary, aids and adaptations put in place.

### **3.2.2 Language**

Every effort will be taken to use appropriate language and suitable vocabulary, enabling the greatest level of inclusivity and accessibility. We will be mindful of the language used within worship and the language used to describe people (such as derogatory words focusing on aspects of someone's disability, race or sexuality rather than the person themselves).

### **3.2.3 Worship**

In all worship services, we will consider the varied requirements of our congregation and try to be as inclusive as possible, by, for example:

- Providing some copies of large print type for all printed materials
- Speakers always facing the congregation and not covering their mouths when talking, enabling those who rely on lip-reading
- Describing what is being presented on a screen for those who cannot see it clearly
- Using inclusive language
- Providing materials in additional languages where appropriate
- Using a variety of liturgy and resources to cater for different levels of understanding
- Using a microphone during times of open prayer so that all can hear
- Considering holding a service which specifically caters for certain groups of adults at risk, such as those with learning disabilities, the deaf or the visually impaired.

### **3.2.4 Insurance**

We will take reasonable steps to safeguard adults at risk and will follow any specific safeguarding requirements as laid out by our insurance company.

### **3.2.5 Financial integrity**

Arrangements are in place for dealing with money, financial transactions and gifts, as outlined below. These relate to both paid staff and volunteers:

- Those who work with adults at risk may become involved in some aspects of personal finance - collecting pensions or benefits, shopping or banking, etc. If handling money for someone else, always obtain receipts or other evidence of what has been done.
- Workers should not seek personal financial gain from their position beyond any salary or recognised allowances or expenses.
- Workers should not be influenced by offers of money.
- Any gifts received should be reported to the church trustees, who should decide whether or not the gift can be accepted.
- Any money received by the church should be handled by two unrelated church workers.
- Care should be taken not to canvass for church donations from those adults who may be at risk, such as the recently bereaved.

- Workers should ensure that church and personal finances are kept apart to avoid any conflict of interest.
- If someone alters their will in favour of an individual known to them because of their church work or pastoral relationship, it should be reported to the trustees. Workers should not act as Executors for someone they know through their work or pastoral role, as this may lead to a conflict of interests.
- Expert legal advice should be sought on matters such as Power of Attorney and Appointeeship to ensure that the situation is clearly understood and is the most appropriate course of action for the adult at risk.

### 3.2.6 Photographs

Workers should make sure that they have the person's permission to take a picture, and that the subject is happy with the intended use of the pictures. When taking group pictures, workers should remember to get permission from everyone who will be photographed.

### 3.2.7 Live Streaming Services

When a service or event is being live streamed or recorded to be shared online at a later date, we will ensure people are aware that they are being recorded and appropriate consent will be sought to those who participate in the service, or who may be visible to the camera.

This is in line with the guidance as set out in the Baptist Union of Great Britain guide: [Recording and Livestreaming Services: Safeguarding Guidelines for Churches](#).

### 3.2.8 Computers

All church computers will have suitable parental controls and blocks put on. Although this is not a failsafe, it will make using the computers for inappropriate behaviour more difficult, whilst also protecting any vulnerable users. We will create a policy specifically for church computer use, including terms and conditions for use as well as what will happen if someone breaches these conditions.

### 3.2.9 Record keeping

It is good practice to record pastoral visits or meetings, noting the date, time, location, subject and any actions which are to be taken. The record of these meetings should stick to facts and try to avoid opinion. Any records of safeguarding allegations, concerns or disclosures should be passed on to the DPS and stored in a safe and secure manner for at least 75 years. Please refer to Baptist Union of Great Britain [Safeguarding Record Keeping Guide](#) available on their website.

### 3.2.10 Pastoral Relationships

All those involved in pastoral ministry should work in a way that follows clearly defined procedures, which set out the boundaries to protect those carrying out the pastoral ministry as well as those receiving it:

- Workers should be aware of the innate power imbalance within pastoral relationships and the potential for abuse of trust.
- Behaviour that suggests favouritism or gives the impression of a special relationship, should be avoided.
- Workers should be aware of the dangers of dependency developing within a pastoral relationship.



- Workers should be mindful of any physical contact or greeting they use within a pastoral relationship, seeking consent if physical contact is offered, for example as a means to offer comfort.
- Workers should never take advantage of their role and engage in sexual activity with someone with whom they have a pastoral relationship.
- All people receiving pastoral ministry should be treated with respect and should be encouraged to make their own decisions about any actions or outcomes.
- Workers should not pastorally minister to anyone whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Workers need to recognise the limits of their own abilities and competencies and get further help when working with situations outside of their expertise or role.
- Workers should seek advice from the DPS if they believe that someone they are pastorally supporting is becoming dependent on them or developing an inappropriate emotional attachment.

### **3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY – Safer Practice and Safer Premises**

#### **3.3.1 Consent forms**

It is essential that we have important information about all children and young people involved in any activities at the church, which is recorded on our consent forms. The first week someone attends workers must record their name, medical emergency information and a contact name and number. Then they must bring their completed form back with them. Similar details will be gathered for adults at risk.

Whenever someone is asked to participate in a service which is to be livestreamed or recorded and shown at a later date consent for them to be on screen will need to be acquired in line with the guidance set out in the BUGB Guide: [Recording and Live Streaming Services and Events: Safeguarding Guidance](#).

#### **3.3.2 Health and Safety**

All activities for children, young people and adults at risk will comply with the church's current health and safety policy, with particular attention paid to the sections on Fire Action, First Aid, PAT testing, Health and Safety and Kitchen and Food Hygiene.

Whenever possible, at all events involving food preparation, at least one worker will hold a valid Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.

Buildings being used for children's and adult at risk groups will be properly maintained. A representative from the teams involved will take part in an annual health and safety review in order to consider all aspects of safety for everyone involved in using the premises.

#### **3.3.3 Fire**

It is the responsibility of all group leaders/responsible persons within the building to ensure the safety of themselves and those who are in their care. In addition, it is a legal requirement that all group leaders/responsible persons are familiar with the emergency procedures in the event of a fire.

In case of a fire, the emergency services shall be called. A sweep of the building shall be carried out to ensure everyone has been evacuated, wherever it is safe to do so. The emergency services will be informed on arrival of the parts of the building which could not be searched safely.

#### **3.3.4 First Aid**

Our church has a number of trained First Aiders and a list showing who they are is displayed on prominent noticeboards at both premises. All church groups will ensure that they have sufficient trained first aiders on their regular team so that there is always a first aider present at major events and activities. If a first aider is not available, please dial 999 in an emergency.

There are several first aid kits in Hale Road and Pownall Road premises. In both buildings there is an incident reporting book, which must be completed in the event of any accidents, injuries or incidents. There is also an additional first aid kit available for external events. A defibrillator is installed at the Pownall Road premises. The administrators in both buildings will ensure that the contents of the first aid kits are checked and restocked on a regular basis. Completed accident forms should be passed on to the Church office for follow up.

#### **3.3.5 Supervision of Groups**

The person with overall responsibility for a group shall ensure all Health and Safety requirements have been met for that group activity.

Workers leading an activity on a specific day shall ensure that the whereabouts of those members of the group attending are known. They will ensure the activities of the group are carried out in compliance with those Health and Safety requirements.

#### **3.3.6 Food Hygiene**

The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 state that anyone who handles food or whose actions could affect its safety must comply with the regulations. It therefore follows that those with supervision responsibility for food will need to possess the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate and be aware of food safety (preparation, handling and storage, disposal of waste, etc).

#### **3.3.7 Risk Assessment**

Before undertaking any regular activity with children or adults at risk, the leader will ensure that a risk assessment is carried out. Any one-off activity raising any issues of safety shall also be considered as needing a risk assessment. It is advisable to appoint someone from among the workers specifically assigned to this task. Advice should be sought if unfamiliar with producing a risk assessment.

#### **3.3.8 Insurance**

Residential activity organisers will check that there is adequate insurance cover for any activities planned. If the trip is at an external venue, it is also important to establish that there is appropriate public liability insurance in place.

#### **3.3.9 Transport**

These guidelines apply to all drivers involved in the transportation of children, young people and adults at risk on behalf of the church. They do not apply to private arrangements, for example, transport arrangements made between friends.

- Only those who have gone through the church safer recruitment procedures for workers will transport children and adults at risk (within the DBS eligibility criteria).
- Regular drivers will have read the church's Safeguarding Policy and agree to abide by it.
- Drivers will be aged 21 or over and have held a full driving licence for at least two years.
- Drivers must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover and that the vehicle being used is road worthy.
- All hired minibuses will have a small bus permit, the necessary insurance and a driver with a valid driving licence that entitles them to drive a minibus.
- Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in the vehicle with someone they are transporting. It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular individual e.g. where there has been a disagreement, or they have romantic feelings for the other party.

Our practice specifically for transporting children is as follows:

- Parental consent will be given for all journeys.
- All children and young people should be returned to an agreed drop off point. At collection or drop off points, children should never be left on their own; make sure they are collected by an appropriate adult.
- Best practice involves avoiding transporting children or young people, on your own. At least two workers (unrelated to each other) should be present when transporting children as part of a church role.
- Do not give lifts to children or young people on your own if at all possible. However, with checked drivers, it is reasonable to expect that he/she may be alone with a child for short periods. Consideration should therefore be given to dropping off the least vulnerable last and plan routes accordingly.
- A driver should inform a DPS or Lead Minister if they are to transport a child, giving them details of time, duration, location etc and informing them when they have successfully returned them to their responsible adult/parent?

### 3.3.10 Outings and Overnight Events involving Children

There are some specific considerations which need to be made for outings and overnight events involving children:

- A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand, including health and food safety.
- Parents will be informed in writing of all the arrangements.
- Consent forms will be obtained for the specific activities involved.

#### **Sleeping Arrangements**

Sleeping arrangements for overnight events will be carefully considered. It is not acceptable for workers to share sleeping accommodation with young people. Instead, workers should be situated in close proximity and ensure that the young people know where to go if they need help. There should be at least two workers on duty until all young people are asleep.

Where a young person is questioning their gender identity or considering, progressing or has completed gender reassignment we will consult with them and their parents about arrangements for residential trips and sleepovers. If needed the DPS will seek advice from the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

### **Adventurous Activities**

No child will participate in adventurous activities without the written consent of the parent /carer. The activity leader will ensure that the staff engaged in such activities are properly trained and qualified and that the correct ratio of staff to children is met. At an activity centre or for an organisation whose own staff undertake such activities, if the activities come within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004, the activity leader needs to ensure that the premises are licensed.

### **Fire Safety**

The event leader will have a fire safety procedure in place, which will include the following:

- Everyone will be warned of the danger of fire. If the overnight event is in a building, then everyone must be made aware of the fire exits. Good practice would be to carry out a fire drill on the first day.
- When using a building as a residential facility, ensure that the fire alarm is audible throughout the accommodation and that all signs and exits are clearly visible. The building will also need to comply with fire regulations.
- In the case of an emergency, ensure measures are in place to alert children and young people with disabilities (e.g. a child who is hard of hearing).

### **Safety**

It is the responsibility of the workers to always know the whereabouts of every child/young person participating in an overnight event, and this may include monitoring access on and off the site.

General safety rules will be applied as appropriate (e.g. no running around tents due to the risk of injury from tripping over guy lines).

### **Swimming Trips**

Recognising that children are likely to be dispersed around the swimming area with additional requirements for oversight as they get changed or visit the toilets there will be an increased adult to child ratio for swimming trips. Prior to the trip, workers will establish the swimming ability of the children attending and obtain specific consent. Workers should never change in front of the children.

### **Named person for safeguarding on the trip**

There will be a named person for safeguarding on all outings and residential trips. This person will not necessarily be the Church Designated Person for Safeguarding, but they will be someone trained to Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding. A discussion with the DPS will be held to identify who this person is and agree how information will be communicated to the DPS if a concern is raised during the event.

### **3.3.11 Outings and Overnight Events involving Adults at Risk**

As with outings and events for children, there are additional considerations for a group taking adults with additional needs, such as learning difficulties or mental health needs, on outings or overnight events:

- A risk assessment must be carried out beforehand.
- Planning for the trip should consider specific medical, physical and support needs of each group member, bearing in mind that there may be people in the group who have individual care needs that will have to be met (including personal care).
- Adults at risk, and carers where appropriate, should be included in the planning of trips and events.
- Consideration should be given to the suitability and accessibility of the venue and accommodation, travel time and mode of transport, and the affordability of the event.

- Adults at risk should be given all the information about the trip beforehand so that they know where they are going, how long it will take to get there and what type of activities they will be taking part in.
- There should be a minimum of two leaders with each group; the individual needs of those attending may determine the additional number of people required.

### **Sleeping Arrangements**

Consideration should be given to the individual needs of those staying overnight. If there is a need for personal care or additional support during the night, it would be better that the person's usual caregiver also attends the event and therefore shares a room with them.

### **Personal Care**

It is not appropriate for church workers to perform personal care for adults at risk unless this is their usual task (i.e. if they have come along to help generally, but also have a caring role for a member of the group, they can provide personal care for that person).

### **Activities**

Leaders should consider the mobility needs of the group when deciding on activities or events. For example, if members of the group have difficulty walking, then including a walking tour around a town may be inaccessible to some who are attending. If you have members of the group who use wheelchairs, then consideration needs to be given as to whether you have sufficient workers to support those who may need pushing.

### **Safety**

It is the responsibility of the workers to always know the whereabouts of every person in the group; this may include monitoring access on and off the site.

General safety rules will be applied as appropriate, and advice sought from the event organiser / venue about the fire evacuation procedures. A copy of the event / venue risk assessment should be included with the group leader's risk assessment.

### **Consent and Medical Information**

It is important to recognise that adults at risk are mostly able to give consent for their own involvement in activities, inclusion in photographs and medical treatment. However, in some situations the question of capacity may arise. The guidelines clearly state that an adult at risk should have a say in their care and any arrangements made for them, however, there may be occasions when you need to involve others in decision making. In these situations, seek advice from the DPS regarding who should be involved.

A medical consent form should be completed by each member of the group and held by the leader. This will include any health concerns, emergency contact information and contact details for their GP. This will allow emergency medical personnel to have access to information should the need arise.

### **Holding and Dispensing of Medication**

Church workers should never agree to hold or dispense medication for those on an event. If someone is unable to manage their own medication, then consideration should be given as to whether their usual carer could attend with them or whether they will not be able to attend the event.

### **Named person for safeguarding on the trip**

As with trips arranged for Children and young people there will be a named person for safeguarding for all outings and residential trips involving adults at risk. This person will not necessarily be the Church Designated Person for Safeguarding, but they will be someone trained to Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding. A discussion with the DPS will be held to identify who this person is and agree how information will be communicated to the DPS if a concern is raised during the event.

### **3.3.12 Hiring of Premises**

Any organisation hiring our premises, as part of the letting agreement, will have their own safeguarding policy and procedures.

Responsibility for implementation of the policy and procedures remains with the hiring group and their trustees. However, if we become aware that a group using our premises are not following appropriate safeguarding policies, we will consider terminating the letting agreement and will report our concerns.

'One-off' private hirers (for example, children's parties) are not expected to have a safeguarding policy, but they are expected to show due care and attention

## **3.4 SAFER COMMUNITY**

### **3.4.1 Bullying**

Bullying is another form of abuse, and it can be verbal or physical. Bullying doesn't just happen to children; adults can be victims too. There is no legal definition of bullying, but it is usually defined as a repeated pattern of behaviour intended to cause emotional or physical harm to another person or exert power over them. The effect of bullying on the victim can be profound, both emotionally and physically, regardless of their age, ability or status.

It is important to recognise that bullying happens within churches, and it is not isolated to the children and young people. Anyone in the church can be a victim of bullying, just as anyone in the church can be the bully, including those in leadership.

Some examples of bullying that could arise in the church context are:

- Being verbally or physically abusive towards another person
- Isolating or deliberately ignoring someone, or excluding them from group activities
- Spreading rumours and malicious untruths about another person in the church
- Use of email, phone or social media to publicly challenge or undermine someone
- Name calling and personal insults
- Making false accusations
- Sending abusive messages or degrading images via phone, email or social media

Bullying will always cause a great deal of pain and harm for those on the receiving end. Many people affected by bullying, both children and adults, believe they have nowhere to turn. They are scared to speak out and often blame themselves. They can become fearful and reclusive. It is important that churches are able to recognise when bullying is occurring and are prepared to take action to resolve the situation.

Some signs that can indicate a person is being bullied are as follows:

- Withdrawal from group or church activities; appearing anxious, tearful or more reticent than usual, particularly in a certain context; development of mental health difficulties, such as depression or anxiety disorders; drop in performance relating to any church roles; physical injuries.

In order to help prevent bullying, the following procedures will be adopted within the church:

- The children and young people will be involved in agreeing a code of behaviour for their groups, which makes it clear that bullying is unacceptable. This should then be displayed somewhere visible to the whole church.
- The church will display signs stating the importance of valuing and respecting each other even in disagreements and this will be practically embedded into the leadership approach to others.
- Everyone in the church, whether children or adults, should know how they can report any incidents of bullying.
- All allegations of bullying will be treated seriously and details will be carefully checked before action is taken.
- The bullying behaviour will be investigated and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible.
- An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour.
- All allegations and incidents of bullying will be recorded, together with the actions that are taken.
- Where an allegation of bullying is made against a church or group leader, advice will be sought from the local regional safeguarding lead as this should be addressed.
- Incidents of bullying may be reported to the statutory authorities in line with the church safeguarding procedures.

It is important to distinguish bullying from other behaviour, such as respectfully challenging or disagreeing with someone else's beliefs or behaviours, setting reasonable expectations with regard to work deadlines and activities or taking legitimate disciplinary action.

**Online safety** –Bullying online and on social media is as serious as physical, in person bullying. In contrast to in person bullying there is often no escape from bullying online in a world where people, especially young people, are accessing their online world from wherever they are; there is no “safe space” and the emotional impact of online bullying can be significant as a result. With this in mind the same procedures apply to disclosures of online bullying as in person incidents.

### 3.4.2 Working with Alleged or Known Offenders

When it is known that a person who has been convicted of abusing children, young people or adults is attending our church, it is important that their behaviour within the church community is properly managed and that a contract is put in place. There are also times when it will be appropriate to take such measures with a person who has faced allegations of abuse but hasn't been convicted.

In determining the details of the contract:

- The DPS will inform and take advice from the Regional Safeguarding Lead.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken with the help of the Regional Safeguarding Lead to determine the contents of the Safeguarding Contract using the BUGB safeguarding risk assessment tool.
- There will be a discussion about who should be informed about the nature of the offence and the details of the contract.
- The rights of the offender to re-build their life without people knowing the details of their past offence should be balanced against the need to protect children, young people and adults at risk.

- The members of the church Safeguarding Team will always be informed.
- The DPS should determine whether the person is subject to supervision or is on the Sex Offenders' Register. If so, the DPS should contact the offender's specialist probation officer (SPO) who will inform the church of any relevant information or restrictions that they should be aware of.

An open discussion will be held with the person concerned which will contribute to the risk assessment and in which clear boundaries are established for their involvement in the life of the church. A written contract will be drawn up which identifies appropriate behaviour. The person will be required to sign the contract and it will be monitored and enforced. If the contract is broken certain sanctions will be discussed and considered with the Regional Safeguarding Lead.

### **3.4.3 Alleged or known offenders who are themselves adults at risk**

A risk assessment and formal contract may be quite a daunting process for someone with learning difficulties or a young person yet having safeguards in place is still necessary. Therefore, an alternative may be to arrange a meeting with the individual in question where they can be taken through the main elements of a formal contract in a way that is non-threatening and easy to understand. Notes would be taken and the individual would need to verbally agree to the requirements laid out in the meeting.

Rather than signing a formal 'contract', the individual would instead sign to say that they agree with the minutes or meeting notes, and that they will stick to what has been agreed during the meeting. This will result in the same outcome as a contract but is a more informal and appropriate approach for an adult at risk. The agreed requirements will need to be reviewed regularly to make sure that the individual is complying, exactly as a formal contract would be. The church will work with the Regional Safeguarding Lead throughout this process.



## SECTION 4 - USEFUL CONTACTS

### Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Tel: 0161 912 5125

Email: [marat@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:marat@trafford.gov.uk)

### Police

Contact 101, or 999 in an emergency.

### Trafford Adult Social Services

8.45am—5pm 0161 912 5135

Out of hours 0161 912 2020

### Children's Social Services

8.45am—5pm 0161 912 5125

Out of hours 0161 912 5125

### Baptist Union Regional Safeguarding Lead

*Tim Presswood*

Tel: 07966 417 502

Email: [safeguarding@nwba.org](mailto:safeguarding@nwba.org)

### Deputy Regional Safeguarding Lead

*Jane Henderson*

Email: [safeguarding@nwba.org](mailto:safeguarding@nwba.org)

## APPENDIX 1 - DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

### Understanding, Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults at risk may be abused in a family, or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or a child or children. There are many different ways in which people suffer abuse. The list below is, sadly, not exhaustive.

Type of abuse	Child	Adult at risk
<i>Physical</i>	Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury to a child.	To inflict pain, physical injury or suffering to an adult at risk.
<i>Emotional</i>	The persistent, emotional, ill treatment of a child that affects their emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.	The use of threats, fear or power gained by another adult's position, to invalidate the person's independent wishes. Such behaviour can create very real emotional and psychological distress. All forms of abuse have an emotional component.
<i>Sexual</i>	Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.	Any non-consenting sexual act or behaviour.  No one should enter into a sexual relationship with someone for whom they have pastoral responsibility or hold a position of trust.
<i>Neglect</i>	Where adults fail to care for children and protect them from danger, seriously impairing health and development.	A person's wellbeing is impaired and their care needs are not met. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what someone's needs are.

Type of Abuse	Additional Definitions
<i>Financial</i>	The inappropriate use, misappropriation, embezzlement or theft of money, property or possessions.
<i>Spiritual</i>	The inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context; the abuse of trust by someone in a position of spiritual authority (e.g. minister). The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack.

<i>Discrimination</i>	The inappropriate treatment of a person because of their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability.
<i>Institutional</i>	The mistreatment or abuse of a person by a regime or individuals within an institution. It can occur through repeated acts of poor or inadequate care and neglect, or poor professional practice or ill-treatment. The church as an institution is not exempt from perpetrating institutional abuse.
<i>Domestic Abuse</i>	Domestic abuse is any threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between persons aged 16 or above who are or have been in a relationship, or between family members. It can affect anybody regardless of their age, gender, sexuality or social status. Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual or psychological, and whatever form it takes, it is rarely a one-off incident. Usually there is a pattern of abusive, coercive and controlling behaviour where an abuser seeks to exert power over their family member or partner. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 identifies children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse as victims in their own right.
<i>Online abuse</i>	The use of computer systems to cause, facilitate, or threaten violence against individuals, that results in (or is likely to result in) physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering and may include the exploitation of the individual's circumstance, characteristics or vulnerabilities.  The Online Safety Bill, 2021, introduces new rules for internet search engines and firms who host user-generated content, i.e. those which allow users to post their own content online or interact with each other. Those platforms which fail to comply with the rules could face penalties of up to 10% of their revenue, and in the most serious cases some may even be barred from operating.
<i>Self-harm</i>	Self-Harm is the intentional damage or injury to a person's own body. It is used as a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress. An individual may also be neglecting themselves, which can result in harm to themselves.
<i>Mate crime</i>	'Mate crime' is when people (particularly those with learning disabilities) are befriended by members of the community, who go on to exploit and take advantage of them.
<i>Cuckooing</i>	Cuckooing is the term used to describe occasions where the homes of adults at risk are taken over and used to distribute drugs or as a base for gang or criminal activities. The tenant may believe that the people who are in their home are their friends.
<i>Modern Slavery</i>	Modern slavery is the practice of treating people as property; it includes bonded labour, child labour, sex slavery and trafficking. In the UK we see examples of this through County Lines, Child Sexual Exploitation and forced labour.
<i>Human Trafficking</i>	Human trafficking is when people are bought and sold for financial gain and/or abuse. Men, women and children can be trafficked, both within their own countries and over international borders. The traffickers will trick, coerce, lure or force these vulnerable individuals into sexual exploitation, forced labour, street crime, domestic servitude or even the sale of organs and human sacrifice.
<i>Radicalisation</i>	The radicalisation of individuals is the process by which people come to support any form of extremism and, in some cases, join terrorist groups. Some individuals are more vulnerable to the risk of being groomed into terrorism than others.

<i>Honour / Forced Marriage</i>	An honour marriage / forced marriage is when one or both of the spouses do not, or cannot, consent to the marriage. There may be physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure exerted in order to make the marriage go ahead. The motivation may include the desire to control unwanted behaviour or sexuality.
<i>Female Genital Mutilation</i>	Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO). FGM is a cultural practice common around the world and is largely performed on girls aged between 10 and 18. Performing acts of FGM is illegal in the UK as is arranging for a child to travel abroad for FGM to be carried out.
<i>Peer-on-Peer Abuse</i>	Peer-on-peer abuse is where sexual abuse takes place between children of a similar age or stage of development.
<i>Child on Child Abuse</i>	Child on Child abuse is when a child abuses another child of any age or stage of development
<i>Historic Abuse</i>	Historic abuse is the term used to describe disclosures of abuse that were perpetrated in the past. Many people who have experienced abuse don't tell anyone what happened until years later, with around one third of people abused in childhood waiting until adulthood before they share their experience.

Whilst it is not possible to be prescriptive about the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, the following list sets out some of the indicators which might be suggestive of abuse:

- unexplained injuries on areas of the body not usually prone to such injuries
- an injury that has not been treated/received medical attention
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- a child or adult at risk discloses behaviour that is harmful to them
- unexplained changes in behaviour or mood (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper)
- inappropriate sexual awareness in children
- signs of neglect, such as under-nourished, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.

**It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is actually taking place.**

**It is also important to remember that there might be other reasons why most of the above are occurring**

## APPENDIX 2 – DETAILED GUIDANCE ON REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### STAGE 1 – THE WORKER

The duty of the person who receives information or who has a concern about the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk is to **RECOGNISE** the concerns, make a **RECORD** in writing and **RESPOND** by passing on their concerns to the DPS. If he/she is not contactable, or they are implicated in the situation, another member of the church Safeguarding Team should be contacted instead.

**Concerns should be passed on to the DPS within 24 hours** of it being raised. If anyone is considered to be in imminent danger of harm, a report should be made immediately to the police by calling 999. If such a report is made without reference to the DPS, they should be informed as soon as possible afterwards.

**A written record using the standard incident report (APPENDIX 3 – SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT FORM) form should be made as soon as possible** after a child or adult at risk tells you about harmful behaviour, or an incident takes place that gives cause for concern.

#### The record should:

- be hand-written as soon as possible after the event
- be legible and state the facts accurately (when hand-written notes are typed up later the original hand-written notes should be retained)
- where possible, include the child or adult at risk's name, address, date of birth (or age if the date of birth is not known)
- include the nature of the concerns/allegation/disclosure
- include a description of any physical injury or emotional distress that you may have noticed
- include an exact record of what the child or adult at risk has said, using their own words where possible
- include what was said by the person to whom the concerns were reported
- include any action taken as a result of the concerns
- be signed and dated by the worker
- be kept secure and confidential and made available only to the church Safeguarding Team (including the church minister), representatives of any statutory authorities involved and the local Baptist association.

If concerns arise in the context of children's or adult at risk work, the worker who has the concern may in the first instance wish to talk it through with their group leader, where appropriate. However, such conversations should not delay concerns being passed on to the DPS. **It should be clear that the duty remains with the worker to record and pass on their concerns to the DPS.**

If an issue concerns an adult at risk who does not give permission to pass on the information to anyone else, the worker should explain that they will need to speak with the DPS, who will have greater expertise in dealing with the issue at hand.

If a concern is brought to the attention of a group leader by one of the workers, the leader should remind the worker of their duty to record and report, and will also themselves have a duty to pass on the concern to the DPS.

## **STAGE 2 – THE DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING (DPS)**

**The duty of the DPS** on receiving a report is to **REVIEW** the concern that they have received and **REPORT** the concern on to the appropriate people, where necessary.

### **The duty to REVIEW**

In reviewing the report that is received, the DPS:

- will check worker's form is completed as fully as possible and assist where necessary.
- should take into account their own level of experience and expertise in assessing risk to children or adults at risk.
- must take into account any other reports that have been received concerning the same individual or family.
- may speak with others in the church where appropriate (including the Minister and church Safeguarding Team, unless allegations involve them) who may have relevant information and knowledge that would impact on any decision being made. Such conversations should not lead to undue delay in taking any necessary action.
- may consult with other agencies to seek guidance and advice in knowing how to respond appropriately to the concerns that have been raised.

### **The duty to REPORT**

**The DPS will decide who the report should be referred on to, working in conjunction with the church Safeguarding Team where appropriate.** They may:

- refer back to the worker who made the initial report if there is little evidence that a child or adult at risk is being harmed, asking for appropriate continued observation.
- refer the concern to others who work with the child or adult at risk in question, asking for continued observation where appropriate.
- Inform parents / carers under certain circumstances, where doing so would not present any further risk of harm.
- Make a formal referral to the police or local Social Services team. With adults at risk, confidentiality means that someone's personal business is not discussed with others, except with their permission. This is not always possible when considering passing relevant information about abuse or concerns to the statutory authorities, however, it is possible to keep the information confidential to the relevant parties. This means not telling or hinting to others what has been disclosed, not even for prayer ministry purposes. For adults at risk, concerns will only be referred to the police or Social Services without consent where:
  - the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
  - there is a risk of harm to others
  - in order to prevent a crime
- **If an allegation is made against someone who works with children\*** the allegation should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or equivalent. The LADO is located within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:
  - behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child

- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
  - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.
- **If an allegation is made against someone who works with adults at risk\***, it should be reported to the police or Adult Social Services.

*\*If a worker has an allegation made against them, they should step down from all church duties until the incident has been investigated by the statutory authorities. It may also be appropriate to put a Safeguarding Contract in place; this should be discussed with the local Regional Safeguarding Lead.*

- **Whenever a formal referral is made to the police, Social Services or LADO, the DPS should report the referral to:**
  - The Safeguarding Trustee
  - The Minister
  - Regional Safeguarding Lead

A record should be kept of all safeguarding incidents and should be considered in the annual review of the church's safeguarding policy. All original reports should be retained safely and securely by the DPS and a written record should be made of the actions taken.

### **STAGE 3 – THE NEXT STEPS**

Responsibilities to **REPORT** and **SUPPORT** in stage 3 of the process are shared by the church Safeguarding Team and the Minister.

#### **The duty to SUPPORT**

Once concerns, suspicions and disclosures of abuse have been addressed, the church continues to have a responsibility to offer support to all those who have been affected, including:

Victims; Alleged perpetrators; Children; Adults at risk; Other family members; Church workers; Church Safeguarding Team; Minister; Leadership Team.

#### **The duty to REPORT**

**If a church worker has been accused of causing harm** to children, young people or adults at risk this would be classed as a serious incident that should be reported to the Charity Commission by those churches that are registered with the Charity Commission.

**If a worker has been removed from their post** or would have been removed from their post because of the risk of harm that they pose to children, young people or adults at risk, **there is also a statutory duty to report the incident to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**. See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs>

## APPENDIX 3 – SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT FORM

<b>PERSON REPORTING THE INCIDENT OR CONCERN:</b>
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____
Role in Church: _____

<b>DETAILS OF CHILD / ADULT AT RISK YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT:</b>
Name: _____
Date of Birth / Approximate Age: _____
Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____
Do they know that you are sharing concerns about them? _____
If not, please explain why: _____

<b>IF UNDER 18 PLEASE INCLUDE DETAILS OF THE PARENT OR CARER:</b>
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____
Relationship to the child/ young person: _____
Do they know that you have concerns that you are sharing? _____
If not, please explain why: _____

<b>DETAILS OF ALLEGED PERPETRATOR (IF RELEVANT)</b>
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email: _____
_____
Are they an adult or a child (under 18): _____
Relationship to the child/adult at risk: _____
Does the child / adult at risk live with the alleged perpetrator? _____



**DETAILS OF INCIDENT OR CONCERN:**

- Remember to include the 4 W's – Who, What, Where, When.
- Be clear whether this is something you have been told about or something that you have observed directly.
- Include names of anyone else who witnessed the incident or is aware of the concern.
- Refer to the church safeguarding policy if you are unsure what to include.

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

**HAVE YOU CONTACTED ANYONE ELSE (SOCIAL SERVICES, POLICE, LADO, REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING LEAD, MINISTER)?**

Please give details of who and when below:

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

This Incident Form should be passed to the Designated Person for Safeguarding (DPS) within 24 hours of any incident or concern arising. Do not delay reporting your concerns to the DPS because you do not have all the information requested in this form. Where there is an immediate risk of harm, please call the DPS straight away and use this form to follow up on that call. Remember if they are not available call the police or social services, do not wait for the DPS to be available.

***Remember: Treat this information confidentially. Do not discuss the contents of this form with anyone other than the DPS, not even for prayer purposes.***

Signed .....

Date .....

## APPENDIX 4 - Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Each church needs to identify and fill several important posts that underpin effective safeguarding in the church. These notes outline the main responsibilities relating to safeguarding connected with key leadership roles.

### Trustees / Elders

- Ultimately responsible for safeguarding
- Responsible for the implementation of policy and procedures
- Responsible for supporting the church workers
- Responsible for raising awareness about best practice within the church
- Responsible for ensuring that the relevant people have received the appropriate training

### Safeguarding Trustee / Elder

Not necessarily the person who heads up safeguarding in the church – could be a trustee / deacon with an interest and willingness to learn.

- Takes a lead on safeguarding matters for the trustees / deacons
- Is the point of contact with trustees / deacons for safeguarding issues
- Ensures church policy and procedures are reviewed annually

### Designated Person for Safeguarding

- Receives all reports of concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk
- Listens, observes and passes on those concerns appropriately, having taken advice from the relevant people
- Acts as a link between the church and other agencies or bodies on safeguarding matters

### Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Verifier

- Responsible for all aspects of processing DBS checks for church staff and volunteers (with the exception of the accredited minister who is checked by the regional association)

### The Minister

- Shares with the trustees the general responsibility for the adoption and implementation of the church's safeguarding policy
- Takes responsibility for ensuring that the pastoral needs of all are being met
- May need to be made aware of safeguarding issues in line with the guidance in SECTION 1

### **For more information:**

Please see [www.baptist.org.uk](http://www.baptist.org.uk) for more information about safeguarding in Baptist churches, including a range of specialist guides and a library of free downloadable resources.

### **BUGB Excellence in Safeguarding training for your church:**

Information and booking arrangements for the BUGB Levels 2 and Level 3 Excellence in Safeguarding training can be made through the ABC Safeguarding Trustee or Designated Persons for Safeguarding.

### **In an emergency:**

If you find yourself facing an emergency situation, where you believe that someone attending your church or community centre is being harmed or is at imminent risk of harm, please ring the police on 999 and ask to speak to an officer in the child or adult protection teams. Always keep records and let your DPS know that you have made this call.

# Safeguarding is a priority

We are committed to the safeguarding of all children, young people and adults at risk with whom we come into contact.

We work to a formal safeguarding policy, which can be obtained on request from the Hale Road or Pownall Road offices.

If you have any concerns regarding the safety or welfare of a child, young person or adult you can speak to one of our Designated Persons for Safeguarding (DPS)

**Children and Young Persons: Rachel Downey - 07796 763 952**

**Adults: David Bradley - 07713 644 725**

**Other contacts -** Social services - Child 0161 912 5125  
Adult 0161 912 5135 (9-5)  
0161 912 2020 (Out of hours)

**In an emergency dial 999**

If you find yourself facing an emergency situation, where you believe that someone attending an activity on these premises is being harmed or is at imminent risk of harm, please ring the police on 999 and ask to speak to an officer in the child or adult protection teams. Always keep records and let your DPS know that you have made this call.

For more information:

Please see [www.baptist.org.uk](http://www.baptist.org.uk) for more information about safeguarding in Baptist churches, including a range of specialist guides and a library of free downloadable resources.

**This document is based on the Model Safeguarding Policy and Procedures published by The Baptist Union of Great Britain May 2023.**